

From: Lois Laczko June 1, 2010 9:00:49 AM  
Subject: Design Review Board Minutes 05/11/2010 ADOPTED  
To: SimsburyCT\_DesignMin  
Cc:

ADOPTED

Design Review Board Minutes  
May 11, 2010  
Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dahlquist called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Kevin Gray, Rick Schoenhardt, Charles Stephenson, William Gardner, Mark Naccarato, John Stewart, Anthony Drapelick, and John Carroll. Also present was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

No alternates were needed.

III. DISCUSSION

Options and Format for the Architectural Standards for the Town Center Form Based Code

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the consultant has stated that there will not be any architectural standards as a part of the Code. He stated that the Design Review Board has considered creating guidelines; the idea would be to take the format that was developed by the consultant and use this as a model.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the way the Design Review Board gets information to the Zoning Commission concerns him. The Zoning Commission, he feels, does not always take their recommendations into consideration. Mr. Peck recommended that a tighter connection be made between the Zoning Regulations and the Guidelines for Community Design.

Regarding recommendation by the Design Review Board to the Zoning Commission, Commissioner Carroll stated that they should write a letter or an official document to the Zoning Commission with certain references and

reasons why these recommendations were made. He made reference to a certain application that the Design Review Board recently made recommendations on. The Zoning Commission approved that application as submitted and did not discuss any of their recommendations. Chairman Dahlquist agreed that a letter to the Zoning Commission may be appropriate.

Mr. Peck stated that the Zoning Commission members receive the Design Review Board's minutes and motions in their packets. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that their recommendations in a form-type document may more likely be read by the Zoning Commission members instead of a letter or minutes. Chairman Dahlquist suggested a checklist may be even better and easier to read. Commissioner Stephenson suggested bullet points highlighting references and reasons be placed under the motion made for each application.

Regarding the Town Center, Chairman Dahlquist distributed a checklist, set up for a form based code, to the Board members. He stated that this could be a record for each project that the Design Review Board hears; they could fill in the data. They could then supplement this with their design comments. This is a way to document each specific project as it is being reviewed. This would help alert the Board members as to what issues are inconsistent with the Code.

Commissioner Carroll suggested that since there are four zones, there could be one or four checklists that apply to all four zones with the criteria that the Code applies to these particular categories. Mr. Peck stated that he would like to have one checklist to fit all applications. The Code will be clear; whatever project is submitted, the Board will be able to tell if it is compliant or not compliant. Mr. Peck stated that the administrative process will be the most difficult part of this process. They need to make sure it works under Connecticut Law and under the local political structure. They then have to make it work under the local Commission structure.

Mr. Peck stated that there are many different kinds of form based codes. The Code for the Simsbury Town Center will be mandatory. He feels that the process will be made easier because of the Code.

There was some discussion regarding the DOT study of Route 10 and how it will fit together with the Town Center. Mr. Peck stated that some of the Town staff is involved in this study. The State has also looked at the Charrette as they study Route 10.

Mr. Peck showed the regulating plan to the Board members. The plan showed Wilcox Street with retail. He will be asking the consultant to consider more streets as retail in this area. Mr. Peck stated that he has also met

with the GIS consultant. If changes need to be made, this can easily be done.

Mr. Peck stated that the Town continues to work on trying to get ownership of the State parking lots in the Town Center.

#### Status of the Incentive Housing Zone Study (Design Standards)

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Incentive Housing Zone sites have been identified. These sites include: Tariffville Mill, Tunxis Road; Simscroft-Echo Farms, Iron Horse Boulevard; Corner of Firetown and Plank Hill Roads; Grist Mill, West Street; and Northeast Utilities, Hopmeadow Street. Mr. Peck stated that this is an overlay zone that could land on these sites. He stated that the Town has continued to work with these property owners, although not all of them may continue in this process.

Regarding the Design Review Board's responsibilities, the Board discussed the site-specific design standards. Chairman Dahlquist read the specific design standards for the Tariffville District. He questioned if there would be any other standards that should be included for this location; this is a historic location.

Commissioner Stewart stated that because of the proximity to the Farmington River, the Design Review Board should discourage construction of structures that would block access and view corridors to the River. Mr. Peck stated that the intent of the open space portion of the Regulation addresses this issue.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if heights have been stipulated. Mr. Peck stated that because of the grade changes; this should be included. Commissioner Gray stated that structures should complement the existing mill and other structures in that area.

Commissioner Stewart stated that he also feels that pervious material should be used in the whole area and not just the parking lots in the open space sub-district.

Regarding the Firetown Road/Plank Hill Road District, Chairman Dahlquist stated that there is no retail intended for this development; it is only residential. Commissioner Stewart suggested having certain height requirements in this area. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that there is maximum height limitations included in the Design Standards. Chairman Dahlquist stated that it is easier when heights are identified as stories.

Regarding the Grist Mill District, Mr. Peck stated that this site is on both sides of Grist Mill Lane. Commissioner Schoenhardt questioned if the

Wetlands Commission would be involved with the approval of this site. Mr. Peck stated that the Wetlands Commission would maintain their authority. Commissioner Stewart stated that this will be a challenging site. He stated that sustainable paving should be encouraged because of the wetlands on this site.

Regarding the Northeast Utilities District, Commissioner Naccarato stated that the 100' buffer seems to be inconsequential for this site. Mr. Peck stated that part of the issue is that the property changes width. Chairman Dahlquist stated that the gateways into Simsbury have open space. He feels that it is critical for the Town to maintain this. Commissioner Stephenson suggested setting an average number for a setback running parallel to Hopmeadow Street. Commissioner Stewart suggested that they should also state that within this area, no structure shall be erected with the top of a roof that will obstruct views to the ridgeline. This same standard should be used for mature trees that are planted.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Board will continue this discussion at their next meeting.

#### IV. CORRESPONDENCE

There were none.

#### V. STAFF REPORTS

There were none.

#### VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of April 27, 2010 meeting

Commissioner Gray made a motion to approve the April 27, 2010 minutes as written. Commissioner Stephenson seconded the motion, which was approved. Commissioner Stewart abstained.

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gray made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Commissioner Schoenhardt seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.