

Planning Commission Minutes 5-15-19

Called to Order: 7:01pm

Present: Mark Fausel, Brian Tellstone, Joy Reap, Lauck Parke, Scott Nickerson, Jessica Draper, Alison Anand, Cathleen Gent, Brendan O'Reilly, Colin Moffat, Virginia Clarke

Public Comment: NA

Jessica said that we are trying to plan a joint meeting with DRB in June TBD, and Capital Plan update will be reviewed by the planning commission in late June or early July

Appointments: Mark gave an overview of renewal of positions on the commission. He said the applicants were Chris Granda, Alison Anand, Virginia Clarke, and Chris Cole. Joy said it would be nice to have continuity of people who have been working on this. Scott said he found Virginia has been very helpful in subcommittees. Mark agreed and said that Alison was as well in the town plan subcommittee, going above and beyond in time and effort. Alison said thank you for the sentiments, and she acknowledges that the other people are qualified to contribute. It's a question of whether the selectboard wants changed on the commission. Mark said at last selectboard meeting, he mentioned how much he would appreciate continuity without knowing who the other applicants were yet and that will be going to the next meeting with the same intent if that is the will of the board. Lauck said he would like to second Joy's observation about the continuity, and his bias would be to keep the same people. Jess was asked to look up all of the member terms, Mark discussed the past issues with membership. Alison suggested the possibility of making the commission larger. Mark said he feels this commission as it is now very representative of the community. Mark moved to recommend Alison and Virginia remain on the planning commission. Seconded by Brian Tellstone. Mark, Brian, Lauck, Joy, and Scott were in favor. Alison abstained. So moved.

Lauck stated that he was highly offended by Chris Granda's letter to the selectboard. Lauck read a clause from Chris's letter about last summer's amendment to the town plan.

Lauck said he respects Chris, but thinks this vitriol should probably not have made it into this letter. He said he doesn't feel like the commission was duped into making the change. Lauck said he thinks the commission is owed an apology. He said he felt this kind of attitude would not aid the process. He said he felt the letter was inflammatory. Alison said she agrees it was not an action taken lightly. Mark said he took a similar reading of the letter, and it wasn't something expected from Chris. Alison said it's also a done deal and turned out in his favor, and doesn't see the need for the chastisement. Mark said he is ready to move on, and it didn't affect his preference for Alison and Virginia staying on. Alison said she would be delighted to continue. Alison said we are blessed with a talented town planner.

Feedback from Survey and Meeting: Jess said she had created a summary of the survey. She said that she saw about 60% positive and 30% negative or iffy. Alison asked if traffic and parking came up, Scott said that it was a pretty big part of discussion. Joy said she wanted to make it clear that her business had been working with Buttermilk for materials. She said traffic is going to be an issue no matter where it goes. She said she feels like the cars will be coming from everywhere either way. Mark said he thought it would impact morning traffic more because school and rush hour overlap. Lauck said he thinks traffic is a sign of healthy economic activity. He also said that even if we say no development, the surrounding towns will contribute to the traffic. Lauck also said he thinks we need long term planning and management for the traffic, and that Mr. Cole's letter had excited him in that regard. Brendan said he agrees there's only so much control over where the traffic is coming from. Jessica gave information about her own experiences at the intersection. Lauck reminded everyone about when the bridge was closed and prior to the park and ride. He said that people figured it out then and they can continue to figure it out. Lauck said we should start pushing public transportation, because this development will not happen overnight and people will adjust over time. Joy said it would be interesting to consider incentivizing the school bus. Alison said that the school board has an interest in working with us. Mark said he thought it was an interesting idea to incentivize the condo option because it promotes ownership and affordability oppose to a single family home. Alison asked Brendan if they had considered the condo option. He said they haven't reached that point, but they designed it to be a possibility.

Virginia gave an update about the subcommittee. She said it seemed like last week the hesitation was more about the village than Jolina. Gabe asked if there was any timeline. Virginia said no timeline was discussed. Gabe asked if any other dissention had come up. Scott said no, it was based on the meeting feedback. Virginia said it was purely a possible idea to move forward with one, and it's definitely on the table for the full commission.

