

Town of Union Planning Board Minutes
Tuesday, February 12, 2008

A regular meeting of the Town of Union Planning Board was held on Tuesday, February 12, 2008 at the Town of Union Office Building, 3111 East Main Street, Endwell, New York.

Members present: S. McLain, T. Crowley, A. Elwood, L. Miller, J. Rotella, R. Signorelli

Members absent: B. Seliga

Others present: Paul Nelson, Marina Lane and Nancy LaBare

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman McLain opened the regular meeting of the Planning Board at 7:00 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: January 22, 2008

Chairman McLain asked for a motion to accept the January 22, 2008 meeting minutes as written.

Motion made: R. Signorelli

Motion seconded: L. Miller

MOTION: Approving the minutes from January 22, 2008.

VOTE: **In Favor:** S. McLain, A. Elwood, L. Miller, J. Rotella, R. Signorelli

Opposed: None

Abstained: T. Crowley

Motion Carried

Mr. Nelson gave the members of the Planning Board a memo from Peter Olevano clarifying a discussion from the December 18, 2007 minutes concerning water problems in the Taft Avenue/Daren Drive area and resulting flooding in peoples' basements. He requested that the minutes show the following correction to prevent misinformation from spreading any further:

“The Engineering Department’s initial review of the subdivision plans recommended that the homes along the wetlands area be built on slabs, no basements were to be allowed. The developer cried the blues to the Planning Director and the Commissioner of Public Works indicating this stipulation would detract from his vision of the subdivision. In an effort to be “developer friendly”, a compromise to allow basements with finished floors above a given elevation was attained. This compromise failed to confirm that walk out basements should not be allowed due to the proximity to the drainage area both

in horizontal distance and vertical elevation of the water level. Furthermore, this was accomplished by a note on the plans rather than a mandatory deed restriction, thus making the awareness of the future owners basically non-existent.”

C. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DISCUSSION: Neighborhood Descriptions

Mr. Nelson distributed additional sections of the Comprehensive Plan for review. The members of the Board were asked to check them carefully, along with the sections that were already e-mailed to them. He stated that Chairman McLain has been doing a great service by editing the Neighborhood Plans making the somewhat technical information more user-friendly and easier to read. Mr. Nelson is completing the Introduction section which will outline the history of the development of the Plan, how the community was divided into the 25 neighborhoods, the organizational structure of the three municipalities, and general questions and answers about the Comprehensive Plan and what the plan is designed to do. He will be e-mailing this section to the Board when it is complete. There are a few other sections that have minor things to be added. They will also be forwarded as they are finished.

Mr. Rotella suggested that the maps in the Education section of the Goals and Objectives reflect more specific school district boundary lines for reference by people buying property in the Town. Mr. Nelson said that, although it may be beneficial, it can be difficult and time consuming to add too many layers to the maps. If a prospective buyer is concerned about the school district the property is in, the information could be obtained directly from the school district. Chairman McLain found the map of grocery store locations in the Technical Background section to be confusing and suggested that the neighborhood numbers not be circled to avoid confusing them as business locations. Mr. Nelson will ask Joe Gaynor to make the modification.

Discussion moved to areas of concern including the Route 26 corridor and 3901 Watson Boulevard. Ms. Lane stressed that it was important that the Board scrutinize these areas carefully to be sure that the Comprehensive Plan reflects the recommendations of the Planning Board. Ms. Lane mentioned the need to clarify existing flood plain regulations as a task for the Action Item section of the plan because they are defined differently in different Code ordinances and are not being enforced consistently. There was a lengthy discussion about filling flood plain areas. It was agreed that if there were a development plan that included specific provisions for managing flood waters, such as filling only the area required for the footprint of a building or raising a building on stilts (piers), the Board would certainly be open to sensitive and appropriate development.

Ms. Lane stated that the old Future Land Use Map may show the 3901 Watson Boulevard property as Recreational, but at some point the property will have to be zoned as the property owner should not be left without any reasonable uses permitted by right under zoning ordinances. The south side is zoned RU/MO, as

is a portion of the north side. After much discussion, Chairman McLain suggested keeping the remaining property RU/MO and if someone wants to build there they will have to come up with a specific site plan. The Board agreed it was a good choice and the recommendation of future land use Mixed Use Residential/Office, as indicated for the north side, will be included in the Plan's future land use descriptions. The Route 26 Corridor is recommended as Corridor Commercial and the members agreed it was appropriate for that area.

