

Montpelier Planning Commission
October 25, 2010
City Council Chambers, City Hall

Public Hearing

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Jesse Moorman, Chair; David Borgendale, Vice Chair; Alan Goldman, John Bloch, Tina Ruth, Missa Aloisi and Bethany Pombar.
Staff: Gwen Hallsmith, Director of Planning and Development

Review of September 27, 2010 Minutes:

Mr. Borgendale said the minutes are correct, but he wanted to correct the fact that was said in the minutes is not correct. It is on the last page it says that Ms. Hallsmith said that our Master Plan would be on the December agenda for the RPC and now it is on the November agenda. Ms. Hallsmith said they are taking it up on their November 9th meeting. The Town Plan Committee will be considering it at 4:00 on November 4th. There are three town plans on the agenda. Barre City and Berlin along with Montpelier will be on the agenda.

Upon motion made by David Borgendale and Alan Goldman the minutes of September 27, 2010 were approved as corrected.

Turntable Park Progress:

Ms. Hallsmith said she hopes all of the members have had the chance to drive down Stone Cutters Way and see the fact that the park is almost built. One of the things about the project that has been a real surprise to her is how big it looks now that it is cleaned up. It seems larger with all of the weeds and bushes growing there.

HUD/DOT Grant:

The city didn't receive the HUD/DOT grant we applied for to fix the Barre and Main Intersection unfortunately. She can opt to have a debriefing which would give us more information. The good news is that it is likely that same program will occur again next year in which case we have the grant already written and it will be further along on the Carr Lot side so it may be more competitive then. They have designed a roundabout for the Route 2 and Route 12 Intersection. They have to apply for a federal grant for the track improvement, which is interesting. The federal government has just turned us down to fix the problem that the track improvement was going to cause.

Mr. Moorman said federal rail banking procedures allow interim trail use of railroads.

Ms. Hallsmith said any time you see a rail to trail you can be sure it could also be a trail to rail project.

Senior Center Capital Campaign:

The Senior Center has embarked on their capital campaign and is looking for donations. In a separate but related development they were awarded a grant for the housing portion of the project, about a half million dollars from the state program. Even though the grant has been awarded it does not decrease the need for the Senior Center's capital campaign.

The grant for the Senior Center is a result of Garth Genge's hard work and real perseverance with the state. It is a fairly substantial grant so it helps us move into the housing development phase.

Mr. Bloch asked what is the base amount they are going to need to convert the two top floors to convert into housing.

Mr. Genge said it basically breaks down to the Senior Center costing about \$1.6 million and the housing will be \$3.2 million. The award from VCDP was \$300,000 for the Senior center and \$288,500 for the housing. There will be 14 units of housing. It is senior housing and housing for people with disabilities so it is very compatible with the Senior Center. He would like to invite the Planning Commission to a design discussion with the community. If you look at 58 Barre Street they have a great plan for 58 Barre Street. The Senior Center will end up with 10,000 square feet of usable space which will be fully accessible. Before 8,000 square feet was accessible. The other 2,000 square feet were available but if you couldn't climb stairs you couldn't use it. The Senior Center comes back to what their highest level of membership was they will be up to 900 members. This project is going to give them a much more efficient and much more affordable location to be in. The demographics of the city show that we are going to outpace the size of this facility fairly quickly. They are looking at the Recreation Center and make that accessible, and then when there are larger events that would involve a large number of members they would have the capacity to do that. But at the same at that location they are looking at St. Michael's School. The church is close to town as is the school. They are having it appraised and looking to sell it. They are looking to talk to the city. That needs to be part of the puzzle of that area. As part of the conversation of the design they are talking about the demographics of the community and 50 percent of the population of Montpelier qualifies for the Senior Center, so given the kind of facilities that are out there that the city owns and has the opportunity to influence the development of where do we want to go? That will be on Thursday, December 9th from 5:00 to 7:00. They will definitely send an invitation to all of the committees because the more input they get from members of the community the better.

