

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
STEERING COMMITTEE FOR ZONING UPDATES
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, 07/06/2017**

Approved: July 24, 2017

Call to Order: 7:01 p.m.

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

Public in Attendance: Roxanne Marino of the Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Council.

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

There were no minutes to review

Privilege of the Floor: No comments

Discussion on Draft Ag/Rural zoning

The steering committee started with a discussion on the subdivision process and the zoning requirements for lot areas and number of permitted subdivisions. On the discussion of flag lots, Ms. Kiley reiterated that a flag lot is not a use but is a type of land subdivision. Flag lots should be allowed in most or all of the zoning districts and this should be specified in the subdivision or lot area and yard requirement section. As a follow-up from the last meeting, Ms. Kiley reported that she sent an email to the Ag Committee explaining that the site plan review procedures were changed a couple years ago and a project can be approved after sketch plan review and without a public hearing, and felt that this closely matches the Ag and Markets streamlined site plan review approach.

In the revised draft, Ms. Randall said that she imported the Board of Zoning Appeals language and calculations for subdivisions, but had concerns about the legal reasons for the “protected” lands and whose responsibility it would be to keep it protected. This needs to be more fully enumerated. If the committee likes the BZA or CSAC subdivision calculations, the town attorney should provide input. Mr. Tselekis suggested sticking with the original draft sent to the committees. Ms. Marino added that the minimum lot size was not the only difference between the BZA and the Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Council recommendations. She said that there needs to be some type of consideration for road frontage, and the CSAC recommended holding out 50% of the road frontage. Ms. Thomas said that the committee has discussed road frontage in reference to conservation subdivision as a way to preserve road frontage from development.

For major subdivisions using natural resource inventory, Ms. Randall stated that the regulations would allow for more development but also lay out protected areas. The draft should disincentivize hacking off one lot at a time. The Ag subdivision (larger lot size reserved for agriculture) could preserve views from roads and the farmer gets an extra subdivision. We do not want to encourage viable farmland to be developed; the zoning/subdivision process could identify critical areas up front – set aside these areas at the beginning with a clear inventory process.

Ms. Thomas asked committee members what subdivision method they preferred. Mr. Boggs is undecided, Ms. Ritter is uncomfortable with the BZA recommendation on 80% protected lands – for legal reasons; Mr. Tseleki and Mr. Hawkes prefer the ZUSC draft; and Ms. Kiley prefers the 2/7/17 ZUSC draft but change the rounding to traditional rounding methods.

Ms. Thomas asked if open development areas would be an option for preserving some of the road frontage from development without the cost of building a road that meets town standards. Ms. Kiley added that the Planning Board worked on open development area regulations in 2015. Ms. Ritter said that the Town of Ithaca has a number of private roads that are on the official town highway map and do not have to go through the open development area process, but subdivisions are reviewed and approved by the Planning Board and the Town Board amends the official highway map.

Regarding minimum lot size, Mr. Boggs preferred a minimum of 2 acres and the rest of the committee preferred 1 acre.

Regarding maximum lot size, Ms. Ritter preferred 2-3.5 acres maximum and other members said no maximum.

Regarding the ag land subdivision of 20 acres, all agreed to leave it as is.

Regarding an open development area or private road with a road that does not meet town specifications, members agreed that this is something to look into. Ms. Ritter and Ms. Kiley preferred a private road over open development area.

For the next meeting on July 24, the committee will cover the Ag commerce definition, any remaining ag language issues, subdivision, side yard setback (larger if adjacent to ag land), and Jacksonville design guidelines.

Privilege of the floor

Ms. Marino said that the CSAC was not only interested in preserving road frontage because of views but other issues associated with water. Groundwater table is shallow and could be contaminated with agricultural products, such as pesticides. Small lots have little flexibility on where the well and septic are located. It is a public health issue and if the groundwater is not sufficient, the residents will request a water district, and Ag and Markets does not condone municipal water extensions in ag districts. She asked the committee to play out various scenarios with the maximum number of subdivisions on different parcels. People do not want to see increased development but it is happening one lot at a time. There are a number of older farmers

that are already and will be selling land, and there are large landowners who lease farmland and they are disconnected to the agricultural needs. The sale price could be lowered by limiting the development potential. The rounding rule makes a huge difference, and the CSAC recommended not subdividing anything under 5 acres.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Darby Kiley on July 17, 2017.