



Town of Jericho
Planning Commission

Jericho Planning Commission Minutes
Regular Meeting
May 17, 2016
Approved June 7, 2016

Present: Phyl Newbeck, Jason Cheney, Samantha Dunn, Susan Bresee, Barbara Bedard
Absent: None
Public: Stuart Alexander, Conor Lahiff, Dean Davis, Katie Forleo, Don Foote, Jim Carroll, Glenn and Ellie Martin, David Villeneuve
Guests: Katherine Sonnick (Planner)

Jason called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Public Comment

None

Draft Land Use Regulations Continued Public Hearing

Dean Davis worried about changes in the PUD density bonus language for senior housing in the agricultural district.

Ellie Martin, neighbor to Davis, noted that she was also concerned about the reduction in allowable building size.

Jim Carroll requested an opportunity to ask some questions. Jason stated that the PC was prepared to hear comments, but preferred to keep comments to 3 minutes as per the PC policy. Jim Carroll objected to the 3 minute limitation and does not believe to be legal. He noted that the proposed regulations include a 50% reduction in square foot of buildings and 85% reduction in all zoning districts. He cannot find anything in Town Plan that would justify such drastic reductions in building size.

Jim Carroll, sees the Town Plan moving towards but not creating affordable housing. He noted that some people are against multi-use development. He thinks that the PC should try to get Land Use Regulations to be consistent with the Town Plan. He noted the PUD language currently punishes property owners with a reeducation of 25% of developable land. Since the Town's population is dropping, he does not believe the current plan is working very well.

Randy Clark noted that he would like to expand his business with new buildings and his lot has three frontages. He is concerned about building size as well as parking limitations.

David Villeneuve stated that his biggest concern is of that the PC wants to stop Dollar General by making changes in the zoning. He has no current plans of building on his property in the Commercial District. He noted that on that his property he shares a drive with the Dollar General and believes that that access will become a road and thinks that parking should be along that road, which would be in the front of a building. He wants the PC to work with land owners to figure out how their plans will fit when rezoning the Commercial District.

Jim Carroll, noted that the Trails Committee wants to promote interconnectivity and he does not see this in the planning in town. He would rather have commercial development in the Commercial District. There has been 150 million in sales, jobs and a ton in property taxes to get that development in there. He doesn't believe that senior housing should be limited 8,000 sq. ft. He thinks people should work together to create affordable housing using wellness and interconnectivity. For example, we want a safe way to get from Route 15 to Joe's Snack Bar and wants to help people get to the Jericho Café without walking since they don't have enough parking.

Ellie Martin wanted to understand if the zoning changes proposed are intermediary. Susan noted that changes to zoning is an iterative process, so changes this round that are proposed are specifically to address things brought to attention recently, such as making sure that the Land Use Regulations and Town Plan are consistent. Changes to Zoning are incremental.

Martin noted that landowners have all done a good job developing their property and would have done better if the Town hadn't required so many regulations. Going into environmental court is not fun, but will go if they have to pay taxes and use their land properly. She thinks that Dollar General is pretty special and stated that she knows that the PC is trying to prevent more Dollar Generals. She is not in favor of many of the questions asked in the questionnaire.

Susan explained to Ms. Martin that changes right now are about PUDs, accessory apartments, capitalizing some letters, updating maps and other language changes. Most people care about building sizes and the punishment about the PUD. There are no changes happening to the commercial district and the hearing is not about that. These are iterative changes and not interim zoning.

Samantha clarified that the current round of amendments to the Land Use Regulations that is being discussed and proposed currently, is a different process than the Commercial District

planning process. Those changes should be proposed for later in the year it is confusing since there are occurring at the same time.

David Villeneuve would like to clarify that some of the changes (i.e. 8,000 sq. ft.) affect every district in the town except in the Riverside area, where the new zoning is in effect. There is no real reason to cut the size from 60,000 to 8,000 sq. ft. He doesn't believe that those steps should be made at this time. Size doesn't matter, what a building looks like is what matters. Someday nice buildings today will look even nicer in the future. Capitalism will cause other buildings to want to look better than their competitor/neighbor.

Glenn Martin noted that the PC should be working on integrating the Champlain Water District within the community to create a unified water system.

On a motion by Phyl, seconded by Barbara, the PC moved to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 5-0. The PC noted that they would be discussing the comments made by the public at their next meeting and decided how to move forward with the draft proposed Regulations.

Minutes

On a motion by Samantha, seconded by Phyl, the Planning Commission (PC) approved the minutes of May 3, 2016 as written. Motion passed 5-0.

Commercial District Community Workshop Wrap Up Discussion

Katherine noted that David Raphael from LandWorks is available to come to the next PC meeting to provide a summary of the Workshop findings and discuss some ideas of where to go with those comments. The next public meeting, where a draft of the regulations would be submitted is scheduled for August. In the meantime, David will meet with the PC to work through the changes.

Samantha noted that it was important for the PC to have ample time to look over any comments and conclusions to provide their comments and thoughts. She also noted that would be true with the draft regulations. The PC decided to try to move the date for David to come to June 14th. This would be an additional meeting but would give the PC time to review his summary prior to having a meaningful discussion with him.

The PC discussed the matrix that Susan had created. They also discussed the more detailed explanation that Susan had created for folks to read ahead of taking the survey.

They also talked about the questionnaire and how it would be helpful to get more feedback. Katherine noted that she would create a fillable form and would get it back out on Facebook, the Town website and Front Porch Forum.

The talked about how a master plan could be made for the district or for parcels. This could be a part of the current process with LandWorks or it might come as a follow up. They also talked about an Official Map. The PC discussed the importance of having a meeting with the landowners in the Commercial District when making a master plan to align goals. Susan thought that starting with regulations would gain the public's trust as well as build framework for the master plan. They talked about how to develop more infrastructure in the district. Jason noted that usually it is a business that usually pays for the equipment and installation.

Other Business

Katherine noted that the Zoning Administrator's last day is May 20th. Interviews have been taking place and there are two current people in the running that already have experience.

Planning for Next Meeting

The PC will first discuss the comments received on the draft Land Use Regulations and make any necessary changes. The PC will then discuss the summary from David Raphael and talk through any issues they have that they would like to talk over with Raphael. Future meetings will involve discussing the Natural Resources Overlay and changes to energy siting in the Town Plan.

On a motion by Phyl, seconded by Susan, the PC adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Motion passed 5-0.