

IMAGINE AMHERST WORKSHOP NOTES

JOINT MEETING
TECHNICAL ADVISORY and PROJECT WORKING COMMITTEES
October 18, 2017

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

Absent: Brian Kulpa, Gary Palumbo, Daniel Ulatowski, and Jane Woodward

Technical Committee Attendees: Kelly Dixon, Rick Gillert, and David Mingoia

Absent: Brian Andrzejewski, Doug Gesel, Bart Roberts, and Mark Rountree

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

Code Studio: Lee Einsweiler

Dal Giuliani began the meeting at 7:05 pm. He asked if there are any changes to the August 23, 2017 meeting notes. There were not any changes – the notes were accepted.

Lee Einsweiler discussed the Plan Graphics, which are to be completed soon in order to replace the images currently in the Plan Amendment – the new graphics will specifically represent the Town of Amherst. Lee stated that Code Studio is working on graphics for the Comprehensive Plan for the upcoming Town Board meeting. He apologized for Code Studio being a little behind on these.

Lee explained the Draft Zoning Code examples (new zoning districts) to the Committee.

- Lee reviewed the *Rules of Measurement* section and explained the various types of metrics used in the zoning code: lot lines, primary vs. side street designations, setbacks, build-to zones, bulk and mass, minimum height, ground floor elevation, story height, transparency, blank wall length, and pedestrian access.
 - David Chiazza asked Lee to clarify the Pedestrian Access rule. Lee stated that in a situation with a corner door it can count for both sides of the major and minor streets; this is applicable to Nodes and Centers because typically Corridors are not at intersections and would not have an L-shaped building.
- Lee discussed how the Rules of Measurement are applied to Traditional Medium Scale Node (T-MSN-3) and Suburban Corridor (S-COR-3). He discussed the chart that shows a use table for all the districts.
 - Dan Howard stated that the districts would be listed at the top of this chart – they are not there currently.
 - David Chiazza questioned if the same standards for retail uses would apply to office uses. Lee answered probably not.

- Lee reviewed the Transitions section, which the Committee has seen in the Plan Amendment.
 - David Chiazza questioned if this would create issues with ZBA and variances. Lee stated if there is a special circumstance, a variance can be asked for.
 - Rick Gillert stated that there is still a need for community engagement and input because they have been concerned with transitions.
 - Duncan Black asked if maximum lot coverage/building length and articulation of the building will merge in some fashion. Lee stated they need to, the metrics match or exceed requirements of articulation currently existing today.
- Dave Mingoia asked if the parking requirements will be changed as part of this project?
 - Lee stated that yes, the parking requirements will have to be considered because if current parking regulations do not change, mixed use buildings may not be feasible to build.
 - David Chiazza stated that an Alternative Parking Plan that is reviewed by the Building Commissioner can be requested now.
 - Rick Gillert stated that every development would have to rely on alternate parking if the regulations are not looked at or changed, which is not a long-term solution.

Lee discussed Bulk Planes vs. Split Zoning, using the Wegmans at Niagara Falls Blvd. and Robinson Road as an example. This is a large deep parcel that has single and multi-family lots directly adjacent to it. It has currently been assigned Suburban Center (S-CTR-5), but asked to consider if a 5-story height would be appropriate directly adjacent to the residential? There are two options to consider in this situation:

1. Split Zoning or different zoning districts of varying intensity in that area (these are hard to manage) or
2. Bulk Plane at lot line to manage the height adjacent to a property line

Lee explained to the Committee that the bulk plane would be the preferred option to deal with height issues. The Committee agreed to look at the Bulk Plane tool to deal with height issues.

David Chiazza about how well tested these standards are in other areas/communities? Lee stated the standards are well tested elsewhere, except for the ½ story provisions which haven't really been utilized in other places where they have worked.

Dan Howard discussed the on-going activities and upcoming schedule as shown on the agenda.

Public Comment:

- Tom Frank

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.