

HAMILTON PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
May 16, 2017

Members Present: Richard Boroff, Peter Clark, Ed Howard, Bill Olson, Brian Stein, and Claudia Woods, (Chair)

Others Present: Shawn Farrell

The meeting was called to order by Claudia Woods at 7:04 pm. in the Memorial Room.

**WSOD By-law Revision Discussion.**

The Floor Area Ratio (FAR) was discussed. In the proposed By-law, the ratio was .35 but Claudia Woods suggested 1.25 as an appropriate number. The number for 227 Willow was greater than that. Brian Stein said appropriateness would depend on the property. Typical zoning would be three floors, with areas for septic and parking. For example, a 10,000 sf lot with a one story at 2,500 sf and three stories would have 7,500 sf or .75 FAR. Ms. Woods noted that MAPC thought it was important to add to the downtown area. However, Willowdale to Asbury St. was the WSOD which was the only area under consideration. Some of the downtown properties were 2:1. Bill Olson thought it was a good idea and would look at ideal properties to determine the ideal ratio. The Gourdeau on Willow St. property would be used as an example. Ms. Woods said it was given visual relief so did not feel like such a mass. Mr. Stein said the full length of the building could not be seen. Richard Boroff said having a set number was not as important as seeing each project in front of the Board.

Brian Stein said FAR made more sense in towns that had a sewer and parking off site. Mr. Stein would determine the FAR for Gourdeau's property and 227 Willow St. in an effort to determine an appropriate FAR for the By-law.

**Estate Overlay District Discussion.**

The letters to the estate owners were sent. They were invited to attend the Planning Board hearing on June 6 to discuss the new draft. A notice would be placed in the paper. Page Fleming (33 Essex St.) said abutters would attend.

**Cottage Housing Discussion**

Bill Olson said he took the best Cottage Housing By-laws from various areas and combined them into a document for Hamilton, but the numbers needed to be defined. Brian Stein recalled having Rob Brennan come to the Board to get a sense of what they typically do. Districting included any residential district by Special Permit. Claudia Woods noted that Cottage Zoning created pocket neighborhoods and wondered what one would look like if one were constructed in the RA zone. Ms. Woods was worried that taking away the open space in the outlying areas would be taking away what the Town was prized for. Peter Clark suggested looking at

properties that had one house placed upon it for the last ten years and what had come on the market as buildable lots to see if they would have been suitable for Cottage Zoning rather than a single family house. This would help the Board see if the properties would have fit in with the character of the Town. Brian Stein said the number of developments would be limited and suggested letting the market drive it as it would be a Special Permit that the Board could control. Bill Olson suggested 50 units per year as a maximum.

Ed Howard expressed that he would vote for Cottage Housing but his life experience said that it would not be built in this town because there was not a financial gain for the developer. Numbers would be left open until after Mr. Brennen would come to present.

Rosie Kennedy (Rust St.) recalled that everyone liked the concept of Cottage Housing but the survey just asked a question and there were no bones to the concept. It sounded cute. Ms. Kennedy suggested that the Board should not consider the By-law as an academic exercise, but that they should truly think of the impact. Claudia Woods noted that any number below five would not really be a neighborhood. There would be a maximum of 12 to 18 units. The affordable housing bonus with a chart was included in Bill Olson's presentation.

#### **New Associate Member Candidates**

Chris Shephard (Bay Road) said he was interested in being a member of the Planning Board and explained his interest in the Board. Mr. Shephard had served on various boards for the Trustees of Reservation. Mr. Shephard said his skills included a sense of fairness as seeing both sides and one who believed in both open space and development. Mr. Shephard described the bedroom community as one with a history and a future that struggled with high taxes and an aging population.

In response to Bill Olson's question as to whether the applicant would respond to a vote based on the By-laws or his own personal agenda, Mr. Shephard responded that he would vote based on what was best for the Town. Brian Stein said he considered Mr. Shephard as thoughtful and that there was the ability to interpret the By-laws.

Bill Dery (Chebacco Road) claimed responsibility for getting Site Plan Review back to the Planning Board. Mr. Dery was concerned about increasing the density of the Town. Mr. Dery would not approve the Cottage By-law because there was no money in it, but would consider what Hamilton wanted. Mr. Dery moved here 38 years ago for horses and the ambience of the Town. Mr. Dery said there were practical approaches to the problems, but the Board had not defined the problems before they were trying to solve them via By-laws.

Richard Boroff recalled the School Committee Code of Conduct which was similar to the Planning Board code. Mr. Dery said as a school committee member, he was not able to speak with anyone in the school system so he refused to sign the Code as he wanted to find out technical problems from the school workers. Claudia Woods added that she did not agree to the

Code of Conduct. Ed Howard said it was inferred that the Planning Board signed a Code of Conduct, but he did not sign. Bill Olson said the Board was cohesive and asked how Mr. Dery, who was outspoken, would be without being disruptive. Mr. Dery said he would just be bringing something to the Board that was different from other ideas on the Board. Peter Clark said Mr. Dery had a lot of skills that the Board did not have and that Mr. Dery would have been useful in his experience. Brian Stein thought Mr. Clark was correct in the need for technical expertise on the Board but an understanding of the By-laws and how to apply them to the Town as well as being open to new ideas was important.

There were five candidates who would be discussed and then two would be recommended to the Board of Selectmen.

#### **Other Board Business: Short Term Paying Guest in Homes Update**

An officer of the Town would investigate the B&B's and if food was served at these places, it would involve the Health Department. Claudia Woods wanted to review the topic in greater detail, such as limiting the number of people who do it within a year. There was a current complaint, but there was no licensing or regulations for it.

#### **Sequencing of By-laws.**

Richard Boroff distributed information regarding the various topics which were not in the same sequence or wording. Each By-law had the same topics in different locations within each By-law. Claudia Woods and the Board agreed that the same sequence should be appropriate. The numbers might be different but the order would be consistent.

Ed Howard referred to discussions regarding the WSOD when reference was made to the fact that someday, there would be sewerage in Hamilton. Mr. Howard wanted to make sure that the Board did not endorse having sewerage in town. The town did not take a position on sewerage.

#### **Minutes.**

Motion to approve the minutes of March 7, 2017 made by Brian Stein

Seconded by Ed Howard.

Vote: Unanimous.

Motion to approve the minutes of April 4, 2017 made by Brian Stein

Seconded by Bill Olson.

Vote: Unanimous.

#### **Adjournment**

Motion made by Brian Stein to adjourn

Seconded by Bill Olson.

Vote: Unanimous to adjourn at 8:56 pm.

Prepared by:

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Marcie Ricker

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Attest

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Date