Mr. Bloch said the biggest thing they have as an obstacle in that building is the removal of the asbestos.

Mr. Genge said some of it is encapsulation and some of it is removal. The most expensive thing for the St. Michael's School will be the accessibility issues.

Mr. Genge said one of the things with the design right now is they are trying to coordinate a streetscape between the two buildings because they are virtually parallel to each other. The Recreation Center won't happen this summer. Right now they are figuring out what they need to do and then figuring out how they are going to pay for it.

Ms. Pombar said in the stages of figuring out what they need to do and they are trying to create a multi-generational community center that we need to hear from the community about what they want us to do versus as seeing promising models from other places. If the intent is for architects to hear feedback then they should start including citizens in another way. We engaged our citizenry through the Master Planning process so they are ready to respond to surveys.

Mr. Genge said they are going to make the Recreation Center accessible and much more energy efficient. They aren't going to do any major changes to what it is as a facility. They are just going to allow it to be more accessible for the Senior Center users. The idea of St. Michael's and what happens there will be a much more natural evolution. The city is not going to go in and buy the building but try to find and encourage community organizations or developers from the area who have an intent that is compatible. As far as putting out an RFP he thinks the church is going to have trouble finding somebody who makes it economically viable in the private sector.

Mr. Bloch said beyond the Recreation Center there is the other issue of Barre Street being a major artery in this city traffic wise. We may have to at long last say we have a huge investment in a public school system, particularly the high school, and for multi generational purposes maybe some of that space needs to be reconverted for that purpose and not to try to just get it all done at 58 Barre. This town needs as a regional shopping center and entertainment center for young people under 50 some kind of a community facility. We need an ongoing facility. These silos of independent interest were maybe nice but are damned expensive.

Mr. Borgendale said he is curious about the residential place. A quick calculation says that those residential units are going to cost about \$230,000 a piece. That seems pretty steep to him.

Mr. Genge said they are also doing the highest level of energy efficiency upgrades they can do. One of the reasons they scored as well with their funding was because the application actually outlined that. The intent from the renovation in the beginning was to make the building as efficient as possible and to cut the ongoing operating costs for not only the housing but the Senior Center. A building of that type is very expensive to do. The calculations from the architects are that to take it down and replace it with something new we could do the renovations for something like 75 percent of the cost and still have a better building overall than we would before. 12 units are something like 700 square feet and 2 are pretty large. If you look at all of the funding for affordable housing and what it costs to

renovate a building like that, at the VCDP hearing Sarah Carpenter was saying they have had some higher and some lower. Basically, when you go by federal ratings and standards and the levels you have to bring the buildings to it becomes a very expensive proposition. There are three federal agencies that regulate different pots of money and two or three state agencies that regulate pots of money. There are ten sources all together and it becomes a very complicated project. Just the legal costs are ridiculously high. When you are doing just 14 units the aggregated costs of just a small number of units like that increases the individual costs because there are some basic expenses of tax credit initiation, etc. that doesn't matter whether you do 100 units or 14. The numbers are high, but it isn't outrageous for what is done around the state. This is a beautiful building, with infill development, walkable to downtown. All of the apartments are one bedroom apartments. There are 12 that are about 650 to 700 square feet, and then there are two that are 1,000 square feet apiece. There is a lot of upfront investment in these types of projects.

REACH Pilot Program:

REACH has started its pilot phase which will be going to the end of the year. They have about 40 members signed up and actively training as of last week. They are testing the system and in the beginning of next year in January we will be launching it as a large public outreach campaign. We had an occasion in the last few weeks to be happy that we are requiring all new REACH members to go through background checks because one of the members of a similar organization was arrested for stealing on State Street and had been on furlough for grave robbing. This was someone who was regularly shoveling one of our seniors' walks. We are really glad we require background checks, and we are continuing to do those.

