

FINAL

LEBANON PLANNING BOARD
Council Chambers, City Hall
Monday, April 22, 2019
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Keith Davio (Chair), Bruce Garland (Vice Chair), Karen Zook (Council Representative), Sarah Welsch, Laurel Stavis, Kathie Romano, Joan Monroe, Matthew Cole (Alt.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matthew Hall, Gregory Schwarz, Jim Winny (Alt. Council Representative)

STAFF PRESENT: David Brooks (Planning and Zoning Director), Tim Corwin (Zoning Administrator), Rebecca Owens (Associate Planner)

1. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Davio called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Chair Davio appointed Matthew Cole to sit in for Matthew Hall in his absence.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 25, 2019

Amendments/clarifications:

Page 2, line 19: remove “as provided by State Statue; Page 2, line 21: change “State Statute” to “NHRSA” and “Plats and” to “NHRSA”; Page 2, line 27: change “Statue” to “Statute; Line 31: change “making” to “make”; Page 3, line 1: change “regarding if” to “on whether”; Page 3, line 25; change “to the” to “it is important to” and change “their” to “his/her and”; Page 3, lines 35-38: remove the sentence: “Mr. Corwin clarified that if the Board is uncertain about how they want to proceed, ask the applicant to clarify their issue of the Board can accept the application but let the applicant know that the Board is uncertain about how they want to proceed.”; Page 5, line 12: change “presenting” to “presented”; line 16: for clarification at “College” after Dartmouth. Corrected a few small grammatical typos.

A MOTION was made by Vice Chair Garland to approve the March 25, 2019 Minutes as presented in the April 22, 2019 agenda packet and as amended.

Seconded by Ms. Stavis.

****The vote on the MOTION passed unanimously, (8-0).***

3. STUDY ITEMS:

A. PRESENTATION OF DRAFT DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES BY GOODY CLANCY

Mr. Ben Carlson and Ms. Kathleen Onufer came before the Board representing the above topic.

Mr. Brooks said that in 2016 the City undertook a Downtown Visioning Study for Downtown Lebanon and the culmination of that project in November 2016 included a variety of numerous recommendations the City could take action on to make its Downtown more vibrant. In follow-up to the conclusions of the Visioning Study, the City engaged Mr. Ben Carlson and Ms. Kathleen Onufer, consultants from Goody Clancy, to help take some of the recommendations and incorporate them into sine if the Downtown Guideline for the Board to consider. These included proposed Zoning Amendments and some changes to Site Plan Review Regulations. Mr. Brooks said there was a first preview meeting with several Architects, Urban Designers and developers from the Downtown area to get their input before presenting to the Planning Board, noting that there will be more opportunities for public input and engagement of stakeholders as the City moves forward.

The consultants presented the first reiteration of proposed amendments that are intended to help implement the Visioning Study.

Mr. Ben Carlson presented an overview of the Downtown Visioning Study, which provided the context for the Zoning and Site Plan recommendations. His role was establishing the Urban Design Framework (key concepts) that encompasses both land use development opportunities as well as the public realm. He described what his findings were after interviewing community members and said these interviews helped him to determine the design guideline strategies for the Downtown Vision Plan such as streets (e.g., Spencer Street), the City's general facade and parking. (Details of his discussion can be found in Appendix F, Design Guide Strategies, in the April 22, 2019 Planning Board agenda pack.)

Ms. Kathleen Onufer presented the proposed revised Zoning and Site Plan Regulations using the current CBDs (Central Business Districts) for Downtown Lebanon and West Lebanon, noting the different characteristics of each area. She said a new Lebanon Downtown District would replace the now Central Business District and the CBD zoning for West Lebanon would remain the same until they could go through a Visioning Plan process. As stated in the proposed Zoning Regulations changes, the purpose of the Lebanon Downtown District would be to provide opportunities for in-town areas to provide for retail and service businesses, banks, offices, and government facilities in downtown Lebanon, and to encourage other related commercial activities and higher density residential uses, as well as to promote an active pedestrian environment consistent with the mixed-use character of the district by providing for continuity of building setbacks and limiting parking in front yards to promote an environment that is safe for walking/biking.

Ms. Onufer reviewed the proposed Lebanon Downtown District and changes to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Regulations with the Board. (These were included in April 22, 2019 Planning Board agenda, item #3A.)

Ms. Welsch expressed her concern about properties along Bank Street/School Street changing, noting there are a lot of unique properties on these streets that should not be changed. Ms. Onufer said that a really important principal in making these moves is that nonconforming uses (the features of the building itself) will always stay the same, as long as they are not changed by an action or redevelopment of a property.

In response to Ms. Romano's questions on parking/parking garage, Ms. Onufer explained the proposed parking requirements noting this (parking garage) would be a Conditional Use Permit process and would need to come before the Board for a determination on whether it would be appropriate for a particular location. Mr. Brooks explained the concept of replacing some surface parking with a parking garage(s). Further discussion and clarifications took place regarding parking garages.

