

From: Carrie Vibert June 14, 2012 1:07:31 PM
Subject: Planning Commission Minutes 05/22/2012 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_PlanMin
Cc:

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MAY 22, 2012
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Michael R. Paine, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Ferg Jansen, Richard Cortes, Kevin Prell, Bob Kulakowski, William Rice, Tina E. Hallenbeck, and Mark Drake. Also in attendance were Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, and other interested parties.

II. SEATING OF ALTERNATES AS NECESSARY

Chairman Paine appointed Commissioner Kulakowski to serve for Commissioner Lungarini.

III. PUBLIC HEARING(s)

Regarding the Subdivision Regulations, the public hearing is closed and Mr. Peck is waiting to hear back from the Town Attorney and will get it out to members before the next meeting.

IV. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DECISION

A. Referral to Zoning Commission regarding draft IHZ Zoning Regulation

Mr. Peck said last night the Zoning Commission took up IHZ as part of the public hearing and 3 sites are left: Tariffville Mill, Plank Hill, and NU's 60 acre site in the south end. He said the process has been lengthy and last night people from the Plank Hill neighborhood were not enthusiastic about creating 6 housing units on 1.09 acres; Jim Gallagher headed the neighbors.

Mr. Peck stated the Tariffville site would have 30-40 live/work units and a 3-story building fits in well. He said the NU south end site is very large

with a significant number of units and the question is how many would be for this access. He provided copies of the Legislature's Study and final draft. He stated an MIT Study comparing mixed income residential units revealed no negative impact. He sent out a summary of how IHZ works to create zones in towns for this type of housing with a minimum 6 units per acre for single family detached; 10 units per acre for duplex/town houses; and multi-family 20 per acre. He said 80% of units would be market rate and 20% affordable and at \$101,431 median income for the area it provides about \$24,000/year or 30% to spend on housing; it is not Section 8 housing, but rather entry level.

Mr. Peck said a suggestion was made to do this type of housing with the Town developing its own regulation. He added whether IHZ is used or the Zoning Commission implements its own inclusionary housing regulation remains to be decided. He said with 6 units per acre, unit square footage could easily be 1400-1800 sq. ft., but it needs to meet criteria for affordability. He said in the most attractive villages, the house styles are all different and the Design Guidelines allow specifications for location, density, and design. Regarding Plank Hill, he said neighbors felt it would degrade the neighborhood and increase traffic and they already are impacted by activities at the neighboring ball field. He said the Zoning Commission is very sensitive to the neighbors' concerns.

Mr. Peck said there is a strong movement of people moving back to city centers with people preferring to be close to centers of activity. He added many towns have created zones that encourage sprawl with houses on 2-3 acres. He said 32% of the Town is already preserved as open space. He said 3 houses may be appropriate for Plank Hill on slightly larger lots with accessory in-law apartments, similar to what is already on Plank Hill; it does not have to be an IHZ which requires 6 houses, but could be a special Zoning regulation.

Chairman Paine suggested looking at the bigger picture for this type of unit. Mr. Peck requested the Commissioners review the IHZ material and provide him with questions. He asked the Commissioners to also look at the POCD to see how it fits into the proposal. He said other recommendations can be made. He stated the Zoning Commission felt some things need to be made clearer in the draft. He said any future requested zone changes to an IHZ area would go through the public hearing process. The Commissioners stated their belief the denser housing developments, like IHZ, were intended for Town Center in the POCD, near public transit. Commissioner Drake said these zones should be kept in certain locations and not anywhere in Town where developers could benefit. Mr. Peck clarified that with IHZ, the Town gets to decide where they would be located including the specific parcel. In the initial study, Mr. Peck said each site was analyzed for proximity to public transit, public water, sewer, and other services;

appropriate sites could be pre-determined. He said where IHZ is used it must increase the number of units developed by at least 25% with innovative siting and good use of land as part of the process.

Mr. Peck clarified only these 3 subzones are being considered and subsequent considerations would be site-by-site; if the Commission does not approve these 3 sites, reasons would be provided, so IHZ standards need to be clear about that specific site. Chairman Paine clarified anyone can apply for this designation and go through the normal hearing process to seek a zone change which Mr. Peck said has a high bar and is not as administrative as a regular subdivision. Mr. Peck promised the State this Commission would take a good look at the proposal even though the Town may go in a different direction. He requested the Commissioners provide him with any questions/comments. He said the Zoning Commission will not make a decision for at least 2 weeks. He added the Town would receive \$5,000 for each permit approved for the zone, e.g. \$30,000 for 6 units for Plank Hill would probably fund an Administrator of Housing. He said they provide this service already for current units and to move from the current 3-4% to the required 10%, 800 units are needed. Chairman Paine stated the next Commission meeting is 6/12/12 and asked the Commissioners to get their questions/comments to Hiram the week prior.

B. Revisions to Draft Subdivision Regulations (if comments available from Town Atty)

Chairman Paine stated the Town Attorney has not yet provided his comments.

V. STAFF REPORT(s) ON ABOVE ITEMS

VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Mr. Peck said the Design Review Board has a meeting scheduled on 6/4/12 with the Zoning Commission regarding Charter Revision. DRB subcommittee members will attend, as will First Selectman Glassman; he has not heard back re Zoning attendees yet.

Mr. Peck said he is working with EPA on a Sustainable Building Block Program for Town Center parking. He is setting up a 2-day workshop in June or July where EPA will look at parking needs and how to make improvements.

Mr. Peck said the Dorset Crossing land exchange submitted by the Applicant went to the Town Attorney and will go next to the Board of Selectmen and he will inform the Commission when that meeting is scheduled. He said if the BOS likes it, they will go ahead; if there are any changes, it will come back to this Commission.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of April 10, 2012, April 24, 2012,
and May 15, 2012

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to approve the April 10, 2012, minutes with the amendment changing "Aednarcyk" to "Bednarcyk" on line 233. Commissioner Rice seconded the motion as amended, and it was passed with Commissioners Hallenbeck and Paine abstaining.

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to approve the April 24, 2012, minutes as written. Commissioner Paine seconded the motion, and it was passed with Commissioners Drake, Rice and Kulakowski abstaining.

Commissioner Rice made a motion to table the May 15, 2012, minutes. Commissioner Kulakowski seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jansen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Commissioner Kulakowski seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Tina E. Hallenbeck, Secretary