

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR ZONING UPDATES
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, 06/22/2017**

Approved: July 24, 2017

Call to Order: 7:01 p.m.

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

Sue Ritter attended the meeting via teleconference.

Public in Attendance: Krys Cail of the Ag Advisory Committee, Roxanne Marino of the Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Council.

Agenda Review; Minutes Review (05/25/2017; 06/01/2017)

Ms. Thomas requested the Committee discuss inviting liaisons from stakeholder committees to attend meetings.

Ms. Kiley MADE the MOTION to accept the May 25, 2017 and June 1, 2017 meeting minutes, and Mr. Boggs SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was unanimously accepted.

Privilege of the Floor: Ms. Cail said she spoke with Chaw Chang recently in regard to the updated draft of the Ag zoning document. This happens to be the worst time to undergo Ag zoning changes, since local farmers are working 15- to 18-hour days. The updated document does include several suggestions the Ag Committee made, but Mr. Chang reportedly felt misrepresented on the subject of subdivisions. Instead of density-based zoning, he favors using a combination approach where subdivisions and site plan review are used to preserve farmland. However, based on Ms. Randall's notes, it appears Mr. Chang's recommendation was misinterpreted and merely combined in addition to other, less favorable approaches. The idea is not to overlay site plan review with density-based zoning, she said, but to replace the density-based approach with site plan review.

Ms. Marino said she would like to see some analysis of how the division of the parent parcel plays out in the Town. She was disappointed there is no addressing the road frontage issue, particularly since three of the four stakeholder boards and committees brought it up. She also had questions for Ms. Cail about how site plan review would preserve farmland. Would every single subdivision come under site plan review? Such a process would be a huge burden for the Planning Board. It might work for cluster development but not for every subdivision.

Ms. Thomas asked when the appropriate time would be to bring in stakeholder liaisons to be part of the zoning discussion. She recognized the need to include other voices, however the Steering

Committee does need its own time to talk through the draft document. Mr. Tseleki said he favors the current process. He cautioned against expanding the Committee – it could slow the process down – and proposed a second Privilege of the Floor for instances when stakeholder opinion would be helpful. Mr. Hawkes favored this idea. Ms. Ritter said she agrees with Mr. Tseleki but felt the Committee’s process could use more input. Ms. Kiley felt the question of more stakeholder input is a meeting-by-meeting matter. Sometimes the Committee is reviewing proposals for the first time and needs to understand it themselves before expanding the discussion to other groups. Ms. Thomas proposed the Committee consider stakeholder involvement on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

At this time, Ms. Randall began a review of the Ag zoning document, an updated version that included revisions based on comments from the June 1, 2017 Steering Committee meeting with stakeholder groups. The Ag Commerce definition was discussed first. The Committee reached a consensus that a reference to the Farm Operation definition was necessary in Ag Commerce. Farm breweries and how they would be classified were also discussed.

Continuing, Ms. Randall outlined the concept of a streamlined site plan review process, the main difference being a 45-day time period versus 62 days. Considerable discussion ensued on the topic. Ms. Kiley thought areas of the concept were confusing, considering certain aspects of ag operations fall under site plan review but most do not. She would like to know the Ag Committee’s thought behind requesting a more streamlined site plan review process. Some of the ag uses listed under site plan review are major impacts, Ms. Thomas said, and shortening the review to within 45 days might not be reasonable for the volunteer Planning Board. Ms. Kiley noted the Town changed its site plan review process a couple of years, granting the Planning Board the option to carry out site plan review, waive the public hearing and approve a project in the same meeting, which works well for residential projects. Within the context of ag-related projects, there was some concern with the prospect of waiving a public hearing during site plan review. Doing so would not allow neighbors to weigh in or even be made aware of the project. Mr. Hawkes felt the difference between site plan review and a streamlined variation – a matter of 17 days – did not seem significant enough to warrant it; if someone wants to build, it does not seem excessive to have a 62-day timeframe versus 45. The Committee felt the current site plan review structure does essentially the same as the proposed streamlined version.

Next, the Committee and Ms. Randall discussed CAFOs. NYS Department of Ag and Markets along with zoning language from the Town of Catherine inform the latest draft. Ms. Kiley expressed concern with CAFOs in the site plan review section, and Ms. Randall suggested CAFOs be subject to site plan review as well as design standards.

Ms. Marino thought there should be more Town review of CAFOs, but the Ag Committee should not be the lone reviewing group. Years ago, Town leaders discussed forming an advisory committee of farmers and other local experts to review CAFOs. Also, she felt the Town does not need to abide by every comment from State Ag and Markets. If the Town feels there is a public health concern related to a CAFO, it has the right to act.

The Committee then turned to the Planning Board’s concerns with road frontage. Randall + West has suggested 150 feet of road frontage, which, admittedly, allows for more lots, Ms. Randall

said. An important question for the Committee to consider: Is the concern with road frontage about preserving the inner, habitat piece of a given parcel or preserving views from the roadway? That needs to be made clear, she said. A lengthy discussion ensued on flag lots and subdivisions.

Twenty minutes were dedicated to reviewing the land subdivision regulations.

On road frontages, Ms. Marino encouraged the Committee to review the BZA's density-based averaging approach, which would preserve 80 percent of a given parcel at the time of subdivision. Preserving 80 percent still allows for more development than currently permitted. A proposal for minimum 150 feet of road frontage and 1-acre lots would allow for more development.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Louis A. DiPietro II on July 11, 2017.