

**TOWN OF ULYSSES
ZONING UPDATES STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, 02/08/2018**

Approved: February 22, 2018

Call to Order: 7:02 p.m.

Present: Chair Liz Thomas, and Committee members Michael Boggs, John Gates, Rod Hawkes, Stephany Heslop, Darby Kiley, Roxanne Marino, Steve Morreale, Rebecca Schneider, and Sue Ritter; CJ Randall and David West of Randall+West;

Public in Attendance: Greg Reynolds, Cheryl Thompson, and John Wertis.

Agenda Review; Minutes Review (01/18/2018)

Ms. Thomas requested the addition of an agenda item to discuss the function of stakeholder alternates.

Ms. Thomas MADE the MOTION to approve the amended January 18, 2018 meeting minutes, and Mr. Hawkes SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was unanimously carried, 9-0.

Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Wertis circulated various materials, including population statistics within the Inlet Valley Ithaca Plan. He said he has yet to read in the ZUSC minutes any discussion of the subdivision analysis commissioned by Randall+West nor of Kry's Cail's analysis of local data. Regarding the documents, Mr. Wertis said the Cornell-led study was done for the Town of Ithaca and includes interesting information about declining population in Tompkins County. He spoke with someone from Cornell who is associated with the study, and this person said they would be interested in helping the Town of Ulysses get further demographic data.

Mr. Reynolds thanked ZUSC for their efforts and said he hoped a more inclusive process would result in a productive dialogue.

Speaking on behalf of the BZA, Ms. Thompson said the Board really favors removing a maximum lot size because it may allow for nice residences located perhaps further off the road. The BZA also encourages the use of a percentage, not a divisor, to determine how much land may be subdivided off a parent parcel. Lastly, she felt the 5,000 square-foot limit on non-ag buildings, particularly churches or schools, seemed quite small and restrictive.

Ms. Heslop arrived at 7:14 p.m.

On the subject of ZUSC alternates, Ms. Thomas felt the chairs of each stakeholder group should appoint anyone they want to serve as a ZUSC alternate. However, to keep ZUSC from getting too large to manage, each stakeholder group will have just one voting member at the ZUSC table. Mr. Hawkes agreed.

A brief discussion on public comments ensued. Ms. Schneider noted the thoughtfulness of the submitted comments, and asked how the Town queried its residents. Ms. Thomas cited the Town list serv, help from the Ag Committee in spreading the word about zoning updates, and at various zoning-related community meetings, including the public information meeting on November 30th. Ms. Thomas said more time would be dedicated to discussing submitted comments at ZUSC's next meeting on February 22.

Manure management at smaller farm operations – not CAFOs – was the next topic. The Tompkins County Health Department requires manure be at least 250 feet from wells or water bodies, Ms. Thomas said. Is this enough of a safeguard for the Town? She asked. Mr. Gates said most farmers participate in the Ag and Environmental Management (AEM) program, which extensively covers the where, when, and how of manure spreading. We are expected to follow the plan, he said, though Ms. Kiley added AEM is voluntary for farms that fall below the CAFO threshold. She noted the new Animal Waste Storage part within the new zoning proposal and suggested that ZUSC review it for next meeting and discuss any possible changes. Ms. Schneider and Mr. Gates said they would work collaboratively on a Town strategy to ensure proper manure management.

Discussion then turned to a proposal put forth to expand the Conservation Zone further west, to Dubois Road and Willow Creek Road the area in the Comprehensive Plan called the Environmental Protection Area. Asked for the reasoning behind the proposal, Ms. Thomas cited the presence of many creeks and streams that carry runoff to Cayuga Lake as one reason. Mr. Gates read the purpose of the Conservation Zone, and said the proposal to expand it sounded like a land grab. Ms. Kiley said that site plan approval is required for new construction in the Conservation Zone where the project site is in unique natural areas (UNAs) or steep slopes. Many of the same uses would apply in the Conservation Zone as they would in the Ag/Rural; the main difference is the Conservation Zone has a 5-acre minimum lot size, she said. Mr. Gates questioned if the streams were blue line streams. Though Krums Corners is not located in the Conservation Zone, it is near it, and Mr. Gates called it valuable land and does not see it as ecologically sensitive. Ms. Kiley noted agricultural is a permitted use in the Conservation Zone.