Public Hearing on Flood Plain Bylaw Amendment:

Rebecca Pfeiffer from the Agency of Natural Resources River Management said this is the Planning Commission's vote to approve the flood hazard bylaws as amended and changed. She is present mostly to answer questions from the public or Planning Commission members.

Mr. Bloch asked if they had resolved the issue of the Carr Lot in the floodway.

Ms. Hallsmith said the ruling has been made and the new maps are out. Our appeal was successful.

Mr. Moorman asked how that helped the city's position about potential development of the lot for the transit center.

Mr. DeSmet said it reduced the area of the floodway so it is no longer an issue.

Mr. Bloch asked how much of a reduction did we experience of the Carr Lot.

Ms. Pfeiffer said her understanding is that it was reduced to pretty close to within channel but nothing within the area where the proposed development is.

Mr. Moorman said it could have been reduced to cover even half the lot as long as the building envelope area was affected.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the only thing that had come up as a question about the bylaws was a question about actual enabling language for the establishment of the DRB and that language doesn't need to specifically be in the bylaw to be able to establish the DRB. It is basically established by vote. Basically, the language that Montpelier has in the draft right now is fine and is compliant. There was a suggestion of alternate language which basically doesn't require as much of a review through the zoning office. The floodway is like a volume so there is the stream channel and some height of flood water. Anything that is going to be occurring above that doesn't need to go through review. It establishes that things that are elevated a foot above flood elevation wouldn't have to go through that floodway hydraulic analysis. If it is within the floodway area it does say that the engineer needs to certify no rise in flood waters which is a minimum standard from FEMA. It also adds a comment that it won't create erosion or a flood hazard on neighboring properties. Those are things that could be considered to be added.

Mr. DeSmet said in the larger document that was 350 pages because it was the entire ordinance it is in Section 7 of the ordinance in Article 7-16.b.3.

Ms. Hallsmith said it basically adds the wording, "and that the flood proof structure meets the flood proofing criteria of this article" to paragraph 4. Currently, it says unless certification by a professional registered engineer or architect is provided demonstrating that encroachment shall not result in any increase in flood levels during occurrence of a base flood discharge, and the suggestion adds the wording about flood proof structure meets the flood proofing criteria of the article.

Ms. Pfeiffer said that is his comments. The language he suggests is not actually in Ned's checklist.

Mr. DeSmet said he told him the ordinance was compliant without that.

Ms. Pfeiffer said it was inserted into the draft zoning where the changes have been made as opposed to on the checklist. The table provided from FEMA is basically what is required. Below Article 7-16.b.3 is some other recommendations Ned makes using the state's regulations about the floodplain and just a commentary about what is or is not required. For the floodway criteria what is in there now is compliant and meets the standard.

Ms. Hallsmith said right now the city's ordinance says we get certification from a registered professional engineer or architect that the proposed development will not result in any increase in flood levels during the occurrence of the base flood. What he is proposing adding is about 10 words "and that the flood proof structure meets the flood proofing criteria of this article."

Mr. Moorman said this is not the actual change that is proposed.

Mr. Borgendale said in Section 316.b.4, the second paragraph, where it says shall be permitted unless it is demonstrated that the cumulative effect of the proposed development when combined with other existing development and anticipated development will not increase the water surface elevation of the base flood more than 1 foot at any point within the community. Is that correct?

Ms. Hallsmith said that is the thing about floodways. It is a very difficult standard to meet.

Mr. Borgendale said he thought it was zero and not 1 foot.

Ms. Pfeiffer said that standard actually applies only in situations where flood elevations have been provided for a floodplain but FEMA hasn't designated a regulatory floodway. In Montpelier there is no situation like that. In some areas of the Connecticut River and parts of the Otter Creek FEMA provides flood elevations that are based on the high water marks from the past flooding events but they never actually went through the engineering to develop a floodway like Montpelier has on the Winooski River. That situation applies in a few areas within the state of Vermont. The reason why it is included in there is because the Blanchard Brook that runs through Sabin's Pasture is shown as a Zone A. It is an approximate floodplain. There is no flood elevations associated with it, but if there was ever a time when a flood elevation was established for it and the town adopted that flood elevation then that regulation could apply to that one stream in that one very unlikely situation. They keep that language in there because in some cases zoning regulations for flood hazard areas haven't been updated for 30 years in some communities.

Mr. Borgendale said she is saying they do have regulatory floodways designated so it really doesn't apply.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the City of Montpelier has a no rise standard in floodways that is found in Section 716. Right now the language in there is compliant.

Ms. Hallsmith said what he is proposing from the model is that the location of the boundaries shall be determined by the administrative officer. If the applicant disagrees with the determination by the administrative officer a letter of map amendment from FEMA shall constitute proof.

Mr. Moorman asked why the insertion. He questions why the administrative officer even needs to make a call. Is there some ambiguity in the maps?

Ms. Pfeiffer said there are structures that are right on the edge of the line. There are structures that may be in the floodplain and out on the other side of the line. These maps show the best they can where that floodplain boundary is. When they really look at where the floodplain boundary is on site they are looking at what are the elevations on the site. They are looking at the height of the flood waters and how far would that flood water have been out of the channel and where would it reach on the land. This is the best depiction of it that is possible using mapping available to us, but it's not exact. FEMA floodplain elevations are determined to a tenth of a foot and these maps are based on elevation contours at best that are 2 foot elevation contours between the two.

Ms. Hallsmith said that is why she likes it because people who are reading the ordinance from the outside may know the Planning Office's word is the determination and this is the avenue they need to use for an appeal and they actually need a letter of map amendment. Mostly the recourse people have in their determinations is an appeal to the DRB but this is an appeal to FEMA and a letter of map amendment is the avenue of recourse if they disagree with their ruling on the floodplain map. It means they hire an engineer and get the engineer to do a study of their land that is a little more specific than the FEMA map.

Mr. Borgendale said this is giving a very specific appeals process.

Ms. Hallsmith said this language gets added to Section 309.b on page 315 of the ordinance. You can see in the current draft of the zoning which is on page 341 it's not there but it has been added in Ned's comments.

Mr. Borgendale moved the Planning Commission adopt the alternative language for 716.b.3. Ms. Aloisi seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Ms. Pfeiffer said there are some edits to the definitions. On page 14 of the review checklist there is a definition for floodplain approval. On the definition of structure under the flood insurance program one of the things that is required to be reviewed as a structure is also an above ground propane tank.

Mr. Moorman said back to the floodplain approval he is looking at Ned's comments and definitions. Floodplain approval doesn't have a red line on it.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the suggestions were made on that draft.

Ms. Hallsmith said he is suggesting they cross out after the City of Montpelier in the floodplain approval definition, which is a good suggestion.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the next definition down is for structure. FEMA considers an above ground fuel storage tank as a structure. The intent is to make sure that it is anchored and/or elevated. It is intended to be considered like a structure so that it is protected so you don't have propane tanks floating downstream during a flood which would hit bridge abutments. He made a small suggestion of how to reword the definition for structure which basically includes a travel trailer without wheels, a mobile home or manufactured home. For the latter purpose structure doesn't mean a recreation vehicle or parts trailer or other similar vehicle as described in c of this definition. The term structure includes a gas or liquid storage tank.

Mr. Bloch said the other things he doesn't want to consider could have propane tanks in them.

Ms. Pfeiffer said a recreational vehicle or parked trailer if it is licensed and ready to drive the theory is you could drive the recreational vehicle out of the floodplain so FEMA doesn't want to get into regulating temporary trailers that are parked on the site. If it is parked there and someone is living there, and it is there for more than 180 days, then that is considered a manufactured home essentially. There isn't a lot of guidance that FEMA provides to back this up because in their language it says they shall be elevated and anchored. The reality in Vermont is that people usually don't choose where their fuel hookup is. It's either build into the house already or the gas company comes and sets your hookup for you and there are a lot of preexisting homes. When she speaks with towns they try to elevate it where they can. In the Town of Windsor they have flood elevations that are 4 or 5 feet above grade. That might not be really realistic to elevate that so they try to protect it and anchor it.