Ms. Monroe questioned if there would be a Lebanon Downtown District and a West Lebanon CBD. Mr. Brooks said yes, the City would continue to separate these two districts until West Lebanon can have its own visioning process completed.

Some members of the Board raised concerns about Lebanon and West Lebanon becoming two different business districts. Mr. Brooks explained that it is possible to have two separate zoning uses, but some further refinement is needed to determine the kind of uses the West Lebanon residents would like to see in West Lebanon. Planning Staff will seek the same community input process for West Lebanon to determine what they envision for West Lebanon. A discussion took place regarding what uses were being omitted /added to the current Zoning Regulations.

Ms. Stavis wanted to make her concern clear - she did not want Lebanon to turn into “this City and that City.” While she appreciated all the work that went into this (Visioning Study) she felt what was being set as a precedent was a rigid distinction between Lebanon and West Lebanon. Mr. Brooks respectfully disagreed and said Lebanon already has two downtowns and has had two downtowns for over 170 years, noting that the way each of them (Lebanon/West Lebanon) wants to develop could be different. Mr. Brooks said West Lebanon developed around the railroad and Lebanon developed between the river and the mills. That’s not trying to divide the City, and the idea of setting up a situation where each downtown area has a set of regulations and uses that are different but considered allowed, or where special exceptions, conditional uses, or variances may be needed, is the nature of zoning and is not splitting the City. It is just tailoring the downtowns to what residents/businesses would like them to become.

Ms. Zook said this type of proposed plan makes sense to her because of the two different types of character each (business districts) have, and further explained her position.

Discussions took place and questions were answered regarding grandfathering existing structures, building heights, the location of parking areas behind buildings, and creating safer sidewalks.

Ms. Zook noted for the folks at home, that just because the Board is talking about future changes this does not mean folks will have their favorite shop moved shop down the road.

Ms. Onufur reviewed the proposed Site Plan Regulations as presented in the April 22, 2019 agenda packet that included pictures from their presentation, the intent of changing Site Plan Regulations, and details for building/site designs.

The next steps will be for the consultants/Planning Staff to incorporate what was heard from the Board and stakeholders and make a round of edits/tweaks. They will also reach out to, and meet with, a broader set of stakeholders/property owners who would be affected by this proposed Lebanon Business District to discuss the changes being proposed, how these changes would/would not affect them, and then bring another set of proposed amendments back to the Board for their review. The plan is to try to get at least the zoning portion done before the Zoning Amendment process starts in the fall.

B. DISCUSSION RE: MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES: Not Discussed

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Planning Board Subcommittees: **No Report.**
 - Planning Board Capital Improvement Program (**M. Hall/S. Welsch/B. Garland/K. Davio**)
- City Council Subcommittees: **No Reports.**
 - Class VI Roads Advisory Committee (**J. Monroe**)
 - Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee (**K. Davio**)
- City Council Representative: (**K. Zook/ J. Winny**): **No Report.**
- Heritage Commission: (**G. Schwarz**): **No Report.**
- Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee: (**VACANT**) – **No Report.**
- Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission: (**VACANT**)
Both Vice Chair Garland and Ms. Stavis were appointed to this Commission. Vice Chair Garland said they had a presentation from a representative from southern NH talking about efforts their

communities were making to help the aging population and trying to see where their synergies lay between the millennials and the older population. They had some good ideas, one being what the towns/City can do and one being what the School Boards does.

- UV Sub-Committee of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions: (B. Garland) – No Report.
- Upper Valley Transportation Management Association: (S. Welsch) – No Report.
- Mascoma River Local Advisory Committee: (K. Romano) – No Report.
- Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Master Plan: (B. Garland/G. Schwarz/K. Davio/J. Monroe) - No report.
- Planning Office - Task Status: (D. Brooks)

Mr. Brooks reported on the following:

- He noted the vacant position for the Ped/Bike Advisory Commission, and explained what the Commission does and is involved with (e.g., pedestrian and bike safety). Ms. Zook said that, assuming the Arts & Culture meeting does not end up meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, she could do the Ped/Bike Committee. Mr. Davio said this could be revisited next month.
- He asked if anyone else from the Planning Board would like to join the CIP Committee, but no one stepped forth at this time.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Chair Davio said the next meeting (May 13, 2019) is going to be very full and requested that the Board start reviewing the materials as soon as they receive them because there is a lot of material to cover. He noted that the Oak Ridge Project may need to go into a special meeting on the schedule.
- Mr. Brooks has not had a chance to consult with legal counsel on regarding the “determination of completeness” process yet.
- Ms. Welsch informed the Board about an interesting article in the Valley News where a developer suggested putting up Jersey Barriers and asked if this could be done in Lebanon. It was suggested that she speak with the Town Manager, Public Works Director, the LPD and LFD about getting these put up.
- Mr. Corwin will email tonight’s Power Point presentation from the Goody Clancy consultants to the Board.

6. OPEN DISCUSSION: NONE

7. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Garland MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Seconded by Ms. Stavis.

****The MOTION passed (8-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dona E. Gibson

Recording Secretary