



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

PLANNING BOARD

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

MEMBERS
ANGELA IPPOLITO, CHAIR
GEORGE POTTS, VICE CHAIR
BETH ISLER
BILL QUINN
JR YOUNG

STAFF
S. PETER KANE, DIR. OF COMM. DEV.
ANDREW LEVIN, ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER

JULY 10, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:07pm – 8:38 pm
Location: Swampscott Senior Center, 200 Essex Street (rear)
Members Present: B. Quinn, G. Potts, A. Ippolito, B. Isler
Members Absent: J.R. Young
Others Present: Andrew Levin (Assistant Town Planner)

Chairwoman of the Board A. Ippolito called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM, G. Potts seconded, and the July 10th Planning Board meeting began.

The Board discussed the meeting minutes from the May 8th meeting. B. Quinn had made some edits to the minutes and had previously distributed copies of the edited minutes to Board members. The Board reviewed the edits that B. Quinn had made. The Board also briefly discussed where Air BnB's were mentioned in the minutes.

MOTION : by B. Quinn to approve the meeting minutes with the edits, to change the typos, A. Ippolito seconded, unanimously approved. B. Isler abstained (absent from previous meeting).

VOTE – WHITE COURT TASK FORCE

A. Ippolito explained that there would not be a vote on White Court, but instead an update. B. Quinn explained that there will not be a vote until there is something to vote on. A. Ippolito instead updated the Board on the actions of the Task Force.

A. Ippolito explained that the Task Force has broken up into little groups, and that each group is putting together a different piece of a business plan. A. Ippolito mentioned some of the different pieces, including; finance and marketing of the property (A. Ippolito explained the groups discussed what the property could be or what could happen with it). A. Ippolito mentioned that there was going to be the "Best of the Northshore" event happening at the property.

G. Potts mentioned the idea of renting the property, A. Ippolito mentioned that this idea is being looked at, and that the Task Force is researching what is currently taking place, along with what potentially could be down at the property.

A. Ippolito mentioned that the Task Force due to different things had missed "one or two" meetings. The next meeting would be August 17th.

DISCUSSION – POTENTIAL ZONING BYLAW CHANGES (RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS)

A. Ippolito moved to the next item on the agenda, discussion regarding a potential Zoning Bylaw change. A. Ippolito mentioned that after postponing the last potential change (the downzoning of specific areas from A3 to A2, from which this potential change was derived), she wished to get this new potential change on the Warrant for the Fall Town Meeting, A. Ippolito mentioned that the Board of Selectmen also want it back on the Warrant.

A. Ippolito mentioned that this potential change reverts back to the idea of creating one zone, and that this idea was brought up long ago. A. Ippolito explained that “clumping” areas together was not going to work, so now the potential change involves creating one new zone. A. Ippolito stated that the previous proposed change was blanketing of neighborhoods and that it was a dramatic change, A. Ippolito explained that A2 districts would be too restrictive, and that the A3 was too permissive, but now the idea is to create a new one.

A. Ippolito brought up the minutes from the previous meeting (where the previous proposed changes were discussed before Town Meeting 5/8/2017), and read some highlights from the discussion, regarding the original idea to downzone. A. Ippolito mentioned that a fourth district (a new zoning district) was brought up at the meeting, and then briefly read what was said in the minutes.

G. Potts mentioned that originally A3 districts allowed 3-families by right, but then in 2009 it was “up-zoned” and the zoning district allowed 8-units by special permit. G. Potts and B. Quinn briefly discussed the potentials of what could happen with a new zoning district and current regulations. A. Ippolito mentioned that there would be a “limbo period”, in regards to adding the new district and the process, and this is why she would like to quickly get a hearing posted.

A. Ippolito mentioned that there was already a meeting advertised and that the notice stated that there is a zoning change imminent at Fall Town Meeting. A. Ippolito explained that building permits are in “limbo” and that the Town runs the risk of someone having to take something down if the warrant article is passed. The Board briefly discussed the legal notice and what the process is.

G. Potts brought up, that at the last meeting (during discussions regarding potential downzoning), residents stated that they would miss the ability to have 3-families, but that residents did not want 8, but three. A. Ippolito and G. Potts quickly discussed the area.

A. Ippolito then asked the Board to read through the proposed Warrant Article. G. Potts asked about the County’s neighborhood, A. Ippolito mentioned she didn’t believe they should be added, G. Potts mentioned that he believes they do fit. A. Ippolito mentioned that there had been lots of “pushback” from the Board of Selectmen and also mentioned that it is hard to know where to “draw the line”. A. Ippolito mentioned a specific area and the potential issues that could arise. G. Potts asked if the County’s had any developments over three-families, B. Isler mentioned that she did not believe there to be any 8-families.