There was disagreement between Mr. Reynolds and others over what the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan said about expanding the Conservation Zone. Mr. Reynolds felt the Plan is solidly against expanding the Zone, while the Lakefront section that Ms. Kiley read said otherwise. ZUSC did a show of hands to determine who was in favor of extending the Conservation Zone. All were in favor except Mr. Gates. Though voting in favor, Ms. Schneider said she would be taking the topic back to the Planning Board for further discussion.

Next, ZUSC discussed the possibility of expanding R2 areas on the northwestern side of Town, around the Village of Trumansburg. Areas near the Village are already R2. However, the proposal is to expand those R2 regions into areas that are currently R1. The primary difference

between R1 and R2 is that R2 allows for a smaller minimum lot size – 1 acre instead of 2 acres. Asked to explain the reasoning for the proposed change, Mr. West said part of the zoning strategy is to allow denser housing in places where it makes sense, like around Trumansburg, since it offers municipal utilities and services. Would the change have any effect on current farming happening there? Mr. Morreale asked. No was the response. Ms. Marino advised caution. Speaking generally about ag-rural concerns, she said it is not that agriculture is or is not being prohibited in certain areas; it is identifying and designating priority land for certain uses, whether that is for housing development, agriculture, or something else.

Ms. Schneider noted a stream in areas considered for R2 and suggested that the stream could be the basis for a community park. Establish a park now, because once density is allowed there, houses will quickly fill that area, she said.

Ms. Ritter made the suggestion to use Curry Road as the natural delineation separating this new R2 area with surrounding Ag/Rural. Ms. Kiley, though, suggested the delineation follow boundaries set by the State-certified Ag District. No consensus was reached on this matter.

Has the Village been brought in on this? Ms. Schneider asked. Ms. Thomas referred to key founding documents – the Tompkins County Ag Plan, the Town Comprehensive Plan, the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan, and the Route 96 Corridor Study – all of which encourage nodal development, as does the Village of Trumansburg’s Comprehensive Plan.

ZUSC did a show of hands to determine who was in favor of expanding R2 around the Village to all areas not within the State-certified Ag District. Everyone was in favor except Mr. Gates, who said he intends to take the issue back to the Ag Committee for a full discussion.

Adding more R1 areas is seen as a possible strategy in an effort to move away from the one-size-fits-all criticism of the Ag/Rural Zone. Where else can we add more R1? Ms. Kiley asked. Ms. Schneider said she was not prepared to pick specific spots; she needs to see a combination of Town maps as well as areas of prime soils. Ms. Thomas asked, should ZUSC encourage more residential development in areas where it already exists. Having worked for many years on past Town zoning initiatives, Ms. Marino was adamant that ZUSC needs clear, defined justification for why certain areas would be more or less acceptable for development; it cannot simply be a matter of “there is some already; why not more?”

For ZUSC’s next meeting, Ms. Thomas said the group will need to discuss some kind of system – whether it is a divisor figure like 15, 10, or 7, or a percentage – to use to preserve farm land and open space. Let’s try to come up with a compromise to include in ZUSC’s next draft, she said.

Figures regarding Town growth were discussed again in light of a recent analysis by Krys Cail, who compiled historical data on certificates of occupancy issued in Town over the last several years. Building Permit data on single family homes from the Ag and Farmland Protection Plan was circulated. The topic grew more general into local and regional growth trends, including discussion of the Cornell Program on Applied Demographics data used in the Inlet Valley Ithaca Plan and the Woods and Poole projections.

Mr. Gates referenced a recent resolution from the Ag Committee that outlines various concerns the group has with the zoning process thus far. He called it a synthesis of some of the Ag Committee's primary concerns.

For next meeting, group members suggested using a projector and orienting the tables toward the audience. Most all articulated their contentment with the addition of more members. Ms. Randall and Mr. West requested specific feedback about what ZUSC would like to see from them.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Louis A. DiPietro II on February 9, 2018.