

## **Zoning Update Meeting Notes – February 27, 2017**

Present: See Attached Sign in Sheet

Meeting called to order by Committee Chairman James Noble @ 6:04 PM

J. Noble introduced and turned the discussion over to consultant Daniel Shuster.

D. Shuster identified various sections of the zoning code that have been focused on to streamline and consolidate in one location. One section is to create a new section on the Planning Board that would consolidate functions to one central location rather than scattered throughout the current law.

J. Noble – Would this result in new duties for the Planning Board?

S. Cahill – No

D. Shuster The goal is to make the ordinance more user friendly and easier for the lay person to navigate. There will be a changing of the overall numbering and chapters as part of the re-organization. Cross references will be checked and where needed corrected.

T. Argulewicz – As he was reading, this would provide staff with more independent ability to make decisions based on certain criteria.

D. Shuster - All changes would be small scale, minor revisions, for example – lot line revisions/deletions when zoning is adhered to for lot sizes, minor site plan changes that have no impact to on-site parking or condition. This would allow staff to approve if the uses are as of right. There would need to be a certain degree of re-organization.

Additionally, there would be an updated section for the ZBA that would codify the use and area variances based on State law. It should be more difficult for applicants to obtain use variances and the decision should be based in fact and not emotion. Area variances are not as distinct, but should also be.

T. Arrgulewicz – Believes that both educational and application upgrades for the ZBA are necessary. There are distinct questions and that more information is needed for the ZBA to make a decision. For example they should be required to provide specific cost analysis and mortgage information

J. Noble – All uses in each zone should be reviewed.

D. Shuster – Explained that would be time consuming and difficult. The approach has been to condense

J. Noble – Combining districts seems to be a positive alternative and a way to approach going forward.

D. Shuster – Compressing certain districts will eliminate confusion.

T. Argulewicz – The chart of uses is a great way to relate information. It speaks to zones, uses and setbacks, etc... He believes that the R-1 zone should be protected as much as possible and has concern over the boarding house uses

S. Cahill – Agreed with TA that education is very important and should be mandated. Noted that the proposal calls for a reduction in the size of the ZBA membership from 7 to 5, with 3 alternates.

H. Clement – Feels strongly that the City needs to start fresh and consolidate. The ideas and concepts presented are valid.

General discussion – There was debate on submitting the changes for zoning in phases or refrain and submit a one document to the Common Council. H. Clement stated it should be held until there is a single submission, S. Cahill agreed, J. Noble agreed.

T. Argulewicz asked where everything stands in the budget?

H. Clement asked what is the time frame going forward

D. Shuster responded that they are committed to seeing the project through and are hoping to have some more revised drafts for the Committee in the next month. These would include details for the Uptown Core, along with the Historic Preservation Design Review and the urban Agriculture

Follow-up meetings – S. Cahill will organize the following:

- Meeting of a representative of the HAC, HLPC, Planning, BSD J. Noble, W. Platte and Dan S. to discuss how the combination of certain review aspects can be accomplished to eliminate duplicity and streamline reviews for business and other applicants
- Meeting in 1 month as follow-up for the full committee
- S. Cahill will post on-line the current draft documents

D. Shuster – Gave a review and explanation of the reasoning about design standards and how they vary from the different business districts. It is the goal to provide for one single concept to address all urban core areas under a single standard that would provide flexibility as needed.

Parking regulations were brought up by residents and some committee members and both staff and J. Noble acknowledged that these are being addressed at in a short term basis. There are areas that can also be improved.

T. Arqulewicz – Asked about the use of form based zoning in the midtown urban core area and the extension of the business districts to promote opportunities along main corridors.

D. Shuster Comprehensive Plan sets forth the use of form based zoning, promoting a variety of uses within existing building framework and also to encourage more pedestrian based uses. These concepts will be transferred to the language of the zoning amendments.

Mapping – Currently there are overlay districts in several multiple areas and there needs to be consistency. An example would be to expand an overlay in the Rondout to both sides of East Strand rather than just between the waterfront and the street. That is an example of creating a more cohesive district.

J. Noble recognized public questions,:

\* E. Hauser – How were the comments of the CAC addressed, or have they been addressed under the updates? (Referring to an email of February 10, 2017) These were submitted and she has not heard how or where they have been addressed. S. Cahill and J. Noble will forward these to the consultant. D. Shuster also noted that they are continuing to work on other portions of the document, but in order to continue the project, the portions that were relatively complete were being provided.

\* T. Garment – Asked what the process was going forward and how it would involve the public. J. Noble stated that there would be public hearings from both the Committee side and also once a recommendation was made to the Common Council there would be at least one additional hearing of the Laws and Rules Committee.

J. Noble requested that any comments of the Committee be submitted within the next 2 weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM