

**IMAGINE AMHERST  
MEETING NOTES**

**JOINT MEETING  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY and PROJECT WORKING COMMITTEES  
May 10, 2017**

**Working Committee Attendees:** Dal Giuliani, Chair, Ellen Banks, Duncan Black, David Chiazza, Carl Montante, Jr., Gary Palumbo, Daniel Ulatowski, and Bob White

**Absent:** Jim Cwierley, Brian Kulpa, Frank Pasztor, Ramona Popowich, and Jane Woodward

**Technical Committee Attendees:** Kelly Dixon, Rick Gillert, and Bill Pidgeon,

**Absent:** Brian Andrzejewski, David Mingoia, Bart Roberts, Mark Rountree

**Staff Present:** Dan Howard, Kim Schueler, Amy Carrato

**Code Studio:** Lee Einsweiler (via telephone)

Dal Giuliani called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. He asked if there were any changes to the March 29, 2017 meeting notes. The meeting notes were accepted as submitted.

Dan Howard stated the two items to be reviewed at this meeting are the proposed Comprehensive Plan language for Section 3.3.2, and actual text changes to Chapters 3 and 10.

Lee Einsweiler reminded everyone that the Comprehensive Plan is used for future guidance for where different forms and types of development should be in the Town, and this informs the Zoning Code. The Plan will guide the provisions being applied to the Zoning Code (the next step) including specific uses, heights, and bulk/yard/area specifications. The proposed Section 3.3.2 Plan language will replace text in the existing Plan in Chapter 3 regarding commercial and mixed use areas. The text coincides with the map and descriptions the Working Committee endorsed.

Lee reviewed the new Plan text for Section 3.3.2 regarding forms and types in detail. He stated that there could be multiple districts for each combination of form and type as they may differ because of their neighborhood context. Lee asked if there were any questions about 3.3.2.

- Carl Montante Jr. asked about the Center type, is it intended that be for a single tenant? What about pad-sites/out parcels? He noted that while these may be more traditional in form, they may not be as pedestrian friendly as a true traditional form.
- Gary Palumbo questioned 10 stories for Centers. If that height is allowed then developers will propose it. He stated that it should be lowered to possibly 8 stories?
- Lee Einsweiler stated that the 10 stories was used because it is the height of the existing Marriott hotel, which actually may be non-conforming today. He stated it could be

lowered, or that the 10 story option could only be for sites with other existing 10 story buildings.

- Dal Giuliani asked the committee if they wanted to change the height of Centers to something less than 10 stories – most agreed it should be lowered and if not, that it should be addressed that there are only specific areas this would be allowed: where existing 10 story buildings are or near highway intersections on major roadways.
- Ellen Banks noted that 10 story buildings could be acceptable on sites where they already exist.
- Dan Ulatowski said the current Zoning Code language only allows 65 feet so maybe we stick with that.
- Rick Gillert stated he would not want to create Plan or Zoning just to help non-conforming structures.
- Gary Palumbo questioned why the height in a Corridor goes to 5 stories?
- Lee Einsweiler stated there can be different flavors of Zoning that could only allow 5 stories in certain areas – this would not show up in the Comprehensive Plan.
- David Chiazza questioned why there are some metrics in the Plan language, and that they are likely to be taken literally by developers – is that the intent? As an example, if the Boulevard Mall gets sold, the 400,000 sq. ft. size as described in the Plan may be too small for that site to be redeveloped.
- Lee Einsweiler stated that the metrics are intended to guide zoning and can be specific.
- Rick Gillert stated that when numbers are in a Plan, people will take them literally. They should only be used if explained.
- Gary Palumbo stated if we create Plan narrative that is very specific and it carries down to the Zoning (such as 10 stories), we have to be willing to hear applicant's proposals for these things when we may not be comfortable with them.
- Dal Giuliani stated the Town Board will be unreceptive to 10 stories. Nonconforming parcels today may be ok, but 10 stories should not become part of the Plan or the Code.
- Carl Montante Jr. stated by limiting the number of stories below 10 you are limiting developers flexibility. For example, the Boulevard Mall site: by limiting the number of stories you are limiting its economic feasibility and the viability for redevelopment.
- David Chiazza stated he does not really like the use of numbers in the development descriptions in the Plan. It will be explained in the Zoning Code which is what developers use to make decisions on parcels and developments.
- Dan Ulatowski stated that maybe the description of development types are too specific and should be more narrative.
- Lee Einsweiler cautioned that when numbers are not used, there will be a battle over rezoning applications because it may be too generic. One way to handle this is to change the Plan map first then change the Zoning. It can be helpful to have meetings with staff on conceptual plans where ideas can be discouraged or reworked before rezonings.
- Dan Howard pointed out that the metrics used in this section already exist in the Plan today – it is intended to give people a general idea and description of the types of development that are supposed to occur there.
- Rick Gillert stated that whether or not metrics are used the description is very important.

- Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands regarding language and metrics in the Plan as shown in the new text for Section 3.3.2 provided by Code Studio: less detailed numbers and more narrative was favored by a majority.

Four areas designated as mixed-use centers in the plan also require designation.

Lee Einsweiler continued by discussing specific sites:

1. Crosspointe is designated as a Center and Lee suggests that it could be a Suburban Medium Scale Node. Dal Giuliani asked for a show of hands to choose if this should change to a Corridor or a Medium Scale Node: the Committee voted to change it to a Suburban Medium Scale Node.
2. The Millersport/Smith/New intersection needs some designation in the Plan, Lee suggested a Suburban Low Scale Node. Lee stated there are other nodes also will be considered as a Special Use Center and this site could be designated as such. Rick Gillert is concerned about this site - it is zoned TND and needs special consideration. Dan Ulatowski stated this area currently serves the surrounding community area so it should be nothing more than a Low Scale Node. The Committee voted and decided it will be a Special Use Center.
3. The UB lands located to the east of Millersport Highway should be considered even though UB has the approval authority over its development. Lee suggested designation as a Suburban Low Scale Node or a Special Use Center. Gary Palumbo stated this area was previously discussed and should not be designated in the Plan Amendment. The Committee voted and decided to designate it as a Special Use Center.
4. Muir Woods had been designated as a mixed-use center and plans for a subdivision phase have been submitted. Much of this area will not be commercial. Rick Gillert explained that the Muir Woods plan has changed significantly from the previous PUD proposal. The Committee voted and decided to designate it as a Special Use Center.

Special Use Centers will be designated on Figure 6. A description of these areas will be included in the text that suggests considerations for their scale, and the form and type of commercial development.

Dan Howard asked for comments on draft text, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, Chapters 3 and 10. He noted that language in modifications to text will be made based on the Committees' comments.

Dan Howard stated there has been some desire to complete this project this year as originally scheduled so that the current Planning Board and Town Board might act on any changes to the Plan and Code. Dan reviewed the preliminary schedule for Committee and public meetings.

Dal Giuliani asked if the Committee was ok to release the documents with corrections based on discussion at this meeting. The Committee agreed to release the revised Chapter 3 and 10 language with the corrections discussed so that the public may review them.

Dal Giuliani suggested that Committee members attend at least one of the public meetings if possible.

Public Comment:

- Alyssa Shields

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:15p.m.