



Town of Halfmoon
2014 Zoning Review Committee
Halfmoon Town Hall
7:00 P.M.
June 19, 2014

Summary Meeting Notes

Attendance: Committee Members (voting): Brenda LaMere, Fred Bahr, Eli Taub, Wayne Allen; Committee Members (non-voting): Jim Bold, Jeff Burdyl, Jason Dell; Town Board/Staff: Kevin Tollisen, Paul Hotaling, Rich Harris, Paul Marlow, Mike Bianchino.

Supervisor Kevin Tollisen began the meeting by expressing his gratitude to the committee for all the work they have put in over the last year. He requested the Committee begin to establish concrete concepts and suggestions to be submitted to the Town Board and CHA for review within the next few months. He explained that the Town is looking to move forward and begin the review process on the Committee's suggested items, with public workshops expected to help flush out the consensus items.

Jeff Burdyl suggested Committee establish a tentative date to submit suggestions to the Town Board and CHA for review. Eli Taub suggested at the next meeting we revisit Fred Bahr's triage chart and try to go through and wrap up as many items as possible. Wayne Allen commented that when we suggest a new density, we target specific places with specific densities; tailoring each specific area of town with appropriate maximum densities that will incorporate various factors. This will give the town some sort of tools to deal with developers; he also made comments that we need to focus on buffers, specifically buffers near commercial areas of town. Rich Harris discussed the "buffering" consensus reached at prior meetings and that the triage chart will need to be updated to reflect this.

Kevin Tollisen discussed PDD's and specifically the public benefits associated with PDD's, and the Town's effort to "tighten" them up and require specific deadlines and milestones for their completion. He explained the importance of the public benefits to both the Town Board, and the residents of the Town; and told the Committee that we now require all public benefits to be disclosed to the Town from the start on their initial PDD application. He also explained that the Town is working to establish concrete time frames as far as the completion of the proposed public benefit, and prefers the Town engineers and planners determine the appropriate timing for their completion. Rich Harris explained as an example, the Planning Board required that the public benefits as part of the Plant Road PDD needed to be complete prior to the issuance of the 51st C.O., which is roughly one-third buildout of the project. This sort of timeline would be early enough on in a project where it isn't likely the developer would abandon the project before the benefit was completed.

Jim Bold made comments that when the PDD was originally drafted as a concept, the "public benefit" was intended not be something in addition to the project, but rather the project itself

should serve as a benefit to the Town and the residents. The Committee discussed the importance of public benefits to the Town, as it helps provide things to residents that the Town may not be able to do on its own (e.g. sewer or water extensions to existing residents, land preservation, redevelopment of infrastructure, etc.) Brenda LaMere expressed that there should be some specific guidelines on public benefits; including: (1) all public benefits shall be disclosed by the developer from the initial submission of the PDD application, which she agrees is a good change by the Town; (2) establish strict deadlines as to when each benefit is to be completed for every PDD; and (3) the Town Board adopt language in the Town Code legislation that refers to the completion of public benefit within or by a certain time, rather than leaving timelines to each individual PDD. The committee discussed the fact that public benefits proposed by developers should be completely independent of the proposed project, and should not be required in any way to make the project work; each benefit should truly be a benefit above and beyond the project to the town and the towns residents.

Kevin Tollisen referenced a note from the May meeting minutes with regards to building heights, and asked for clarification as to what the maximum height suggestion pertained to, including the applicability to residential vs. commercial (e.g. hotel). The Committee discussed and clarified that the intent of the May discussion was to limit the height of residential homes, and felt the height of a commercial building would be a case-by-case scenario. Brenda LaMere discussed the FOIL of maps that have copyrights on them; she expressed her uneasiness that the public cannot obtain a copy of certain maps, per a determination by the Dep. Town Attorney last year regarding Princeton Heights. Committee discussed that a disclosure form to allow the Town to copy and release all maps submitted, whether they are copyrighted or not, should be considered. Kevin Tollisen indicated he will pursue this with the Town Attorney for a legal opinion.

Kevin Tollisen also discussed the letter he received regarding a proposed asphalt plant in the Rolling Hills PDD development. No application has been received to-date, but a number of residents have submitted letters and emails opposing the project, should one be formally proposed. Thus far, the Town is keeping a file on all comments received, should an application to amend the PDD be filed with the Town.

The Committee discussed lot sizes and types of homes that are built around the town. Brenda LaMere expressed her concerns that lot setbacks are not appropriate, and specifically rear yard setbacks. She explained that with the 30-ft setbacks for rear yards, homes are encroaching on one another and not allowing for any privacy, and she suggested at a minimum, rear yard setbacks be a 50-ft minimum. The Committee discussed the topic and determined that some areas of town may need larger lot sizes and setbacks, while other parts of town would be best suited with smaller lot sizes. Wayne Allen and Jim Bold expressed that there was a need for a wide range of homes in the area, some on larger lots that would cost more and some on smaller lots that would be more affordable for young couples or retirees. The Committee discussed analyzing the Town to identify areas that would be best suited for certain lot sizes larger and smaller than currently zoned.

The Committee agreed to review an area of Town that represents an existing diversity in lot sizes and housing types. The Committee agreed to look at the Vosburgh Road and Farm To Market area, from 146 to Rt. 9. Jason Dell to provide copies of aerial images and Town staff will let the Committee know when they are available. Committee members agreed to then visit this area in advance of the July meeting and be prepared to discuss their findings.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. The next meeting will be Thursday, July 17, 2014 at 7:00 PM.