

HAMILTON PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
Via Zoom 816 3089 9729
Passcode 696471
Tel # 1-929-205-6099
January 5, 2021

Members Present: Corey Beaulieu, Marnie Crouch, Rick Mitchell, Brian Stein (Chair), and Bill Wheaton

Planning Director: Patrick Reffett

Others Present: Pat Norton (potential associate member)

This meeting was called to order by Brian Stein at 7:03 p.m. with a quorum established via Zoom.

Roll Call: Rick Mitchell – aye, Marnie Crouch – aye, William Wheaton – aye, Corey Beaulieu – aye, and Brian Stein – aye.

REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS POTENTIAL CHANGES TO HAMILTON ZONING BYLAW

LANGUAGE – The Board is reviewing the text of a “flexible” residential zoning bylaw and considering its application to the Town of Hamilton. The Board is also considering the potential of creating an open space fund to offset density on development parcels. Additionally, the Board may consider the possibility of amending the Senior Housing Bylaw.

Brian Stein explained that William Wheaton had updated the density matrix and Marnie Crouch updated the language so a semifinal draft could soon be sent out to developers for comment. William Wheaton added that the amount developers pay into the Open Space Fund correlates with how many bonus density units they obtain. An example shown in the footnotes was explained that if a developer had a 10-acre parcel and wanted 50 percent set aside for the OpenSpace Fund, they would be allowed to build 1.75 units per acre in the RA zone and could therefore get 17.5 units on the 5 acres with a total contribution of \$600,000. Without contributing to the Open Space Fund, the developer would have 5 units on 2 acre lots.

The Board agreed that some footnotes would be eliminated and added to the text of the bylaw. Additionally, Marnie Crouch will add to the text that the applicant will utilize advanced water and energy efficiency standards that exceed 10 percent as set forth in applicable building codes and in the rules and regulations of the Planning Board. A footnote that states total development units as calculated will be rounded down to the nearest whole number will also be added.

The Board agreed to eliminate section 8.1.14. The Board agreed to rename 8.1.14 to minimum parcel size to eliminate confusion and to add the dimensional standards. Brian Stein commented that the minimum parcel size of 80,000 feet in all applicable zones could be added

to section 8.1.2 instead of having the table. Corey Beaulieu pointed out that edits should be made to change references to section 8.2 to 8.1.

Board Members agreed it would be ideal to get the draft out to developers before the next Board meeting. William Wheaton told the Board that he would add examples tomorrow of each zoning district to the matrix to add clarity before sending the matrix to developers. The Board agreed that the best approach for developer feedback would be an open dialogue discussion over Zoom after giving the developers a chance to review the draft. Developers to be invited are Larry Smith, Alan Berry, Tom Ford, Steve Dodge, Peter Gourdeau and Dave Traggorth. A structured list of questions will be used to gather comments and answer their questions. Depending on how many developers are available, the meeting may need to be split into 2 Zoom sessions.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ZONING MAP CHANGE – The Board is to conceptually review and discuss the possibility of a zoning map change for property associated with the Winthrop School from R-1A to Business.

Patrick Reffett summarized that at the last meeting, the Board discussed the idea of expanding the downtown business district which is about 19 acres, to include the property that accommodates the Public Safety building, the Council on Aging building, Carriage Lane residences and then extends northward on the right east side of Bay Road. Realizing that it may not be for at least another 10 years and with enrollments down, the Board discussed how the Winthrop School property could be best used to increase the town's tax base if the town decided to sell it. At this point, a Request for Proposal might be beneficial. Potential uses discussed were higher density residential property, expansion of the downtown commercial district, or mixed-use property. The Board decided they would like to engage the public and especially abutters in a discussion sharing development ideas. With past Housing Development Committee studies, feedback from Hamilton residents showed they liked the appeal of a New England village which would increase town beautification. With Patton Park across the street it could be a place to meet for coffee or a bite to eat. Retail trend concerns were discussed as well.

BOARD BUSINESS – Review/approve Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2020; Liaison reports; Staff reports; Future agenda items; Proposed Planning Board Calendar for 2021; Upcoming preparation of Planning Board 2020 Annual Report; Etc.

Motion made by William Wheaton to approve the amended minutes of December 1, 2020.
Seconded by Rick Mitchell.
Roll Call Vote: Rick Mitchell – aye, Marnie Crouch – aye, Corey Beaulieu – aye, William Wheaton – aye, and Brian Stein – aye.

Marnie Crouch had minor edits for the December 15, 2020 minutes and the Board agreed to approve the amended minutes at the next meeting on January 5, 2021.

Patrick Reffett reported to the Board that he had gathered student demographic data from the School Department and the Assessor that conflicted with information William Wheaton obtained. William Wheaton told the Board that he would work with Patrick Reffett to obtain the data needed and that he would conduct a fiscal impact analysis to determine student demographics.

Patrick Reffett reminded the Board that they needed to start preparing the 2020 Annual Report for the Planning Board which needs to be done by the end of February. Richard Boroff had prepared the report in the past and someone else on the Board may want to assist him this year.

Patrick Reffett reported that Larry Smith of Restoration Capital should be submitting the Essex Street Senior Housing application within a few weeks but an exact date was not known.

In other business, Patrick Reffett told the Board that a 40B Project Eligibility Letter (PEL) was submitted to the town by Habitat For Humanity for a 10-unit residential project on the land that wraps around the cell tower at 434 Asbury Street. Habitat will likely be presenting their application to the Zoning Board of Appeals at their meeting on February 3, 2020 at which point the report will be sent out to other boards that have purview. Patrick Reffett will be sure that the Planning Board gets a copy of the report.

Adjournment

Motion made by Rick Mitchell to adjourn at 9:19 p.m.

Seconded by Corey Beaulieu.

Roll Call Vote: Rick Mitchell – aye, Marnie Crouch – aye, Corey Beaulieu – aye, William Wheaton – aye, and Brian Stein – aye.

Prepared by:

Ann Schlecht 1/16/2021

Attest