

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
November 13, 2019

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:04 pm on Wednesday, November 13, 2019 by Mr. Karp in Meeting Room A of the Municipal Building.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the township bulletin board and filed with the municipal clerk on November 7, 2019.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Sue Appleget
Linda Geevers
Curtis Hoberman
Michael Huey
Andrea Mandel
Michael Karp
Hemant Marathe
Allen Schectel- Alt I
Anis Baig-Alt II

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Karp advised that the meeting will entail discussing Section III of the Master Land Use Plan.

MASTER PLAN WORK SESSION

David Novak, AICP, PP, provided a summary of the Master plan. He advised that the process began in July of 2019 based on a 2018 reexamination report. The document being reviewed tonight is just a draft.

Mr. Novak provided a background of planning and zoning in New Jersey. The Land Use Plan is a framework for growth and development and sets the stage for the zoning ordinances.

Mr. Hoberman asked if Fair Share housing, Open Space and recreation elements were already completed. Mr. Novak stated that they were and that this is the next step.

Ms. Mandel asked about an Economic Development Plan. Mr. Novak stated they will work on the Economic Development Plan after establishing uses and issues.

Mr. Surtees advised that there are three nights to go through the draft plan, November 13, December 4 and 11. The Circulation Economic Development Plans will come next.

Mr. Shechtel advised that West Windsor is misspelled on Page 3.

Mr. Novak summarized the introduction of the Master Plan and its requirements. Strategy regarding smart growth, resiliency, environmental sustainability.

Mr. Schectel asked about electric charging station requirements. Mr. Novak stated right now charging stations are considered an accessory use. It will be up to the Planning Board to recommend requirements for electronic vehicles.

Mr. Karp asked who sets the standard number of electric charging parking spaces. Mr. Novak advised that West Windsor could require certain businesses to make a percentage of their parking spaces for charging stations. Ms. Geevers stated the ordinance number should be placed on the signs at designated parking spaces to ensure that only vehicles using charging stations park there.

Mr. Novak continued to review the Plan. Section 2.1, General Principals of Zoning. Section 2.2, Township land use goals and policies, which are goals and policies specifically catered to West Windsor.

Mr. Schectel questioned as to whether P&Q were recently added. Mr. Novak stated yes.

Ms. Geevers pointed out a typographical error on Page 6, Bullet 2, add comma after word residential.

Mr. Huey stated that language should be added regarding affordable housing for military, wounded soldiers and seniors. Mr. Novak stated that would be good language for C or D. Mr. Huey suggested language to be added as "promote access to affordable housing to military families and seniors, ensure such affordable housing accommodates the special needs of our wounded soldiers or handicapped individuals." Mr. Surtees stated that Section 2.2 would be the place for that language. Mr. Karp suggested changing "Military families to "Veterans"

Mr. Karp inquired if the Township receives any additional credits for Affordable Housing for vets/handicapped. Mr. Novak stated it is based on beds. Mr. Muller suggested keeping senior citizens and military Affordable Housing separate.

Ms. Geevers asked if anything needs to be added regarding bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. Mr. Novak stated that that would be part of the Circulation Plan. Mr. Novak stated that Goal A, Policy 11 would be a good place for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

Ms. Geevers asked about schools in the Master Plan. Mr. Surtees stated that's another plan element in the Master Plan.

Mr. Novak stated that there is a new Goal F with five policies.

Mr. Huey asked if language of 2.2 in policy 5 could be condensed. Mr. Hoberman asked what the definition is of transfer of development technique? Mr. Novak explained it is buying the development rights of one property and transferring it to another area. Mr. Karp asked if that is typical language. Mr. Novak stated that it is for TDR.

Goal A:

Mr. Novak discussed Goal A, achieving a balance. Twelve policies established. Mr. Schectel asked if it would make sense to keep Goal A and not go through the more detailed policies? Mr. Novak stated that he likes to have a more specific policy statement.

Mr. Karp suggested that some language be removed from Policy 3, possibly reducing from 5 policies to 4. He also stated that 12 policies may be too much. Mr. Surtees asked for guidance regarding Policy 3.

Mr. Karp asked the Board if there were any other policies, other than Policy 3, that can be removed or if there are any other policies under Goal A that can be combined or eliminated. Mr. Surtees stated it can be reviewed again.

Goal B:

Mr. Novak discussed Goal B which contains three new policies created regarding performance standards.

Mr. Hoberman asked if Residential Site Improvement Standards is a document. Mr. Novak stated that it is a statewide document that establishes certain standards for residential developments. It is a Department of Community Affairs document. Mr. Schectel stated that the goal doesn't make sense. Ms. Mandel suggested leaving the policies in the plan, but changing the goal or possibly putting them under another goal. Mr. Karp suggested removing Goal B and placing policies 1,2,3 elsewhere.

Ms. Mandel asked if environmental features mean natural environment and if that can be specified. Mr. Novak stated yes. Ms. Appleget asked if it can be moved to the conservation element. Mr. Novak stated that perhaps Policy 3 could be moved to the conservation element.