A. Ippolito explained how the new Zoning district would work, explaining that she believes the (newly created) A4 will be the new A3, except for the properties outlined they would stay A3. A. Ippolito also mentioned that the use-table will be changed, which will not affect any other district. B. Isler mentioned that the County’s neighborhood would be A3 but should be A4. G. Potts stated that the A3 use table would be changing, but that many properties would be becoming A4 zoned, A. Ippolito responded that all properties would go to A4 except for the ones specified to be A3, and that the A3 use table would change.

B. Quinn mentioned an idea of reverting back to pre-2009 use table in A3, which would allow up to three-families in A3 and in lots large enough, and specific lots could choose to be A4, which would make it a small district. A. Ippolito mentioned that A3 allows up to 8 units by special permit, B. Quinn responded that this would be taken out across the board. G. Potts mentioned that A3 could be more restrictive, and that A4 could allow 8-units by special permit. A.

Ippolito brought up the potential changes to the zoning map (which units were originally being downzoned, then changed).

B. Quinn mentioned that this change could lead to possible issues for some, and that these issues will be brought up at the discussion. A. Ippolito mentioned that the Board needs to decide who is A4, G. Potts mentioned that A4 did not need to have an area, but that it would be available.

The Board briefly discussed what happened in 2009, and the feedback that resulted from the change.

A. Ippolito asked how people will get A4 Zoning, and what the use and dimensional regulation tables would look like, B. Isler mentioned it could stay the same, but the question is, who is in it? A. Ippolito explained that A3 could stay the same, and just revert back to pre – 2009. G. Potts mentioned to the Board that they should look at what is currently in the Town and see how many 8-units there are in the specific areas, the Board briefly discussed this.

G. Potts and A. Ippolito briefly discussed the dimensions of the Greenwood Middle School lot, G. Potts hypothesized (by looking at the ratio of built sf to lot size) that the lot has the potential to fit 8 units, B. Quinn mentioned another lot as well. A. Ippolito mentioned that A4 would be the most permissive.

A. Ippolito asked what this potential Zoning change would do to future development? G. Potts responded that the A3 district would only allow up to three-units, and then at the public meetings the Board would find out who would want the ability to build more than three and the Board would be able to decide better once they know the amount that want to build more than three. G. Potts mentioned what potentially could happen in regards to the new regulations, and that if someone wanted to build more than three-units they would have to ask to change their zoning. A. Ippolito mentioned that a Zoning change requires a Town Meeting vote, so the person would have to wait for the Town Meeting to happen. G. Potts mentioned that he did not know how successful potential 8-units would be, even by special permit.

B. Isler asked if this potential process would be spot-zoning, B. Quinn responded that if it was restrictive, the Board then discussed this.

A. Ippolito mentioned that they would have to go to Town Meeting with a map that shows the properties, if they wish to get this new Zoning district. B. Quinn mentioned that it would be easy to go back to A3 if the A4 is done appropriately. The Board then discussed potential regulations that could be in the A4. A. Ippolito explained how people could potentially get the ability to build more units. A. Ippolito asked what would happen with the dimensional requirements, B. Isler and G. Potts explained they would stay the same.

The Board briefly discussed the current locations of 8-units in the Town.

B. Isler asked for some clarification regarding the locations, A. Ippolito mentioned that she could make the argument for the properties on the map and why making their zoning more restrictive. B. Quinn mentioned that the Board had already lost that argument during the last meeting. G. Potts and A. Ippolito clarified that the previous article change was to make the properties A2. G. Potts mentioned that the change made in 2009 could be eliminated, A. Ippolito and G. Potts then discussed potential things that could happen with that change, including how density in certain areas could still be accomplished. G. Potts mentioned some potential locations, and A. Ippolito mentioned some potential outcomes of the change.

A. Ippolito explained that if the change goes in front of Town Meeting there needs to be a map, so that these properties can be defended on why they are becoming A4. B. Isler asked if there would be a need for A4, A. Ippolito agreed, and mentioned that this new idea would make up to 3-family units allowed in A3, and mentioned the possibility of instead of a A4, make an overlay.

B. Quinn mentioned that there would be too many overlays, and explained that he is ok with a A4 district without any properties. B. Isler asked if an overlay district already covers this, B. Quinn mentioned that some did not. G. Potts mentioned that some developers will want to develop in commercial areas. G. Potts continued to explain that it is probably Not feasible, financially, to buy multiple lots and combine them to make large multi-units.

A. Ippolito asked for clarification, and explained her understanding is the new proposal would be to potentially downzone A3 to pre-2009 and take away the ability by special permit to get 8-multifamilies, then the Board would ask for public comment. G. Potts mentioned that he is fine with keeping an A4, and mentioned that there would have to be criteria though. The Board briefly discussed this.

