



PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday July 27, 2017
Town Hall Meeting Room
6:30 p.m.

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Introduction of Board Members

David Andreesen; Paul Boisvert; David Dow; Niles Schore; Nichole Fecteau;

Regular Board Member(s) Absent:

Alternate Members Present:

Sean Winston

Alternate Member Absent:

Michael LaRue

Staff Members Present:

Kathy Connor Town Planner

Public Comment

Approval of Minutes

1. July 20, 2017

Motion: Paul Boisvert

Second: David Dow

VOTED – 3-0 in favor

Motion Passed

In favor: David Andreesen; David Dow; Paul Boisvert

Opposed: None

Abstain: Niles Schore; Nichole Fecteau

New Business

2. Berwick's Form-Based Code – Design Standards in the Village Overlay District.

Kathy Connor suggested keeping the Public Hearing open until August 3rd so Berwick residents could have more time to review the Form-Based Code document.

Mike Lassel introduced the Form-Based Code.

Mr. Lassel stated that the street trees should be looked at carefully. As well as places to sit and public art. Mr. Lassel stated these are components that all communities should have.

The Form-Based Code follows a lot of the existing ordinance. Mr. Lassel stated that this could be the first step in updating the Land Use Ordinance.

Kathy Connor stated that first floor commercial and restaurants with fewer than 40 seats have no on street parking requirements.

Mike Lassel clarified that the document is not a true Form-Based Code, however it is a Performance based code with Form-Based Code aspects.

Old Business

Public Hearing

3. Berwick's Form-Based Code – Design Standards in the Village Overlay District.

James Bellissimo of Envision Berwick shared the concern for the balance of commercial and residential, where there should be enough residential to provide for vibrancy downtown, but not so much residential that it limits the potential for commercial.

Niles Schore brought up note 5 in Section 6.4 about the 4:1 ratio of residential to commercial. Kathy Connor stated there are reasons to exclude that 4:1 requirement, to be covered later in the meeting.

Serena Galleshaw of 21 First Street asked if the Code will be used for Conditional Use. Ms. Galleshaw asked what the Village Overlay Application would look like. Kathy Connor stated that it would look like the existing Conditional Use Application.

Paul Boisvert and Niles Schore clarified that the Conditional Use Table will still be in effect for the Village Overlay.

Niles Schore requested to add the title of Section 9.8 in Section 6.4 so it is easier to understand and the Section referenced is known.

Mike Lassel and Kathy Connor stated that the towns and cities that do have a true Form-Based Code also have a full time Planner, assistance Town Planner, Town Engineer, Public Works director etc. Berwick is currently a small town, however as time goes on

Berwick could grow, and the Town could have the resources to implement a true, full, form-based code.

Serena Galleshaw pointed out that the Sustainability section is mostly a recommendation and not a requirement. Nichole Fecteau pointed to the Low Impact Design requirement that was recently adopted by the Town, to encourage developers to think about Low Impact Design.

Niles Schore said that it is better to start out as a recommendation to see if something will work and if it does, then later it can become a requirement.

Serena Galleshaw suggested throwing some theoretical projects at the Form-Based Code/Design Standards to see how the Design Standards hold up.

Sean Winston asked if the pictures that were included in the earlier documents could be included as an appendix. Niles Schore mentioned that it would be nice if instead of an official appendix that would require a vote to add a picture, there was a guide or handbook.

Amy Bregy of 25 Goodwin Street said that this was the first-time hearing about the Form-Based Code.

Motion: Dave Andreesen motioned to keep the Public Hearing open until August 3rd

Second: Niles Schore

VOTED – 5-0 in favor

Motion Passed

In favor: David Andreesen; David Dow; Niles Schore; Nichole Fecteau; Paul Boisvert

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Niles Schore asked Kathy Connor about section 5 regarding the 4:1 ratio. Ms. Connor stated that the ordinance could be too restrictive.

James Bellissimo pointed out that the existing buildings will be 100% commercial, and the new construction in phase 1 could be 100% residential, which would be restricted by the current ordinance.

Kyle Flanagan asked if the Board could use Conditional Use to limit residential over time. Paul Boisvert said he does not think the Board can. Niles Schore said that later on the ordinance can be changed to bring back the ratio requirement, it is just at this point the ratio would not work.

Niles Schore asked about the parking requirement and asked for clarification on what it means if the parking is not possible or achievable. Mr. Schore asked to specify size of lot and shape of lot as reasons for the parking not being able to go behind a building.

Niles Schore requested that the applicant write the reason the parking cannot go behind the building and that the Planning Board explain why they would grant or not grant the waiver on the parking requirement.

Information Items

4. Special Town Meeting on the option to purchase 71 Sullivan Street August 8th.

Public Comment

Adjournment

Motion: Sean Winston

Second: Niles Schore

VOTED – 5-0 in favor

Motion Passed

In favor: David Andreesen; David Dow; Niles Schore; Nichole Fecteau; Paul Boisvert

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

Minutes prepared by Planning Technician, James Bellissimo, for consideration at the Berwick Planning Board's August 3, 2017 meeting.

Signed as Approved by the Board:

Signature

Date