



Town of Jericho
Planning Commission

Jericho Planning Commission Minutes
Regular Meeting
August 16th, 2016
Approved September 6, 2016

Present: Jason Cheney, Samantha Dunn, Phyl Newbeck, Susan Bresee, Katie Forleo
Absent: Conor Lahiff
Public: Stuart Alexander, Livy Strong, Peter Booth, Ellie Martin, Glenn Martin
Guests: Katherine Sonnick (Planner), Amelia Moriarty (Recording Secretary), David Raphael (Land Works)

Call to Order

Jason called meeting to order at 7:01

Public Comment

Stuart Alexander said that if he raised his hand it was because he couldn't hear, as he only had one hearing aid in at the time.

Approval of July 19, 2016 Minutes

Phyl made the motion to pass the minutes July 19th minutes, seconded by Samantha. Passed 5-0. Phyl asked for an edit in the page 1 language, removing "interrupted" from Jason's interaction with the public.

Discussion with Land Works – Draft Commercial District Regulations

Jason introduced David Raphael from Land Works.

David introduced the Commercial District Development Standards Report and how it was the background research to back up the new ordinance and what it contains. He went over the table of contents, appendix, district map, photographs documenting existing conditions and other elements of the report. He explained the importance of including photographs of specific views within the district and how they would impact the standards and regulations in the ordinance. He noted a key piece was the conceptual master plan on page 11 which identified changes to footprints, density and future potential build-out areas. He noted that new roadways are included.

He explained that there could be three ways to use the master plan. The first way would be as a means of looking at how the district is going to develop and what parameters need to be worked

around. The second way would be to have it made a part of the Town Plan, adopted as appendix and a planning element to guide district development. The third way would be as a district development guide as a reference when new projects are being discussed, using it while making new rules and formats for an ordinance. Also, once refined to use it as a tool to both guide and inform applicants in the development of their properties in their district.

No residential use is proposed for the Commercial district. Conservation could be dealt with in a few different ways. To contribute to the districts open space, the owner of the lot could be given incentive by the set aside of key lands, or to conserve specific key features. David offered two different ways to convey district standards to the public. He finished by saying that one cannot predict the different uses that would be needed which was why it was suggested to have very general uses so it would be open to proposals that may not be able to be anticipated but at the same time give strict standards to protect character.

Samantha asked for clarification on prohibited uses. David answered that there would be a general definitions for what would be prohibited. Jason said the thinking is that the character of the buildings would naturally guide what uses would be allowed. David said that the challenge would be to have some criteria not to be overly onerous but clear and understandable when reviewing proposals.

David moved on to the issue of deciding on the allowed footprint of buildings. He noted that there was no magic number. His recommendation was for a maximum of 25,000 square feet. He also spoke of how there would be a different footprint sizes for each size of North Main Street. Samantha asked for his professional opinion on having different footprint sizes for each side of the street. David said it would probably be important for the thinking that lead to that decision is made clear to the public so that they could understand.

David talked of how maintaining a view corridor with a minimum setback could compromise that view. Peter Booth pointed out a language error about parking and David agreed that the change should be made. Jason talked about how he thought that parking could be considered differently depending on where the business is, what the business is and how it would affect the view corridor. David replied that parking on the side, lining up with the building, may work better as it would still show whether or not the business was open. Katie voiced that she liked the idea of shared parking. David agreed that was a good way to go. David finished that he would not get into the details of building mass and size right now, but that would be a part of the draft regulations. David said that a key thing to decide would be where to write the 'shalls' (requirement) and 'shoulds' (recommendations).

The next topic was site design. David started saying he was eager to see the feedback for this section. David said the issue with lot density boiled down to infrastructure and how it was handled and that he problem would be very small if there was access to infrastructure such as septic disposal.

Peter Booth wanted to know the next step in the process. Phyl said it would be the public meeting on September 20th with David Rafael.

David continued on about site design, going over such topics as native versus naturalized materials (how we could not recommend certain plant materials), the level of specification for landscape requirements and the types of furnishings for districts. With site lighting, David had included requirements such as lights being shielded and 'cut-off' style to avoid light spill and trespass. He went over how no new curb cuts would be allowed on Route 15 and other such restrictions in curbing and pedestrian walkways. He quickly spoke of signs saying how he recommended some new or adapted guidelines for them. Also quickly addressed scenic and rural quality as well as community spaces saying that this could be very simple, for example encouraging picnic tables and such so that employees would want to go have lunch outside.

Jason introduced Livy Strong, from the Jericho/Underhill Land Trust, who was invited to talk about conservation. She talked about how the first thing the Land Trust does would be to work with the landowner. She said that the parcels that are being talked about are small, much smaller than the Land Trust is use to working with. She talked about conservation easements, which protect the conservation values, as well as other ways of protecting lands, one of which being deed restrictions. She stressed that the bottom line was that it all started with the willingness of the land owner. Livy then answered David's question about the role of the Land Trust in monitoring and stewardship in preservation of land given to the Land Trust. She said that the local Land trust did not hold easements since there was not the financial or people resources. She said that the Land Trust was not stand alone, it did fundraising and grant writing but had to collaborate with larger Land Trusts. She said that conservation was a broad term and there was lots of different ways to do it.

Ellie Martin asked about where the money was coming from for conservation and Livy answered that there was no money sitting there to jump in and make a purchase, that it would take a significant amount of time and work to get it. She restated that the Land Trust had to fundraise and grant write for money and it had actually gotten harder to find the funding.

The PC then began asking questions. Susan started with saying that she was very encouraged and optimistic that they were making progress. She then went on to comment that there was a lot of references to 'character of the district' and that the PC should probably do more to define what it that character, saying that the definition should be about what the ideal character was and not necessarily the current state of the district. Susan also agreed that a business' use should not have to be included as long as it meets the standards of a specific zone. She said she would be in favor of a more conditional review. Jason noted that the PC's goal should be to have more clear conditions so that business and the general public could better understand them. David responded and the board continued to discuss permitted versus conditional use. Susan voiced her concern with restaurants and retail belonging in the in the village center as well as other concerns. Jason argued how restaurants could possibly fit in a village center without being a traffic hazard. Susan commented about parking and how she could be more flexible to have parking minimums to allow front parking. She asked if David could imagine on street parking on North Main Street. Susan also wanted to prevent against constraints being created by applicants. David agreed. Susan asked if there was language about coverage of trees, using the example of how some buildings has small shrubs in front of a huge wall and not covering any space since they have not yet grown larger and would not for many years. Public roads and private roads were also

discussed. Jason asked if Katie had any other comments. She said she liked the idea of one stop shopping so that developers didn't have to guess what section to go to. She said she agreed with Susan to have parking allowed in the front with restrictions. She also said she liked the idea of required community space for some businesses. Jason then asked for other comments. Phyl thought there should be site consideration for passive solar and she did not want any drive-throughs.

Other Business

None

Wrap up and planning for Next Meeting

- Prepare for the Community Workshop

Jason informed the public that they would have their own time to comment but first the PC needed to forward their comments so that when David met with the landowners he would have all of the edits from the PC. Ellie voiced that she did not like that idea. David said it would be fair to meet with the landowners before the community workshop. Jason agreed. Samantha voiced that an important issue should be to talk about definitions at the community meeting. Katherine asked if the board wanted to see a first pass of the regulations from the community workshop or otherwise. Jason said that from a work-flow stand point what would be the capability of David's office. David replied that this should be settled on first and decide on the key topics that should be brought to the public so that the key items were gone over to avoid 'getting down in the weeds'.

Samantha made the motion to adjourn seconded by Katie, passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:00.