It was mentioned that the public meeting (regarding the proposed Zoning change) will be August 14th, G. Potts mentioned that the Board will be able to see and hear the objections and concerns at this meeting, regarding the proposed change. G. Potts then briefly mentioned some outcomes that could come from hearing public comments and concerns. B. Quinn mentioned briefly some potential future steps that the Board would need to take.

The Board then briefly discussed the new changes. B. Quinn mentioned that he is fine with the A4 district being kept in, A. Ippolito explained that change would include the A3 going back to pre-2009. G. Potts added that if the Board hears negative comments at the public meeting, then they could work adding in comments, but added that this could help create a template for the change.

The Board then briefly discussed what the A4 district would be, A. Ippolito mentioned that the Board could eliminate it, or “reverse” the map, and look at where it makes sense, and where there are overlay districts. The Board discussed some points to bring up at the public hearing. G. Potts, in regards to the public meeting, explained that the Board would explain that A3 is going from allowing 8-multifamily units by special permit, down to three by right. G. Potts added that many of the multi-unit homes in the neighborhoods that were proposed originally to change, are only three-units, and mentioned that he did not see reducing the allowable (from 8 to 3) units as being an issue. A. Ippolito stated that she sees this new proposed change as being wildly different then what was originally voted on before the previous Town Meeting. A. Ippolito tried to clarify the new proposal, and explained that 8-units by special permit is eliminated from A3 districts, and now only up to three units are allowed, and any additional development over three would get covered by an overlay. A. Ippolito mentioned that there are some potential issues that come with this, G. Potts mentioned the public meeting is where these questions and concerns will be heard.

A. Ippolito mentioned that the new approach made sense, B. Quinn added that he believed the A4 should stay (as part of the proposed change), and that there would be a provision for it, even if the district would be empty. A. Ippolito asked the Board if they think the A4 is useful, G. Potts mentioned that a A4 could make sense in a hotel district, A. Ippolito and G. Potts quickly discussed. B. Quinn explained that there could be an overlay district in a A4 district, because the initial zoning drives the district. G. Potts mentioned there are many things to look at, including were does a A4 district make sense.

B. Quinn stated that the new proposal will be a lot of work and that the public meeting would be coming up quickly. A. Ippolito mentioned the idea of just downzoning A3, and then look at developing a A4 district at a later date. B. Quinn mentioned that they would have to repost the legal notice, G. Potts and A. Ippolito discussed what a potential legal notice would say. B. Quinn mentioned that the notice would have to be advertised and spread wide, A. Ippolito mentioned the Board could talk with Director of Community Development, Peter Kane about it. G. Potts mentioned the Board could do a reverse phone call to residents to let them know of the meeting.

A. Ippolito mentioned that the new approach to the Zoning change would be simpler, G. Potts mentioned that it would be more wide-spread, then targeting specific areas.

The Board then discussed if a motion was necessary regarding what was previously discussed.

MOTION : by A. Ippolito of proposing that the zoning change, instead of adding a zone at the hearing next month, propose a simple downzone of A3 zone principal use, from multi-family containing not more than three (3) family dwelling units is yes, and four (4) to eight (8) family dwelling units is a no, for discussion at the previously scheduled Planning Board meeting August 14, seconded by G. Potts, unanimously approved.

A. Ippolito asked that before the next meeting, the Board study the Zoning map and think about where a potential A4 district could be.

DISCUSSION – PLANNING BOARD TO DISCUSS AND SET A SPECIAL MEETING DATE TO BEGIN ADMINISTRATIVE SITE PLAN REVIEW 71 GREENWOOD AVENUE

A. Ippolito asked if any Board members were present for the past administrative review that the Board had done, G. Potts mentioned that he was. A. Ippolito mentioned that there would need to be a separate meeting, from the monthly scheduled meeting of the Board, to have the administrative site plan review. G. Potts mentioned that he did not think the meeting in August would be enough time.

The Board discussed potential dates for the hearing. G. Potts asked what has been submitted currently, A. Ippolito explained that nothing had been submitted.

OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD

A. Ippolito mentioned that now that the hotel Zoning has passed and was approved by the Attorney General, she wishes to add it to the Humphrey Street Overlay District, as a Zoning change. A. Ippolito mentioned that she believes there could be opportunity.

A. Ippolito asked if the other Board members would be interested in this, and mentioned that it has to first pass, which it did, then hotel Zoning could be added as a provision, by special permit in the Humphrey Street Overlay District. A. Ippolito mentioned that she would speak with P. Kane about it.

B. Quinn brought up the Beach Access project and wondered about potential spending with it, and mentioned that he wanted the Board to be aware.

MOTION : by G. Potts to adjourn, B. Isler seconded, unanimously approved by the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Andrew Levin
Assistant Town Planner