

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR ZONING UPDATES
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, 04/06/2017**

Approved: May 4, 2017

Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair Liz Thomas and Committee members Michael Boggs, Rod Hawkes, Darby Kiley, and George Tselekis. David West of Randal + West.

Sue Ritter was absent.

Public in Attendance: Phil Antwiler, Ed Gatch, and Tim Gatch.

Privilege of the Floor: No one addressed the Committee at this time.

Agenda Review and Minutes Review (03/02/2017)

Mr. Hawkes MADE the MOTION to accept the March 2, 2017 meeting minutes, and Mr. Tselekis SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was unanimously carried, 5-0.

Ms. Thomas suggested discussing the NYSERDA grant deadline for zoning revisions, and Ms. Kiley noted that there was a proposed standard for animal waste storage facility in the earlier versions of the zoning draft. However, in the Rural/Ag draft that was released for committee review, it was mistakenly omitted. She was unclear as to whether to address it presently as a Committee or wait until all comments from stakeholder committees are in.

Debrief of the Ag Committee meeting on March 23, 2017

Ms. Thomas commended Randall + West on their presentation and noted concerns put forth by Ag Committee Chair Chaw Chang. Rather than discuss them now, she advised the Committee to address those concerns after all stakeholder comments are in. She attended a recent meeting of the Town Board of Zoning Appeals, and the group seems well on its way to forming comments. The Sustainability Advisory Council has requested a delay, but NYSERDA's deadline makes that difficult.

Jacksonville Pre-draft Zoning Discussion

Mr. West said he and consulting partner, CJ Randall, have fundamental questions about what the Town wants with Jacksonville zoning. There is some confusion about what has been suggested for zoning in the Hamlet, and Mr. West said he would like to bring the discussion back to basics and lay out options on how to handle zoning updates in Jacksonville. At this time, he began a review of what a hamlet center is, its characteristics, and defined form-based zoning. Ultimately, the Town has three options for handling zoning updates: (1) replace all existing Jacksonville

zoning, (2) supplement existing zoning, or (3) optional/parallel code, creating a standalone code for specific areas. If proceeding with form-based code, consultants will explore characteristics outlined by the Town Comprehensive Plan, including mixed-use development in the Hamlet and the establishment of architectural design guidelines. Mr. West said he would like feedback as to what to include in form-based zoning. He also provided a review of existing regulations and allowed uses.

Given Jacksonville's small population, Hamlet businesses will rely on commuter traffic, Mr. Hawkes observed. How do you accommodate traffic without parking lots? Mr. West recommended the Town work with the State Department of Transportation to get on-street parking. Ms. Thomas said it seems most people do not park on the street within the Hamlet. Mr. West said that is partly because the Town allows on-site parking, alleviating any need to park on the street.

Mr. West continued his review of existing allowed uses, recommending the Town eliminate as many special use permits as possible within the Hamlet. This is to avoid the potential for being sued. Currently, there are special use permits for churches, mosques, flag lots, fraternal organizations, hotels and more. He advised moving these uses to permitted uses because it would allow businesses like restaurants and barber shops to open without having them go through the special-use permit process.

Returning to the subject of parking, Mr. West said existing off-street parking standards, as written, welcome strip malls. He recommended removing the requirement for off-street parking. There is no reason to impose an off-street parking requirement for a restaurant looking to open within the Hamlet. On-street parking slows traffic and is a good use of space.

After a short discussion of the three options for zoning updates, the Steering Committee reached a consensus that option 2 – supplement existing zoning – was the sensible strategy.

Mr. West asked the Committee to consider which existing uses currently permitted with a special-use permit should be moved to site plan review. A discussion of Hamlet density ensued.

Ed Gatch shared his opinion that the Committee needs to advertise its meetings better; the Committee needs input from Jacksonville residents. Ms. Thomas said there have been three input meetings with Hamlet residents thus far. Tim Gatch felt that what is being proposed sounds like what Jacksonville used to be. Who will pay for this? He said it is difficult for businesses to make it in Jacksonville and felt the roads were not wide enough for on-street parking; people want convenience.

Mr. Antwiler shared his thoughts, saying he has a lot of skepticism about the plan's practicality and feasibility for Jacksonville to develop into a Hamlet center. It seems the population is too small. When the Comprehensive Plan was being written, Jacksonville residents were surveyed and found to support local shopping, but their actual interest in buying local is pretty low. He has noticed a recurring mention of multifamily housing in Jacksonville, a proposal that would have little community support. Lastly, rezoning the ag land east of Jacksonville Road to support density would be a hard sell, since the existing viewsheds are assets.

What we heard from two meetings and a kick-off event, Mr. West said, is that Jacksonville residents want a place to convene in the Hamlet center. What is more likely is a mixed-used building, with four apartments above two, small shop fronts.

Mr. Antwiler asked if there would be any challenges or disincentives to adding more form-based zoning to only one part of Town – the Hamlet of Jacksonville. Mr. West said it depends; there is not a lot of room for single-family home development, and the commercial core, not houses, is the intended targeted of zoning guidelines. Form-based zoning adds a hoop, but it protects Hamlet character. He said to be cautious in assuming more stringent design guidelines would increase the cost of bringing the buildings up to design standards.

Weighing sentiment from the Committee, Mr. West suggested exploring zoning parameters for two Hamlet zones – the Hamlet center and the Hamlet neighborhood. A short discussion ensued regarding the administrative aspects of design guidelines. Mr. West said a strong zoning law can unequivocally prevent undesired development, like a chain retail store, while the Town Planning Board would take up any matters concerning design standards.

The Gatches were asked to share their thoughts. Ed Gatch gave a brief review of several past Jacksonville businesses that no longer exist. He does not envision any business coming to Jacksonville and doubts zoning can revive the Hamlet. He said he is against imposing zoning rules on property owners. Tim Gatch also said he would have a problem with zoning laws dictating what a homeowner can do with their house. The Committee stressed proposed design guidelines are for commercial buildings, not houses.

The Committee then discussed parking. Ms. Thomas cited two Town businesses that were required to put in a certain number of parking spaces. The sizes of those parking lots turned out to be excessive. However, Mr. Hawkes noted, one of those businesses – ATC – had expressed a future plan to expand.

Mr. West said consultants are considering how to make buses more productive in the Hamlet. If people know there is free parking, they almost always drive. It would help to not have two parking spaces for every barbershop. Ms. Thomas preferred to loosen Town parking requirements to reduce parking-lot sizes. Mr. West recommended not having a parking requirement in the Hamlet center. Asked about the most efficient ways in limiting chain retail stores, Mr. West said parking parameters and design standards.

Deadline was discussed. Ms. Kiley said the end-date on the rezoning efforts will need readjustment, since the original deadline is the middle of this year. The Committee needs to think about when they will have zoning drafts ready for the Ag zone and Jacksonville Hamlet and when they will be publically available. Is it reasonable to say by the end of the third quarter? she asked. After a discussion, Ms. Kiley proposed seeking an extension from NYSERDA, with the new proposed deadline being the second quarter of 2018.

The Committee discussed its next meetings on Thursday, May 4, Thursday, May 18, Thursday, June 1, and Thursday, June 22.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Louis A. DiPietro II on April 24, 2017.