



OAK BLUFFS PLANNING BOARD

ZONING REFORM SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 2, 2023
5:00 p.m. | Hybrid Meeting

Members in Attendance: Ewell Hopkins, Sean DeBettencourt, JoJo Lambert

Members Absent: Mark Crossland, Erik Albert

Staff in Attendance: None

Attendees: Llewellyn Rogers, Kris Chvatal, Doug Pease, Peter Palches

Chair Hopkins opened the meeting at 5:06 p.m. A quorum was present.

Updates by Topic

The Chairperson indicated that there will be one more meeting in August, and then the Subcommittee will do the work of meeting with legal counsel where necessary, and consolidating warrant language. Hopefully, by mid to late September, public hearings will begin. He further stated that he suspects a couple of topics will be ready, but that others would need more work.

- Increase Commercial Zoned Areas/Commercial Activity in Residential Zones

Member DeBettencourt stated that Mr. Chvatal met with members of the MVC recently to discuss the affordable housing component of the topic. There is a revised draft that was circulated, and the language is being reviewed by the group. Mr. Chvatal stated that he believes the group is getting close to having something ready for review by Town Counsel, once he receives feedback from the group on his latest draft. There are some missing pieces, but he believes those missing pieces require coordination with affordable housing. He stated that he has not yet been able to get answers to the specific questions he has, so it may be best to submit the draft in its current state, given that there are likely to be multiple edits going forward.

The Chairperson announced that each group will submit their work, and before the Subcommittee goes to public hearings, the Planning Board will review it all in detail.

- Light Industrial/Mixed Use Overlay

Mr. Chvatal stated that the group has not looked at expanding B1 or B2. He believes this may best be done at the Planning Board level because the working groups are not set up to hear testimony from abutters and the like.

- Accessory and Guest Apartments/Home Business/Sheds

Mr. Rogers stated that the group will re-name accessory and guest apartments as ADUs. The group will also finish up with the Home Business component. Shed language will also be addressed. Mr. Rogers explained that the shed language is important because the existing by-law language is archaic and confusing. He reported that the group is on track for meeting an August deadline.

- Subdivisions that shouldn't be in R3

The Appendix is being changed to suit the setbacks of an R2 subdivision for places like Tower Ridge and Meadowview Farms, to name two.

The Chairperson stated that at a recent Water Department meeting, the department expressed that the Town is in a dire state where it comes to meeting demand with the infrastructure that is in place. He suggested that in thinking about the language that the groups are and are not incorporating, they should anticipate water usage implications. Increases in water usage should be avoided.

- Eliminating the Sign Committee

Mr. Rogers stated that it appears he will be able to get language together by an August deadline.

- Noise By-Law

Mr. Chvatal stated that this topic should be wrapped up by a week from Friday. Minimal changes will be recommended and it appears to be a Select Board issue, as opposed to a zoning issue. As such, the focus will be on leaf blowers and mechanicals.

- Definitions

Mr. Rogers indicated that the focus will be on shed and ADU definitions.

The Chairperson stated that the groups should consult definitions corresponding to the by-laws they are working on to determine if changes need to be made.

A discussion followed regarding the definitions relating to garages and accessory apartments.

- Minimal Lot Size for R3 and R4/Permitted Use Under R1, R2, R3

Member DeBettencourt pointed out that much of the R4 land that is eligible is under the auspices of the Land Bank. Within the eligible R3 land, they discussed the feasible locations for LYMOD versus not LYMOD. The more this is researched, the more difficult it seems to be to make meaningful change. The Chairperson encouraged the group not to look at appetite at this point, because that is something that will be pursued in the fall. He further stated that there are many undeveloped R3 and R4 lots in town that deserve scrutiny. Member DeBettencourt agreed that he would take this into consideration, and that in reviewing the Master Plan, there appears to be a desire to maintain a more rural and open environment. He agreed to revisit.

- Mixed Use Zoning

Member DeBettencourt reported that he did not see anything in Section 7 that was easily removable and would make things significantly better. The Chairperson stated that if change doesn't appear necessary, change shouldn't be made just for the sake of it.

- Implementations to Non-Vehicular Transportation Options

Member DeBettencourt stated that thus far, most of the language and documents he reviewed did not appear to have much to do with bicycles, and was more geared toward pedestrians. That is the progress that has been made so far.

Mr. Chvatal remarked that there are a number of things happening with respect to mixed use zoning at the state level right now.

- Affordable Housing

The discussion was tabled because Mark Leonard was not in attendance.

- Commercial Zoning in the Copeland and Cottage City Districts

Member Lambert reported that she submitted a request to the Town Clerk for the maps of the subject area. She is also seeking further information and documentation of the meetings that took place regarding re-zoning the area. She further stated that she is in the process of drafting the bylaw. The Chairperson remarked that the forensic investigation will not likely be completed within the timeframe, and expressed a hope that the subgroup would instead focus on the recommendation to the Town in the fall.

- Dukes County Ave. Re-Zoning

Lou Rogers stated that there are many lots that are split with respect to zoning, and the current maps appear to be drawn free-hand in those areas. Nothing has really been changed since the last draft changes were written two years ago. Lou Rogers, Doug Pease, and JoJo Lambert will meet one more time to review the drafts.

The Chairperson then stated that he would consider this the last checkpoint meeting as a group. Work should be wrapped up at the end of August, at which time drafts will be submitted to Town Counsel.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 pm.

Minutes approved August 24, 2023

Documents on File:

Agenda; Zoom Video