Mr. Goldman asked what about our downtown buildings.

Mr. DeSmet said administratively it is just like any other preexisting nonconformity. It is already there. A lot of them are anchored already.

Ms. Pfeiffer said you can't always apply common sense to regulations, but when they look at a proposal for a structure if it is new they try to incorporate it underground or see if there is another way to have the propane tank protected or on an area of the land that may be elevated already. In some cases elevating several feet in the area doesn't make sense. Elevating it six inches off the ground on a concrete pad makes sense, but when it starts to get several feet then it becomes harder to meet that standard.

Ms. Hallsmith said the change he has proposed if you read it carefully is really just a minor grammatical change making the business about propane tanks a separate sentence.

Mr. Moorman said he doesn't read it like that. There are two purposes he doesn't understand. The full definition of structure talks about structure for floodplain management purposes and then it goes to say for insurance purposes it means a, b, and c, and this later

purpose does not include gas or propane tanks. Why are we talking about insurance purposes?

Ms. Pfeiffer said she believes it is a notification to the person in the city who comes in so they understand what they are reviewing under the city regulations as a structure may be different when they go to apply for insurance from FEMA.

Mr. Moorman said basically the structure is defined as including gas or liquid storage tanks. Structure for insurance purposes means a, b, and c. It says for the latter purpose, which is insurance purposes, "structure" does not mean a recreational vehicle or parked trailer or other similar vehicle except as described in c of this definition.

Ms. Pfeiffer said she thinks he didn't see in the middle of the paragraph where it says for flood insurance purposes.

Mr. Moorman said he doesn't think they need to change it.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the only change would be to add for flood insurance purposes.

Mr. Moorman said for flood management purposes gas and propane tanks are considered structures and for flood insurance purposes they aren't. That is the way it is written and that is the way they want it.

Ms. Pfeiffer said a substantial improvement when you are making a large investment into an existing structure with renovating or making improvements you eventually trigger the need to bring your building into compliance with the flood elevation so you have to have the low floor elevated to or above the flood elevations if you are putting a major investment back into improving a building. FEMA doesn't require that to be tracked over any certain period of time so what has resulted is a loophole so you could propose a 30 percent improvement to the building and another year come back in and wouldn't have to meet the requirement of having the structure come into compliance.

Mr. Goldman asked what the actual trigger was if they made the improvements all at once.

Ms. Pfeiffer replied 50 percent of the current value of the building or more. One of the suggestions made is to track those improvements over a certain time period.

Mr. Goldman asked how it would apply to buildings where you are doing upper floors and the lower floors are not being touched but it would still be a large value change.

Ms. Pfeiffer said it would still require that. The intent is that this is an insurable structure and regardless of whether or not the current homeowner has flood insurance the idea is that this is something that the federal government may insure at some point.

Mr. Goldman said this would also apply to a downtown building that is a commercial building so any upper floors they were trying to fix up could trigger that kind of review.

Ms. Pfeiffer replied it could. In most of downtown Montpelier a lot of the buildings are contributing to the Historic District so they are not required to bring the building into that compliance because it is a historic building and bringing it into compliance would probably preclude it from being historic any longer. The buildings on the National Register are contributing to the Historic District. One of the things the city has been very good about is that in those situations that if someone is going in to do major renovations of those buildings to try to incorporate protection measures where they can by bringing the electrical panels up to the second floor or protecting the furnace. They are trying to incorporate those mitigation measures to reduce the chance that the building would have even larger damages during a flood. It depends upon what improvements are being proposed.

Ms. Hallsmith said one of the side benefits of the district energy system is getting a lot of these furnaces in their buildings out of the basement because it will be one central plant that is flood proofed and the rest of the buildings could be on the system and not have to deal with this hassle.

