



**Town of Halfmoon**  
**2014 Zoning Review Committee**  
**Halfmoon Town Hall**  
**7:00 P.M.**  
**July 17, 2014**

Summary Meeting Notes

Attendance: Committee Members (voting): Brenda LaMere, Eli Taub, Wayne Allen;  
Committee Members (non-voting): Jim Bold, Jeff Burdyl; Town Board/Staff: Paul Hotaling,  
Rich Harris.

R.Harris opened the meeting by requesting approval of the 5/15/2014 and 6/19/2014 summary meeting notes. Approved – unanimous.

R.Harris shared an email from F.Bahr regarding his findings related to the June meeting assignment to review lot sizes in the northern section of Town (F.Bahr could not attend tonight's meeting). His email stated:

- The northern part of Halfmoon should retain large-size lots (north of Tabor, east of Cary, and north of Farm To Market). I believe this is consistent with the comprehensive plan. I suggest this, as I think it helps retain the character that many admire about the area. Leave the more dense (subdivision) areas to closer to where the stores currently are. An example where I think should have stayed with larger-size lots ... just East of Staniak.
- Maybe this is not related to zoning, but one Belmonte neighborhood that I drove through had sidewalks and street lights. I think more neighborhoods should have both. Maybe solar powered lights.
- Finally, I just started reading a book that I think others should consider as well. Very relevant and interesting. It's called "The Geography of Nowhere, The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape", by James Howard Kunstler (lives in Saratoga).

W.Allen discussed the issue of sidewalks and lighting, and the need for a "Lighting Department" or district to help ensure they are maintained. Members discussed the issue of ownership, maintenance, formation of "districts" to address costs, etc. Members cautioned that the issue of ownership and maintenance should be carefully reviewed and clearly established if they are going to be approved or encouraged by the Town.

W.Allen's findings on the June assignment include a recommendation that 5 acre minimum zoning be considered north of Johnson Road, generally in the northern border-area of Town, where currently zoned industrial; as move south towards Rt. 146, consideration should be given to transitioning from 5 to 3 to 1 acre minimum lot sizes; keep Rt. 9 zoned commercial and industrial in the northern end of Town up to the railroad and Town line.

ZRC commented on W.Allen's recommendations; significant discussion on Residential vs. M-1 Industrial for the northern section of Town; R.Harris discussed that the Planning Dept. often receives inquiries regarding the potential use of these LI-C and M-1 zoned lands for residential purposes when up for sale.

J.Bold and R.Harris discussed the Northern Halfmoon GEIS and fees required for development in this section of Town due to the 2003 study; discussed listing of projects required to be built or funded from the GEIS mitigation fees for development in this area; Members were in general agreement that GEIS needs to be updated due to time, development and cost changes.

J.Bold discussed that the Town should consider no residential PDDs in the northern section because the infrastructure cannot handle dense residential developments; E.Taub agreed with this recommendation. General agreement on the need for lower density residential development in this section of Town, including limiting or prohibiting residential PDDs.

ZRC discussed the idea of minimum and maximum square footage limits for residential structures/homes; Members discussed concerns regarding such limits and potential impacts on private property rights of homeowners.

B.LaMere reviewed the assignment and recommends the following:

- duplex (two family homes) should be required to have a larger lot than single family homes;
- There should be a 1 acre minimum for all single family homes;
- Rear lot line setbacks should be increased to 50 ft. for residential homes
- Side lot line setbacks should be increased to 20 ft. on both sides of a residential home
- Consideration should be given to relax or lessen restrictions on long time residents who have and will live in Town forever.

J.Bold stated that there remains significant land in town without public water and sewer, and one acre minimum may not be large enough if a group of non-serviced lots are proposed near or adjacent to one another.

J.Bold discussed the Church Hill Road area and sewer district formation; residents wanted a sewer district, and then the Town formed a district that those residents pay towards; Town sponsored a bond that the residents in the district pay back; County Sewer District approved the district/extension.

Members discussed costliness of extending water and sewer and that it is largely driven by developers for specific developments, which they construct at their own cost; the Town seeks through PDD public benefits to extend such services to existing residents when requested or necessary. ZRC discussed that in cases where residents constructed new wells, there may not be support to extend a water district due to cost and lack of need.

ZRC discussed concerns related to stormwater and development, including recent rains and flooding in Woodin Road area neighborhoods; R.Harris cited stormwater as significant issue dealt with by Boards and requirements of developers to maintain stormwater on-site and/or run-off from property cannot exceed pre-development status; ZRC discussed/recommended need for

higher standards than the current state standards and requirements due to recent flooding events, increase in frequency in major rain events and development impacts.

J.Bold believes drainage and road system in northern Halfmoon not designed to handle dense development and no long-term plan in place to adequately improve the road and drainage network; R.Harris provided brief history and summary of the Northern Halfmoon GEIS completed in 2003 and general agreement of ZRC that it needs to be updated; J.Bold expressed concern that updating it not likely to result in large enough mitigation fees to pay for everything needed.

J.Bold recommends relative to Northern Halfmoon area:

- Revisit and update Northern Halfmoon GEIS
- Prohibit residential PDDs if density is greater than the underlying zoning
- Increase side yard setbacks per recommendation of B.LaMere
- Increase minimum lot sizes

W.Allen raised issue of farms and interest in saving them; J.Bold responded that special tax district is sole existing incentive, but believes currently only four farms qualify under NYS tax credit program; Discussion on difficulty of requiring long-standing farms to remain active farms; ZRC discussed types of incentives or programs, including outright purchasing to preserve as open space, but tough to require it to continue to be farmed, purchasing development rights to keep it farming, density bonus/incentives for farmers, etc.

ZRC discussed logistics of presenting recommendations to Town Board; may want member(s) to present at public meeting and/or forum.

ZRC discussed need to update triage chart for next meeting for discussion.

W.Allen and E.Taub agreed to look further together into what acreage zoning should be recommended for different areas or parcels of Northern Halfmoon.

E.Taub requested a vote of the ZRC at the next meeting to determine what items are ready to be forwarded to the Town Board (e.g. PDD amendments) and what needs further discussion/resolution by the ZRC.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM. The next meeting will be Thursday, August 21, 2014 at 7:00 PM.