Goal C:

Mr. Novak discussed Goal C, to provide for a wide range of housing densities and types. Some policies were changed earlier this year and some remained the same. Mr. Huey asked about Policy 7 and if military housing could be added. Mr. Novak stated it could be included or could be put in a new policy. Mr. Karp suggested using the word "Veteran" rather than Military.

Mr. Novak stated that Policy 7 is more oriented towards age restricted housing so he's not sure if it is the appropriate place for military families.

Mr. Schectel asked what is meant by veteran's housing. Mr. Karp stated Affordable Housing for veterans. Mr. Muller stated you can have a veteran's preference for Affordable Housing if the developer agrees to it.

Mr. Hoberman brought up the issue of co-housing in the context of Goal C and asked where and how it would fit into the Master Plan? Mr. Novak stated that an Eco-Village has been brought up and is comprised of smaller housing units around a shared environment. This would be allowed for in land use categories. Mr. Surtees explained that a property owner wants to start an eco-village consisting of 20 small residences with common kitchen facility, common recreation areas and farming area.

Mr. Muller asked about Goal C, Policy 8. Mr. Novak stated it was to provide housing opportunities for moderate income families. After discussion it was decided that Policy 8 would be removed from Goal C.

Mr. Karp asked if Policy 6 could be combined with another policy. Mr. Novak explained cluster development options and changing density. Mr. Surtees stated Policy 6 needs to stay in.

Goal D:

Mr. Novak discussed adding a policy to Goal D to include a policy to promote Affordable Housing opportunities for veterans, possibly inserting it in Policy 4. Mr. Muller agreed that it should be added to Policy 4.

Ms. Geevers asked about Policy 1. Mr. Novak stated it should read, "For senior and special needs populations all are 100 percent affordable housing developments in order to ensure that the Township continues to remain an inclusive community."

Mr. Huey stated that it should be indicated that Affordable Housing units will be suitable for handicapped. Mr. Schectel stated that there are already certain requirements in place. Mr. Novak agreed.

Ms. Geevers asked about Policy 2 regarding the parameters of using Affordable Housing Trust Fund money and if something can be added regarding the same. Mr. Muller suggesting adding "Encourage use of Affordable Housing trust fund money. "

Goal E: Mr. Novak stated that Goal E remains the same except for policy 6. Policy 6 addition is "Maintain an appropriate scale of building and establish residential neighborhoods, most particularly in the Township's earlier residential settlements." Ms. Appleget asked if this could be included in Policy 2 and eliminate Policy 6. Mr. Novak agreed.

Ms. Appleget asked about lawn care in Policy 3. Mr. Muller recommended taking it out. Mr. Surtees stated there is no property maintenance ordinance. Mr. Novak agreed with Mr. Muller that it is not necessary for the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Huey asked if Policy 4 is necessary for a land use plan. Mr. Novak recommended deleting it.

Goal E now has Policies 1, 2 and 5.

Goal F:

Mr. Novak discussed Goal F, a new goal, "To continue to support opportunities for non-residential developments in appropriate locations throughout the community." This was in the previous Land Use Plan but moved to its own goal.

Regarding Policy 2, Mr. Karp recommended flipping the sentence to say promote a variety. Mr. Muller stated Policy 2 would be changed to "Promote locations for a wide variety of retail goods and services."

Regarding Policy 1, Ms. Appleget asked who determines what high quality is. Mr. Novak explained there is a rating system for offices, but that retail and commercial development is subjective.

Mr. Karp suggested adding design standards into the policy. Mr. Huey asked if the term aesthetically appealing could be used on a case by case basis. Mr. Hoberman stated that he doesn't want design standards in every zone. Mr. Novak suggested they revise policy 1 to read "Maintain a high quality of development for office, retail and other commercial uses in appropriate areas."

Mr. Novak discussed the Land Use Plan section. Identifies locations and different types of residential, non-residential and mixed-use land uses. Mr. Novak stressed that this document is not a zoning ordinance but sets the framework for any future zoning regulations. Mr. Schectel discussed the failure to acknowledge the districts that were expanded into another and that he finds the text misleading. Mr. Novak stated those districts could be identified.

Mr. Hoberman asked about the 4th column on page 21 and asked if there are other overlays that should be mentioned. Mr. Novak stated that there is another one. Mr. Hoberman feels that the overlay should be culled out for the reader.

Ms. Mandel pointed out that there is no listing for public other than educational, town buildings, open space. Mr. Surtees stated that there are not separate zones for parks and open space.

Mr. Schectel stated he would like to see one overall map. Mr. Novak explained he wants to get through land use categories and then combine everything into one map.

Mr. Novak continued discussing 3.2 residential land use categories and sub-categories and that there are no changes proposed.

Mr. Novak discussed the R-1c, low density residential/conservation land use category. No changes proposed to this district either.