Mr. DeSmet said they should notice there are two definitions of “substantial improvements” in the definition section and they need to pick one. That is Section 1303.

Ms. Pfeiffer said that establishes tracking improvements over three years. You could do a project by project. That is where the common plan of development comes in because they had this happen in another city in the state where they had a lot of old mill buildings they were renovating and putting apartments in. They would do 45 percent of the value of the building and then another year another phase, but it was evident they were renovating the entire building so that was a common plan of development.

Mr. Goldberg said this is going to require a lot of policing.

Mr. Moorman said he is leaning towards not putting a period of years in here but sticking with common plan of development.

Mr. Goldberg said he is for taking out all of the timelines because people just find a way around it.

Mr. Moorman said he reads the common plan of development as the overall project. He understood our goal right now is to get the minimum done and get it in so we can comply and be able to not have this flood insurance unavailable to us. At a later point he would like to come back and say here is where we can score some points. He isn't so much concerned with three years or ten years right now but something that makes sense.

Ms. Pombar said it becomes kind of vague for homeowners who are trying to make changes over a long period of time.

Mr. Goldberg said a lot of it is financially driven.

Ms. Pombar said if there is no timeframe on it then it has no framework for context. It gets too broad. She feels we need a time limit. They can be broad about the time limit to try to avoid what Alan is mentioning and do something from three to five years.

Mr. Moorman said if they don't need the highlighted text right now we just don't include it and not includes a common plan of development.

Mr. Borgendale said he thinks the old language is better than the new language is.

Ms. Hallsmith said the first definition requires that a structure be listed on the National Register of Historic places or state inventory to be considered historic. The second definition it is just an historic structure. The fact that it is contributing to our district if it is not listed independently on the National Register we could determine it to be historic. There is a difference between being in the National Register District and being a structure that is independently listed on the National Register. You could read this original definition as an interpretation as saying that structure isn't actually listed itself on the National Register but just part of the district.

Ms. Pfeiffer said there is also contributing and noncontributing. There are structures which were never officially nominated to the National Register but still contributing.

Ms. Hallsmith said it is a broader definition than what is in our current bylaws.

Mr. Moorman said he is happy that historic structure is the name of the term.

Mr. Borgendale said he would like to go back to the substantial improvement definition. Looking at this he doesn't think they can adopt this by just excluding the stuff in yellow. If we are not going to have a time period or a common plan of development we need to delete everything after the cost of which up through cumulatively.

Mr. Moorman said he agrees.

Mr. Borgendale moved they adopt the red language as modified. Mr. Bloch seconded the motion. It would read: "Substantial improvement" – any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement of a structure after the date of the adoption of this bylaw, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvements. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Pfeiffer said the next discussion will be about points and good flood hazard policy for the city of Montpelier. That is much more at the discretion of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Moorman said they have done the business on this to get us into compliance so they can take advantage of the flood insurance rates.

Ms. Hallsmith said now they need to make a motion to accept all of the changes and send them on to City Council.

Mr. Borgendale said having accepted overwhelming input from the public on the matter he moves they close the public hearing. Mr. Bloch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Borgendale moved the Planning Commission adopt the proposed amendment to the ordinance. Mr. Goldman seconded the motion. The motion was voted unanimously.

Ms. Hallsmith said now they send it on to City Council for their consideration.

Mr. Moorman said the state has a model that has the lexus of floodplain zoning which scores points.

District Energy Plant:

Ms. Hallsmith showed the members a chart which the bidders were required to fill out themselves as they provided their bids for comparison. There are a wide range of alternatives, even in a fairly small number of proposals. There is the standard basis for the bid which everybody had to fill out. Two of the different proposers suggested alternatives. One suggested an alternative technology in an alternative location, although that one would still serve the state and be quite close to where they had proposed the state system would be. That is Pizzagalli coming in at \$17.5. It would be a different type of boiler using wood dust instead of wood chips. It is an interesting technology and requires less building because you don't have to have so much storage on site. The other big alternative is in the McMillan proposal where they proposed both the standard basic bid, which the city required, and the city only alternative which they proposed to site down on Barre Street and serve only the city side of the equation. This would be in the event that we don't want to continue to work with the state. There are a broad range of possibilities and they will be discussing them at more length at the Energy Committee tomorrow night.