During this discussion, Mr. Crowley asked about the State dumping construction material along George F. Highway, near Home Depot and the effect it has on the flood plain. The Planning Department will look into the problem. Concern about the future of The Heritage Club was also discussed. The members of the Board would like to see positive development for this property to go along with the dental laboratory, American Cancer Society, and town houses that have been built.

Mr. Nelson and Ms. Lane again stressed the importance of the Board scrutinizing the proposed Future Land Use categories parcel by parcel. Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted every development from that point on must, by law, be in agreement with the adopted Future Land Use Plan. If any language for flood plain protection is needed, it should be included. The Plan is almost ready to be reviewed by the community and the Town board wants to see it before it is presented to the public. Mr. Nelson said that any changes suggested by other department heads will be considered along with any comments the public has. The final plan that is submitted to the town and village boards will contain a summary of all comments received along with an explanation as to why they were accepted or rejected.

Mr. Nelson then discussed the plans for neighborhood meetings. He would like for the Planning Board to consider holding five "open house" style meetings, one in the Village of Johnson City, one in the Village of Endicott and three in the Part-town area. They should begin mid-March and finish by the end of April. Evening and Saturday meetings will be planned in order to allow several options for the public to attend. Mr. Nelson will attend each meeting with different members of the Planning Board also attending. Members will be compensated for their time just as they are for required training sessions.

Each of the 25 neighborhoods will have three large maps posted on foam boards: one with existing land uses, one with aerial photographs, and one with the proposed Future Land Use Plan. The boards for all 25 neighborhoods will be available at each meeting for review, with a main display of the boards specific to the area where the meeting occurs. If the time scheduled in their neighborhood is inconvenient, it will allow all residents an opportunity to come to any of the five meetings. Rather than have an organized presentation, each of the meetings will be in an open house format with residents coming during a two-hour time frame. A PowerPoint presentation will loop continuously to provide information about the Plan. Handouts with an overview of the goals and objectives of the plan will be

available for residents. The meetings will be advertised several ways including a large impact ad running for five days in the Press and Sun-Bulletin. Several locations scattered throughout the town were suggested including the Johnson City Senior Center, the Western Broome Senior Center, the American Red Cross Building, the Endwell Fire Station, Ann McGuinness Elementary School, and the Highland Park Recreation Center. Mr. Nelson will begin calls this week to see what facilities might be available.

Once the Plan is released for public comment, residents will also be able to review it on the Town of Union website and will be able to submit comments or concerns online.

When all neighborhood meetings are done there must be, by law, be a formal Public Hearing by the Planning Board before it is sent to the Town Board for review and, hopefully, adoption. The Town Board would also have to hold at least one Public Hearing before adopting the Plan. The Villages of Johnson City and Endicott would also have to follow this procedure if they decide to adopt the Plan. The Plan was prepared by the Town of Union as a governmental courtesy to these communities and Mr. Nelson will make a presentation to their respective Planning and Village Boards before it is presented to the community at the neighborhood meetings.

Mr. Nelson again stressed that the members have to be diligent about checking the proposed Future Land Use Map and verifying that it reflects the decisions made by the Planning Board. If anything is different from what was decided it must be changed now. Being specific now will avoid unwanted interpretations later and bring a level of predictability and stability to the development process in the Town.

D. OTHER SUCH MATTERS AS MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Ms. Elwood discussed a problem that occurred near the sports dome on Stella Ireland Road on Saturday, February 10, 2008. A lacrosse benefit was held with 48 teams attending. Parking was at a premium and those attending the event were forced to park on Stella Ireland Road and Dimmock Hill Road. Several of the individuals were rude and belligerent to neighbors who did not want them parking on their property. The State Police and Sheriff were called but they could not help since there are not any "No Parking" signs on those roads. Although the Planning Board did not know about the event, it was not necessary for them to have a Special Permit as it was not held outside approved hours of operation. Mr. Nelson said that residents would have to petition the Town Board if they want to have parking restrictions in the area. Ms. Elwood will take that information back to the residents.

Ms. Elwood also pointed out that there is a new building that has gone up behind the dome which was not part of the site plan. Ms. Lane will have someone from the Planning Department check into it.

E. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made: J. Rotella
Motion seconded: L. Miller
MOTION: Adjourning the meeting at 9:17 p.m.
VOTE: **In Favor:** S. McLain, T. Crowley, A. Elwood, L. Miller,
J. Rotella, R. Signorelli
Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Motion Carried

Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for Tuesday, February 26, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Foti