Joy asked how the timeline would be affected by delaying a vote tonight. Jessica explained how the timeline would be changed. Mark asked when the selectboard would need to decide, Jessica and Cathleen said it's early/mid September. Mark said he would like to have the density bonus split off on its own track as well so the overlay doesn't get adopted and underlying doesn't. He would like the commission to consider that. Virginia said that it's also possible to put the bonuses into the base regulations. Virginia said if we only move forward with one we should build them into the base regulation. Lauck said his personal bias is to go ahead with two zones, and that instead of 3, worst case scenario you have only pieces and parts adopted. He said he thinks we have worked through the two zones, and thought Joy's previous argument to do both was compelling. Lauck said that two different attendees from last week's meeting had called him at home and he had to go through the density tables with them. He said it helped clarify for him that we should go ahead side by side with differing built in density bonuses. Lauck also said he liked the idea of the half size units helping drive the affordability and the suggestions in Buttermilk's letter about senior options. Alison asked the subcommittee why they really thought why the one at a time was a good idea. Scott said he felt that Jolina has been discussed over a long period of time, and that maybe the village needed acclimation. Virginia said it would also

give time to consider the borders. Alison said she was concerned about things being held up too much for the upper block, and we have talked about the merits of doing more than Jolina. Virginia asked Alison if she felt comfortable moving forward tonight on the upper block. She said she didn't but also wasn't against it either. Gabe said he understood the points being made, and as the person who came six months ago about the need for real change specific to a decrepit property. He said the concern sounds like it's more public concern about what's included, but you could draw it back down. He said it was a handful of concerns that can be addressed, but it's been a long time since real change has occurred. Gabe said he thinks the absence of people is too discounted and this isn't offensive development. Brian said he thinks we ought to get any additional thoughts on the bonus and possibly massaging those terms. He said it sounds like Buttermilk supports it but does not necessarily appreciate the metrics. Mark said he doesn't want to table the concept of slowing the upper block, but we should discuss the density bonus metrics which could affect our decisions tonight.

Alison asked Cathleen if she had any wisdom or thoughts about density bonus. Cathleen said she felt the affordability density bonus at 80% AMI was kind of high, and maybe 60% would be better. She asked why the unit size was restricted, and Jessica explained that it was for volume of people and inherent affordability. Brian said she can conceive of that being market driven but not stipulating it. Cathleen said that condominiumizing is difficult and our current process is clunky. Gabe asked what the philosophy was behind ownership. Mark said it started during the accessory dwelling regulation adoption, and that there is a sentiment from community members that ownership creates more responsibility of occupant. Jessica clarified that some of it is also concern about public participation of non-tax payers. Brendan reminded the commission to consider the approaching Section 8 level with affordability. Virginia said there are two points of view that 80% is too high and 80% is too low. She clarified that AMI does increase and decrease as it is the Area Median Income. She also said that she had considered the possibility of making tiers of bonuses for levels of affordability. Mark said he would rather not drill down into the weeds when it's not base zoning. Virginia said that there are developers where they would need to use these to make their numbers so the specs do matter. Brendan said that the affordability bonus is probably the most difficult and will be the last to get exhausted. Jessica said it also matters what they get for what they give, and the trade off is just as important as the level of criteria.

Lauck discussed the options of partnering with Housing organizations. Mark said that the half unit possibility would give them up to 90 units. Brendan said you're already there, because you could build 45, 3-5 bedroom units, which could be 130-150 bedrooms. Virginia asked if the market is driving small units why would we need to change the unit. Brendan said there's a good reason to define the unit so it won't become that. Discussion ensued about unit sizes and unit amounts. Gabe said that assigning a value to a unit is important but if that's not on the table then we should move on because this could complicate the process. Jessica clarified the 75 car trip concern. Lauck asked Joy what her perspective is as a professional developer. She said that she was more concerned with the time to adoption of the regulations. She said the bedrooms being defined somehow would be great but don't want delay because of it. Cathleen

pointed out that dormitory housing isn't an allowed use in the draft, and that there would definitely be other things it would affect if you changed unit definition.

Discussion ensued about where to move forward. Mark said he is in favor of moving forward with both. Jessica said she could make the math work however, but you need to decide what your max cap is on either district. Discussion continued about types of units and the bonus feasibility. Discussion then turned to the parking requirements and what half units would turn the overall number of apartments into. Joy asked if it was possible to discuss going by square footage instead of units. Alison said she didn't think it was a bad idea. Joy said it could look like a max square footage of res or commercial space per acre instead of units.

Mark asked the group if they would be willing to have another meeting in May. Several members agreed to having another meeting. Lauck asked Mark what the subcommittee's charge is versus the whole commission. Mark said that defining units and fine tuning density bonuses is what we need a proposal for by next Wednesday.

Brian moved to adjourn, Scott seconded. All were in favor, adjourned 9:08pm.