

IMAGINE AMHERST MEETING NOTES

JOINT MEETING TECHNICAL ADVISORY and PROJECT WORKING COMMITTEES March 29, 2017

Working Committee Attendees: Dal Giuliani, Chair, Ellen Banks, Duncan Black, David Chiazza, Jim Cwierley, Carl Montante, Jr., Gary Palumbo, Frank Pasztor, Ramona Popowich and Daniel Ulatowski.

Absent: Brian Kulpa, Bob White, and Jane Woodward

Technical Committee Attendees: Brian Andrzejewski, Kelly Dixon, Rick Gillert, David Mingoia

Absent: Bill Pidgeon, Bart Roberts, Mark Rountree

Staff Present: Dan Howard, Kim Schueler, Amy Carrato, Laurie Stillwell

Code Studio: Lee Einsweiler (via telephone)

Dal Giuliani welcomed everyone. He stated Ramona Popowich had comments regarding the meeting notes from March 8, 2017. Ramona would like her suggestion regarding number of stories included in the meeting notes. The notes were accepted with that addition.

Dan Howard said the committee has two items to discuss:

1. The Commercial & Mixed Use Activity Center Designation Typologies
2. The Commercial & Mixed Use Activity Centers Future Center Designations Map

Lee Einsweiler stated the designation typologies that the Committee has come up with for the centers is a great framework to include in the Plan, and that specifics, such as height and transitions, for the centers can be finalized in the Zoning Code.

Dan Howard asked if there are any concerns on the designations/typologies that were made at the previous meetings. No further concerns. The Typology Framework document was accepted by the Committee and can be posted for public comment and given to NYSERDA.

Discussion of the Future Center Designations Map

Ramona Popowich stated she would like to revisit 5 of the 74 previously designated sites:

1. Main/Eggert – North Side (Eggertsville, #30) - Ramona would like to see this be a Low-Scale Node, not a Medium-Scale Node.
 - Dal Giuliani asked the Committee for any comments. He pointed out that if Key Bank vacates their current building, which might happen, the Committee should consider what the future use of the site should be - at what density and height should it be redeveloped?

- Carl Montante, Jr. asked what would it be considered today? It is more dense and has more height than the south side of Main
 - Dan Ulatowski supports keeping it a Medium-Scale Node, and looking at how to transition into the surrounding area in the Zoning Code.
 - Gary Palumbo stated that the height difference for both types of nodes is close, either 2-3 or 3-4 stories. The Committee should look at the other characteristics in the typologies, like that this site meets Medium-Scale Node due to the depth of the Key Bank and St. Benedict's parcel.
 - Duncan Black sat with this table/site at the Charette and stated that the discussion was having a higher height at Main Street and a lower height at the rear of the property near the residential properties.
 - Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on Low-Scale Node or Medium-Scale Node.
 - *After the vote, Main/Eggert – North Side (#30) will remain designated as a Medium-Scale Node.*
2. Main/Kensington (#35) - Ramona would like it be a Low-Scale Node, not a Medium-Scale Node:
- David Chiazza stated the north side has already been redeveloped and will likely remain this way for a long time. Both the north and south sides of Main at Kensington have larger parcels, and it is near a highway.
 - Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on Low-Scale Node or Medium-Scale Node.
 - *After the vote, Main/Kensington (#35) will remain designated as a Medium-Scale Node.*
3. Transit/Dodge, #57:
- Ramona is concerned about floodways, height of buildings, proximity to creeks, and higher density in this area regarding future development on this site. She stated that she is Chair of the Amherst Flood Mitigation Committee including Ransom Oaks and the Tonawanda Creek Watershed Area, and is concerned about flooding events which already occur near here. She recommends Low-Scale Node, not Corridor.
 - David Chiazza stated he is not sure how the building height impacts the floodway.
 - Ellen Banks stated there should be special consideration of development near waterways.
 - Dal Giuliani asked Lee Einsweiler if he had any comments on this matter. Lee stated that stormwater management is likely already regulated, but that in centers near creeks and other bodies of water, specific standards can be set – those standards can be addressed in the Code. Suburban form has more visible open space, but this doesn't address stormwater.
 - Ramona Popowich would like this site removed from the list, there is so much development and nearby homes flood.
 - Brain Andrzejewski stated it is zoned GB now, and that the Committee needs to consider what is permitted under that zoning currently – dropping this down to a Corridor type restricts it already. If developed, anything proposed in that center

would require studies and stormwater would have to be addressed anyway, through our current process today. He stated you are allowed to build in the floodplain currently, but not in the floodway.

