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PINE PLAINS PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday March 31, 2021
6:00 PM
Via Zoom and Uploaded to YouTube

IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Stabile, Chairman
Peter Salerno
Vikki Soracco

ABSENT: Ethan DiMaria, Alternate
Dick Hermans
Jayelle Hoffman, Alternate
Ken Meccariello
Kate Osofsky
Steve Patterson

Chairman Stabile opened the workshop meeting at 6:00pm.

Zoning Committee Review: Stabile mentioned how he is on the zoning review committee and how he has gotten to have his say with the issues that the board is working on, but wanted the planning board's input as well.

Stabile said two tricky issues are the proposal to get rid of the NND (new neighborhood development), as well as the five-acre minimum density for subdivisions in the rural district to encourage cluster housing. Stabile said they also spent a lot of time talking about the setbacks in the hamlet and reducing those. There was also discussion about the church lot and the Murphy Chase property, regarding increasing the density in them.

Salerno asked if the church lot was going to be purchased by the town or does the church want to develop it. Stabile said the church is not looking to develop it, but there has been some discussion with the town regarding the waste system and the water/gray water system and the lot being a possible location. Salerno said he thought a sewer system was also being discussed. Stabile replied that he believes that at a meeting held in 2019, it was discussed that there would just be a tank for solids and then gray water would go into some sort of septic field. If enough people signed on, there would need to be a system created, similar to the one in Hillsdale. The engineers should be getting back to the town shortly with their conclusion.

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Stabile said if the town wanted to create density in the hamlet area, that lot would be a good area to do so and does the town want to do anything with the zoning to make it possible.

Stabile said they also discussed nonconforming uses predating the zoning, such as the Liberta property and the Berlinghoff property. Stabile said the Berlinghoff property would be easier to deal with because they discussed just extending the Main Street Hamlet from the school down through Church Street to connect with Dale Mitchell's property. Stabile said the Liberta property is harder to deal with because it is in a critical environmental area. The planner may suggest leaving it and if the business ever closed, then reverting it back to a residential zone. Soracco asked what would happen if someone sold the business and Stabile replied that then it could keep going. Stabile said the difference is, would you like the business to continue as is, or change the zoning so that they may do more with the property commercially. Soracco said she doesn't understand why it couldn't be included, as it borders a former gas station, and an autobody shop. Stabile replied that the issue is that it is a critical environmental area. Stabile said one possibility would be to cleave off the environmental area.

Stabile said they also talked about the area by the town garage and the slaughter house and should an industrial zone be created there. Stabile said someone had previously been interested in purchasing the Dillinger property, but because of the zoning, were precluded from doing anything.

Stabile said Rory Chase was concerned about loosening zoning in the rural zone.

Soracco said she was concerned about the setbacks on Route 199. She said if a resident wanted to put a garage in their backyard it would only be wide enough for one car and it would need to be in the middle of the backyard. Soracco feels making it even less for houses in the hamlet isn't helping those residents. She said if a resident wanted to place an accessory dwelling over their garage, they wouldn't be able to do so.

Soracco also mentioned that most people moving into the town are putting up fences. The fence is usually right on the property line and not installed correctly. Soracco said most install them with the bad side facing the neighbors, when they are supposed to be installed the opposite way. Soracco also mentioned that if a resident wanted to create an accessory

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dwelling, current rear yard setbacks are 40 feet, where the new zoning suggests 20-25 feet. Soracco feels this is too small for those in the center of town. For this reason, she feels the hamlet should be looked at different than the other zones, due to the lot line sizes, and most things already being built on the line.

Soracco asked about a lighting zone, but Stabile corrected her that is a light industrial zone.

Soracco agreed with Stabile that the hamlet should be less restrictive. Stabile and Soracco then further discussed the setbacks required in the hamlet.

Soracco said she wasn't sure where the business district was so Stabile clarified that the business district is from the old Peck's building to the Grange Building and then just past Tower Pizza.

Stabile said in terms of the rear yard setbacks, the consultant was concerned about fire access. Soracco said it would be restricted anyway if people continue to put up fences. Salerno said if they are illegal fences, then someone should call Drew Weaver to investigate. Stabile reviewed the fence regulations.

Stabile said accessory dwellings were being encouraged and Salerno asked in what way. Stabile said just making sure they were not being restricted so that the rental stock could be increased.

Stabile then discussed the zero-lot line affordable housing units and how he believes they are already okay in the town code. Salerno asked if they would override the setbacks and Stabile replied yes. Salerno asked for clarification if it could cross property lines or just be in a resident's backyard, if it was big enough. Stabile replied that is not permitted in the business district, but elsewhere would require a special use permit. Stabile believes it does override the setback regulations.

Stabile mentioned that some people find the manufactured home regulations too restrictive. Salerno said he recalls double wide trailers being allowed in the previous zoning code and aren't manufactured homes similar. Soracco and Stabile agreed.

Soracco said, speaking about modular homes, that it must be allowed what people can afford. Stabile said he is not sure

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what the issue is with modular homes and why they are on the agenda. Soracco said that Salerno was right about the original zoning and the town not wanting singular trailers. Salerno said he remembers recently a resident wanting to replace their singular trailer, but it was allowed, since it was placed pre-zoning, and he was improving it. Salerno said it is difficult because you don't want to get into a situation where it is dictated how a residence's home should look, similar to a Home Owner's Association. Stabile said that the current zoning requires site plan approval for any manufactured home, etc. Stabile then went over some of the other regulations for it.

The board then went over the NND and the Durst Organization and how the planning board would have had more input to a specific plan had they not pulled that application. Stabile said there are some other properties in town that the NND could apply to. Salerno said at the time it was enacted the Durst property was the only one.

Stabile brought up flushing out some definitions, such as "Major Home Occupation". The board discussed adding the term "Charity" to the use table.

Salerno asked about changing the footprints of buildings on very large properties. Salerno said he believes the current footprint is for 5000 square feet which would discourage a business like Harney Tea or Irving Farm from having a factory in Pine Plains. The board discussed how this regulation also keeps businesses, such as Dollar General, which may not necessarily be wanted, out of the town.

The board then discussed a business having parking in the back, unlike the current Peck's, which is a bad design, as people need to walk through the parking lot to get inside from the sidewalk.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tricia Devine

Michael Stabile