

**Town of Ithaca Planning Committee
Thursday, October 18, 2018**

Committee Members: Rich DePaolo, Chair; Rod Howe and Pat Leary

Board/Staff Members Present: Bill Goodman; Susan Ritter, Bruce Bates, Mike Smith.

Guests: Jamie Gensel (Fagen Engineers), Ithaca High School Students (2)

- 1. Persons to be heard:** None
- 2. Committee announcements and concerns:** None
- 3. Consider April meeting minutes:** Approved with no changes.
- 4. Review and consider appraisal for 471 Bostwick Road for potential conservation easement:**

Mike Smith reported on the status concerning the 51-acre parcel at 471 Bostwick Road owned by the Mallon's that is under consideration for a conservation easement (CE). At the April 2018 meeting, the committee voted to recommend that the Town Board approve obtaining an appraisal of the development rights value. The Town Board agreed and NE Appraisal Services was hired to undertake the work.

Mike gave a brief property description recap, stating that the current farm operation involves growing conifer trees used in landscaping applications. A private company leases the land and grows trees on 17 acres of the property. Most of the land was intensively farmed in the past (per aerial images) and there remains the potential to revert back again to farmland in the future. Soils on the property are classified as being of "Statewide importance". The property is in the Town's Agricultural Zone and Tompkins County Agriculture District. The land also contains a steep sloped gorge area containing older woods with larger trees that is part of a designated Unique Natural Area (UNA). Adjacent to the Mallon property is active farming operations.

NE Appraisal Services conducted the appraisal and estimated the development rights at \$78,000. This amount is the fair market value of the land and represents the difference between what the property is worth without the easement and its value as restricted by the easement. Factors in the valuation included limited road frontage and private water/sewer. For comparison, the development rights on the Indian Creek Farm were valued at \$155,000 for 42 acres. Reasons for the higher value/acre included access to municipal water/sewer and a larger road frontage. Funding for the Indian Creek CE was assisted through a NYS grant.

Mike described expectations for how a CE might work, including a "farmstead" designation on 2-3 acres encompassing the existing house where various unrestricted (by the CE) improvements would be allowed and be differentiated from the "farm area". The committee discussed the proposal, the Town's ability to fund it through the Open Space Reserve and the merits of this property being considered for the CE.

Committee decision: Rich proposed recommending that the Town Board consider moving forward with the purchase of development rights for the property. Pat moved the motion; Rich, seconded; all in favor. Motion passes.

5. Consider revised Chain Works District Planned Development Zone (PDZ) language:

Jamie Gensel provided a report on the Emerson cleanup. He stated that current activities involved implementation of all the IRM (Interim Remedial Measures – measures to clean up the site), including additional undercutting of material in the “rice-paddy” area. The IRM work was expected to take about 65 days and they had just begun the work a few days earlier. A full report will be prepared when completed. The Chain Works consultant, LaBella, is also on site observing the IRM work. The Record of Decision is not expected for a couple more months. The property is still owned by Emerson and it is unlikely to change hands until at least January as the new owner is still waiting on DEC’s determination of the boundary reassessment in the City and for the feasibility study.

The final GEIS (generic environmental impact statement) for the Chain Works District project has not been completed due to these outstanding environmental aspects. It is in the hands of the city and a special City Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Oct 30th to discuss it. After that meeting it is expected to be released to the town for concurrence.

Sue explained that the revised redlined PDZ provided to the committee included proposed changes from Susan Brock (attorney for town), staff, and input from the development team. The most notable change is that the revised document incorporates the design standards, rather than having them as a standalone document. Yellow highlighted areas denote sections that still need to be addressed. These need additional work and will need final input from the committee once language is proposed. The committee will need to see the document again, as will the attorney for the town.

Rich expressed interest in seeing the previous draft version of the PDZ, prior to this current attorney/staff redline version, to review committee’s previous comments and to see if there was anything substantive.

The committee went through the document reviewing the redlined and yellow highlighted areas of the text. The committee agreed to the redlined proposed changes, with the exception of the following modified or additional changes:

271-17.3 Uses

Collective living

- change ≥ 4 unrelated persons to ≥ 3 ; and
- change the last provision to read “not to exceed two persons per bedroom or a maximum of six.”

Live-work housing

- change from permitted to special permit for CW2A, 2B and 3A.

Day care: pet

- change title of the use to Pet care/boarding; and
- change permitted to special permit for CW3B and CW4.

Research/laboratory

- change permitted to special permit for CW4.

271-17.4 (2) Civic and open space

(c) Community open space calculation does not include the following:
Rejected deletion of "Park area or driveway" and "Entry feature, median, or traffic island."

(d) Public and open space configuration
Remove the word "defensible" and replace with promotes a sense of physical safety.

271-14.4 (3) (b) Thoroughfare types and design
To be revised and reviewed at the next meeting.

271-17.4 (4) Utilities
Remove lines in the first sentence, so it just reads as Permanent utilities.

271-17.5 (2) Building types and disposition
Page 1 table of building types and subzones:
Add "Main Street Mixed Use" to the CW2A Subzone.
Add "Mansion Apartment" to the table (the building type is included elsewhere in document, but not in the table).
Building type: Town Home/Row House, Section 5 (Building Height) – in heading add a and b to CW2 (currently missing), change 4 stories to 3 stories for CW2a.
Building type: Main Street Mixed Use Building, Section 1 (Description) - change "buildings are between two and eight stories tall" to "buildings are between four and six stories".

Discussion on the building height for townhomes led to a discussion of the purpose of subzones a and b. The idea was to allow taller buildings in subzone b with shorter buildings in subzone a, along the road frontage. It was proposed that subzone map in section 271-17.2 be modified so that CW2A is along the road frontage only. A new map will be prepared for the committee's consideration

271-17.5 (4) (c) Building form and design - Exterior materials
Modify to allow vinyl siding greater than 0.044 thickness and revisit "pre-engineered metal buildings".

271-17.5 (5) Parking
The committee discussed parking and the absence of parking standards in the PDZ. The decision was to rely on the site plan approval process and oversight by the Planning Board to ensure that parking needs are analyzed and adequately provided for. Committee felt that the Board was diligent about parking and would ensure accessibility and that the number would not be more than necessary.

271-17.6 (2) Building Guidelines

Energy

Bruce explained that 4% open area was consistent with the NYS Building Code, but that the Code does not require windows to be open. No changes were requested, but the committee asked to have input from Nick Goldsmith and/or David West on the solar reflectivity guidelines.

Architecture

The committee will review this section at the next meeting.

271-17.7 Definitions

"Site Envelope" was identified as having been described in 271-17.5 and it was questioned whether this was redundant and warranted elimination in this section.

6. Discuss next meeting date and upcoming agenda items:

Next meeting is Thursday, **November 29th starting at 3:00 pm.**

Agenda topics:

Chain Works District PDZ

Discuss interpretation of rental registry law