Town of Ulysses
Planning Board
Final Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2017

Approved: August 21st, 2108

Call to order: 7:08

Present: Chair David Blake, Jonathan Ferrari, Jon Wertis, Katelin Olson, Rebecca Schneider, Rich Goldman, Town Planner John Zepko; Not present: Steve Manley

Member of the Public Present: Carl Guy

Agenda Review, Minutes Review (July 17, 2018): Concerning the permit review for a sign on the 4 Seasons Storage building in Jacksonville, Mr. Blake asked that the minutes show the applicant agreed to remove the old sign before installing a new sign. Mr. Wertis then MADE the MOTION and Ms. Schneider SECONDED the MOTION to approve the July 17th minutes as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

Privilege of the floor: None

New Business


Mr. Wertis MADE the MOTION and Ms. Schneider SECONDED the MOTION to open discussion; the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Guy, representative for the Fahs family, presented a revised site plan that incorporated all of the changes requested by the Planning Board at an earlier (May 1st, 2018) meeting. He also included a letter of approval from the Tompkins County Health Department for the new site septic plan.

Board members asked a few questions about setbacks, sediment control and tree protection and thanked Mr. Guy for the improved plan. Mr. Blake requested that if happy with the new plan, the Board keep the request open until the next meeting on August 21st, when Mr. Guy will be able to show the exact location of the septic system. Mr. Wertis MADE the MOTION to keep the site plan review open and Mr. Blake SECONDED the MOTION; the motion passed unanimously.

The Board began review of the ZUSC’s zoning proposal with the businesses allowed by site plan review section. Ms. Schneider noted she has been pleased with the Committee’s efforts but remains concerned about the intent to move from many smaller to one big zone. She and several other members also expressed concerns about areas they feel need more protection than what is offered by new zoning. To that end, Board members decided to create overlay districts – a planning tool less strict than a site plan
review but still able to aid in preserving the specific character of an area – that would further support zoning protections.

After some discussion members named Taughannock Creek, watersheds, and steep slopes and wetlands as features most in need of extra protection. Ms. Schneider noted that immediate implementation of the overlays will help support environmental protections the Board has already put in place while the new zoning is discussed and finalized. Mr. Ferrari MADE the MOTION and Mr. Blake SECONDED the MOTION to recommend the Town Board add the Taughannock Creek, watershed, and steep slopes and wetlands overlays to the new zoning without delay.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion continued about businesses allowed in agricultural and farming zones. Mr. Zepko encouraged the Board to focus on protecting areas through zoning and not move toward outright banning or allowing conditions, buildings, etc. – which is not in Planning Board purview, anyway. When a member questioned allowing operations like breweries and slaughterhouses in farming and agricultural areas, he suggested using SEQRs (State Environmental Quality Review) or a similar tool to provide protection in those zones. A member also raised the issue of Cafos (Confined Animal Feeding Operations), saying they irreparably harm drinking water – leading to a motion MADE by Ms. Schneider and SECONDED by Mr. Ferrari to not allow Cafos.

The MOTION failed three to two, with Mr. Wertis, Mr. Olson, and Mr. Blake voting nay.

Members talked further about developing standards for nutrient run-off until Mr. Blake noted the time. Mr. Zepko requested that, instead of continuing a review section by section, each member read and digest the proposed zoning and come to the next Board meeting with three or four areas of concern to be discussed.

Ms. Olson MADE the MOTION and Ms. Schneider SECONDED the MOTION to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Maria Barry, August 28, 2018