- Carl Montante stated this is GB zoned and this section of Transit Rd. is mostly suburban already. There really isn't much height difference between Low-Scale Node & Corridor.
- Dan Ulatowski stated this discussion should be on what form the Committee wants to see in 20 years, form is the focus. Right now anything can be built in GB.
- Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on Low-Scale Suburban Node or Suburban Corridor.
- *After the vote, Transit/Dodge (#57) will be designated as a Low-Scale Suburban Node.*

4. Hopkins/Dodge, #59:

- Ramona Popowich has spoken with area residents and they have complained about parking at this site and having additional height. She would like this to become a Low-Scale Node, not a Medium-Scale Node.
- Carl Montante stated if there is not enough parking available, then developers will not build.
- Dan Ulatowski supports Low-Scale Node at this site.
- Gary Palumbo stated that if Maple/North Forest is a Low-Scale Node, this site should be as well.
- Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on Low-Scale Node.
- *After the vote, Hopkins/Dodge (#59) will be designated as a Low-Scale Node.*

5. Millersport/Smith/New, #67:

- Ramona Popowich would like this site removed due to flooding concerns and that there is no development there today.
- Dan Howard stated this was rezoned in the last 10 years, it was previously zoned Shopping Center, it is now TND to down-zone the site to prevent large retail stores there and provide for more mixed uses. This parcel was one of the only in that area not affected by wetlands. There is no active agriculture there now. If this is removed from the map, the current zoning will remain.
- Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on keeping or removing this site.
- *After the vote, Millersport/Smith/New (#67) will be removed from the map as a commercial/mixed use center.*

Dal Giuliani asked if anyone would like to discuss any other sites.

6. Main/Youngs, #46:

- Kelly Dixon stated that the Technical Committee discussed this site and would like to see it designated as Traditional form to continue the Village and create a connection to the ECC North Campus.

- Brian Kulpa explained the Trolley the Village of Williamsville is working on and would like to see more density there, wouldn't mind seeing this being a Traditional Medium-Scale Node.
- Carl Montante has done a number of medial related concept plans for the northwest corner due to its proximity to Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital and they tend to be more Suburban in form. Currently it is suburban today.
- Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to vote on Suburban Low-Scale Node or Traditional Medium-Scale Node.
- *After the vote, Main/Youngs (#46) will be remain designated as a Suburban Low-Scale Node.*

Dan Howard said that the Planning Staff had gone over the map and asked the Committee to verify the designation of two sites:

7. Sheridan/Harlem, #21: Asking if this should be broken up on the west and east side of Harlem Road? The Committee decided to do so:
 - East Side – Traditional Center
 - West Side – Traditional Medium-Scale Node
8. Eggert/Bailey, #16: Not sure if this should be Traditional or Suburban? The Committee decided to keep it Traditional
 - Traditional Medium-Scale Node

Dal Giuliani asked the Committee that with the changes from the meeting tonight, if they are ok with the maps. The Current and Future Center Designation Maps were accepted by the Committee (as amended) and can be posted for public comment and given to NYSERDA.

Lee Einsweiler discussed the next steps. They will make all the changes discussed at the meeting and will post the maps online for public comment. Next, Code Studio start the Plan Amendments (the text) and get this to the Committee along with Zoning Assessment materials.

Dal Giuliani stated there will be public hearings at both a Planning Board and Town Board meetings for public input on the documents as well.

Dal Giuliani stated that the next meeting will be on May 10, a Technical Committee Meeting. Stay tuned for more information.

Dan Howard reviewed the tentative schedule/calendar with the committee, stating that this is preliminary and may change; Planning Staff will keep Committee members informed.

Ramona Popowich asked if this project would go before the Town Board this year?

Dan Howard answered that with the current schedule this will likely not happen.

Public Comment:

- Anthony Marconi – Main Street is historic
- MaryAnn Hochberg – Eggertsville concerns
- Debbi Bucki – work with Clarence on Transit Road
- Kim Utech – show more clearly what is currently allowed vs. what is being proposed
- Tom Frank – stormwater control management is important
- Alyssa Shields – asked if telecommunications is part of Imagine Amherst

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30p.m.