Right now we are facing the charter vote on November 2nd. The charter vote is really an important vote because it provides the enabling legislation for the city to get into the energy business. It doesn't mean we are getting into it in this particular way, but it does allow us to do it. It is really more of a long term foundation piece than short term. We have to have the charter vote in November as opposed to later because we have to file the legislation in this legislative session for it to be approved to be on track.

Her reaction to the bids is that she was really pleased. She was pleased they received three excellent proposals and pleased we have some real alternatives. One of the other alternatives is that Pizzagalli has proposed to finance the project privately rather than having a public bond for the portion of the project that isn't grant funded. That is another piece of decision making that is going to be required. The charter vote is still important because energy as we move into the future will be increasingly important for the city to be involved in, and that does enable a lot of different possibilities for the city.

City Council Workshop on Zoning Process – October 27, 2010:

The City Council would like to have a workshop with the Planning Commission on Wednesday night to discuss the process for moving forward with the zoning. She presented a memo to the Planning Commission where she outlined elements and would like their feedback. There are three components. One is the neighborhood meetings and three meetings per neighborhood. There may be neighborhoods we could combine for the first meeting because it is more informational. They have developed a draft survey to give to the neighborhoods which has a lot of pictures in it. They are asking people to do some work around their neighborhoods to collect some information and come back to the second meeting to present what they recommend. Then, there will be a third meeting where we give them back the kinds of neighborhood development standards that we have developed through that process.

The second part of the proposal has to do with the way we will look at analyzing the land use in the neighborhoods as we move forward. She has used a term talking about land use budgets as an analytical tool. We pulled together an inventory in the neighborhoods that includes both the areas and density of residential, commercial, and industrial development, developable land, conservation priorities, etc. and give people a snapshot of what all of those land uses are currently in their neighborhoods. This is similar to some of the preliminary work that was done even before she started in the last part of the Master Plan.

If you start thinking in terms of a land use inventory or a land use budget, and we are working to increase density in certain parts of the community, then there would be a factual basis on which to build looking at what the future land use budget might be and what might be acceptable to the neighborhood on an aggregate basis. Say a neighborhood wants to have slightly more residentially compatible commercial development, the convenience store or café, then the land use budget today might say there is zero there right now because of our Euclidian zoning that rules those things out, but the land use budget of the future might allow for quite a bit more. As you move forward with those metrics established you could translate those metrics into a regulatory system or just use them as a way of evaluating some of the proposals that are made.

The third part of the proposal related to how we engage the business community because obviously in the downtown along Route 302 and Route 2 and Toy Town there is some business interest that may not be the same as like going out to the neighborhoods and talking to the neighborhoods. Business owners don't necessarily live in town. They live

outside of the community a lot of the time and yet we still want to take their needs and interests to heart.

Mr. Bloch asked if they were going to have a special meeting with businesses.

Ms. Hallsmith replied yes. We would do some special outreach in the downtown, along Routes 2 and 302 and in Toy Town to engage the businesses and in other parts of town as well. We need to find out what their needs are, recognizing it doesn't work the same ways as a residential neighborhood basis.

City Council wants to know from us what we are going to do as a process for getting people involved and how we are going to move forward with the changes. This will at least give us a framework for what the discussion is on Wednesday night.

All Board Meeting – November 8th:

Ms. Hallsmith distributed a tentative agenda for the All Board Meeting on November 8th. They have invited Jim Teschler to talk about form based codes and newer types of zoning. This is part of the process of moving forward with the zoning.

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Mr. Borgendale and Mr. Goldman the Planning Commission adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Hallsmith, Director
Planning & Community Development

Transcribed by: Joan Clack