

Planning Commission Minutes
3-6-19

Called to Order: 7:05pm

Present: Brian Tellstone, Alison Anand, Virginia Clarke, Lauck Parke, Scott Nickerson, Joy Reap, Jessica Draper, Brendan O'Reilly, Colin Moffat, Lars Whitman, Gabe Firman, Don Morin, Christy Witters, Josh Arneson

Absent: Mark Fausel

Public Comment: Gabe Firman spoke about the town plan supporting the village growth, and that there is existing support in the community for change. He expressed concern for timing and didn't think that the commission should worry about public pushback regarding things that were voted in favor of in the town plan like density.

Representation from Buttermilk, LLC. gave similar comments to Gabe's regarding increased density for their development. Colin presented the 4 requested changes to their zoning being to remove the "developable acreage" rule that does not allow for "undevelopable" land to count toward density, changing units to be bedroom based, removal of the commercial to residential ratio, and increasing to 30 units per acre. They discussed that they believed the first floor commercial ratio worked on the main roads, but didn't work in the rear buildings. They said changing the ratio to 25:75 would work better, but no ratio would be best.

The conversation turned to walkability and diversity. There was disagreement over whether existing service brings population or population drives the need for service in terms of commercial attractions.

The commission and attendees then discussed the upper bridge street density that currently exists and the possibility for making the upper block all the same density and back to conforming.

After discussing that there is an excess of commercial space in Chittenden County the question was asked about what commercial enterprises still need brick-and-mortar spaces. There seemed to be consensus that food and drink, entertainment, and crafting/manufacturing were the businesses that still were successful in the sense of needing buildings.

Strong concern for traffic was expressed by both commissioners and attendees. There was disagreement about whether the traffic was manageable.

The commission agreed that they should try to make the zoning more flexible for more than just Jolina Court, and try to expand the changes to other portions of the village. They decided that traffic and parking would be major considerations moving forward.

Joy moved to adjourn. Seconded by Scott. All were in favor, adjourned 9:10pm