

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR ZONING UPDATES
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, 11/14/2016**

Approved: 12/1/16

Call to Order: 7:03 p.m.

Present: Chair Nancy Zahler, and board members Rod Hawkes, Darby Kiley, Sue Ritter, Liz Thomas, and George Tselekis. CJ Randall and David West of Randall + West.

Public in Attendance: Roxanne Marino of the Sustainability Advisory Committee.

Agenda Review; Minutes Review (11/3/2016): Ms. Zahler reminded the Committee that the evening's agenda would be solely dedicated to continued review of the ag zoning document. Minutes from the previous meeting were not yet available.

Committee members continued their review of the draft zoning document, beginning with each item listed under section 212-29 "Lot area and yard requirements" and offering various wording changes.

In reviewing documents supplied by Randall + West, Ms. Zahler said she was intrigued by how other municipalities addressed well-head and watershed protection. She asked if such setback measures between ag operations and nearby streams and watersheds were addressed in parts of the zoning. Ms. Randall said additional requirements were added to the section on animal waste storage to address setback issues and prohibit farm animals from entering nearby streams. The language aligns closely with public health, she said. That is the Town's strongest method in protecting water wells without developing a watershed protection overlay. Ms. Kiley said the Town also has established setbacks from streams and outlines standards for vegetative buffers. Ms. Randall also noted Tompkins County Soil and Water as another local resource on stream setback measures.

Items J and K, regarding maximum footprint size on ag- and non-ag buildings, were retained as written.

Next, discussion ensued on rear and side yard setbacks – items F and G – with members reaching a consensus to add language in an effort to both limit ag-residential conflicts and give the Board of Zoning Appeals flexibility when reviewing setback variances involving neighboring residential and/or agricultural properties.

Significant time was given to the "Limitations on Subdivision and Parent Tracts" section (212-29.1), with several changes made to clarify and simplify the language throughout the section. Discussion ensued regarding the date of which the ag zoning document would take effect and which dated tax map would be referenced, if at all. Ms. Kiley said the most recent tax map is from July 2016, and there have already been 10 subdivisions since then. Ultimately, the Committee agreed that the document would take effect on the day it is adopted and, further, language would not specify the date of the tax map, giving the Town flexibility to reference a future tax map.

The provision pertaining to clustering was discussed, with attention given to incentives. The Committee reiterated that it favored incentivizing clustering by offering a land bonus for such projects. Several edits were made to the document based on recommendations from Committee members. In regard to presenting the proposed zoning changes to Town boards and committees, Ms. Thomas suggested that the most significant changes be outlined alongside of the current zoning parameters, so as to better communicate proposed changes to those unfamiliar with Town zoning.

Discussion also involved questions of how best to properly track fragment lots and development rights. Ultimately, the Committee opted to hold off on finalizing language in this section until the Town's Counsel weighed in. On the subject of transfers of development rights, Ms. Randall emphasized the need for proper documentation, some kind of paper trail – like on a deed – that states definitively whether or not a parcel has development rights. She also suggested the Committee return to a provision within the same section that addresses “Simple Subdivision Annexation”.

Committee members then reviewed past changes. In regard to Ag Commerce, Ms. Zahler noted parameters are written for site-specific, on-farm activities, but there is a trend toward collaboration among several farms. As it is written now, the document seems to only speak to activities directly related to one's own property, she said. Ms. Thomas said she favors the Ag Commerce section as it is, and Ms. Kiley added that more flexibility for collaboration and shared operations among farms could open up the possibility of larger-scale, undesirable farm use, like a canning factory. Ms. Zahler also noted the specificity of on-farm operations within the Ag Events section. Ms. Randall said the reasons for tightening the language in that section were two-fold: to link provisions to state Ag and Markets, and to specify that larger-scale events would be subject to some kind of Town review.

A general discussion ensued regarding CAFOs, home occupation, and site plan review for lawn/landscaping services.

The Committee concluded its review with a conversation regarding next steps. Members agreed to request a review of the “Limitations on Subdivisions of Parent Tracts” section by the Town's attorney. Once completed, the draft would then be circulated to participating boards and committees.

Ms. Marino suggested forwarding to committees parts of the document that do not need review by its attorney, like definitions. Ms. Randall said the hope is to have the latest draft sent along to stakeholder groups following the Committee's next meeting. The Committee hopes to hear back from the Town Attorney before December 1.

Ms. Zahler MADE the MOTION to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Hawkes SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Louis A. DiPietro II on November 16, 2016.