Mr. Geevers pointed out a typographical error on Page 25 3rd paragraph in middle should read, "historic dwelling is on these properties," not "historic dwelling is one these properties."

Mr. Huey brought up the issue of Bed and Breakfasts/AirBNBs. Mr. Hoberman asked how the Township will deal with AirBNBs. Mr. Novak stated there are statutes that allow for regulation of short-term rentals. Mayor Marathe stated that the Township closely monitors AirBNBs.

Mr. Novak discussed the R-2 District. No changes proposed for this district, but suggested adding nuisance language to this section pertaining to AirBNBs.

Mr. Novak discussed the Low-Density Residential Office conversion R-2b overlay. Proposing establishing an office overlay land use category near the intersection of Village Road West and Quakerbridge road. Intent is to preserve zoning standards of R2 districts, but give homeowners opportunities to convert homes to commercial. Mr. Surtees stated that it is similar to an area on Alexander Road converting residential homes to commercial. Mr. Novak stated that he will add language regarding existing floor area.

Mr. Novak discussed Medium Density single-family residential land use categories, Page 30, Section 3.2.2 R-20, 20a and 20b. Already established neighborhoods comprised of 3 different zoning districts. Mr. Novak stated that he has been told that some neighborhoods are not correctly identified since the 2002 Land Use Plan, but he and Mr. Surtees will review them.

Mr. Hoberman stated that he couldn't discern the difference between R-20a and R-20b. Mr. Surtees stated that would not be in the Master Plan as that is a zoning ordinance. Mr. Hoberman suggested a distinction be put into the plan so that it can be read and understood by all.

Mr. Novak discussed R-20, Medium Density Residential B&B. Near Alexander Road and to the north of Grovers' Mill Pond. Allow for B&B option as conditional use. Suggested adding language regarding controlling nuisance.

Mr. Novak discussed the R-24 District on Page 32 and stated there are no changes.

Mr. Novak discussed R-30, 30a, 30b, 30c, 30d and including general language as to why the zones were created. He will work with Township to make sure neighborhood names are correct.

Mr. Novak discussed Page 34, modification to traditional residential density R-7.5 which includes the Berrien City land use category which has a wide variety of lot sizes. This land use needs to be reviewed. Mr. Hoberman stated that community engagement would be necessary.

Mr. Novak discussed the Dutch Neck land use category. This section is setting the framework for reviewing the area. Mr. Surtees stated that the majority of the lots in this area are non-conforming.

Mr. Novak discussed the Medium to High Density residential areas. These already existed in 2002 or were added. They are existing and there are no changes proposed.

Mr. Hoberman asked about 3.2.4, the definition for maisonette. Mr. Novak stated a maisonette is a multi-family building and is still listed as a permitted use. Mr. Karp suggested removing it if there are none in the Township. Mr. Novak stated it will be removed as a permitted use.

Mr. Novak discussed a new land use category R-3d proposing an eco-district. Permit same uses as R-3a district, but would also permit for an eco-village. Mr. Hoberman stated that New Jersey is lagging regarding this housing type and would like more information regarding eco villages.

The review of the Plan was concluded at Page 42 for the evening. To be continued December 4, 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

John Church – 11 Princeton Place

Mr. Church referred to Page 21 and pointed out that his zone, R-24 was omitted. Mr. Novak stated it will be added.

Miguel Vilaro – 216 North Post Road

Mr. Vilaro asked why Goal B is being omitted. Mr. Novak stated that the Board wanted to remove Goal B because it was oddly worded and that it makes more sense to spread the policies around to other goals in the plan. Mr. Hoberman added that it is not eliminated, just moved.

Mr. Vilaro asked about the reasoning behind Page 14, Goal C. Mr. Novak stated that the general intent of the policy is to provide a wide range of housing types for various income and family types.

Mr. Vilaro stated that the Township never looked in the community for an Affordable Housing solution and instead went outside of the Township. Mr. Novak explained the Affordable Housing requirements.

Rich Goldman, Princeton University

Mr. Goldman suggested an additional policy to encourage development of University campus facilities within the E-zone to foster and support educational, research, athletics, campus housing and other uses customary to the operation of a major university.

Regarding the educational portion of the Master Plan, Mr. Goldman suggested additional language to talk about what is actually going to happen at the University regarding "collaboration space."

Jerry Foster – 15 Suffolk Lane

Mr. Foster spoke on behalf of the GMA and advised that they have been working on regional trail plan for bicycles and pedestrians and are getting ready to publish it. He encouraged the Board to consider the parts of the plan that have bike and pedestrian facilities.

Kevin Moore, Sills, Cummis & Gross

Will speak next meeting regarding letter he sent the board. Mr. Karp stated that the Board will address Mr. Moore's concerns at the next meeting.

Mr. Karp stated that the Board will discuss Princeton University aspects at next meeting.

Next meetings will be December 4th and December 11th.

Ms. Mandel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Mr. Schectel. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Bergen
Recording Secretary