

Finance Committee Minutes

Meeting Date: November 15, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM in the Band Room, Amherst Regional Middle School.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Alice Carlozzi, Brian Morton (Chair), Andy Steinberg, (6:42) Kay Moran (Vice Chair), Marilyn Blaustein, (6:36) Paul Bobrowski, Doug Slaughter

STAFF AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director; Vince O'Conner, Jim Oldham

AGENDA

1. Town Meeting Articles
 - a. Article 13
 - b. Article 14
 - c. Special Town Meeting Article 1
 - d. Article 17
2. Next Meeting and Agenda
3. Miscellaneous

COMMITTEE ACTIONS

- Article 13 – Motion to support Dismissal approved 5 – 0 with 2 absent.
- Article 14 - Motion to support Dismissal approved 5 – 0 with 2 absent.
- Article 1 of the 11/28/2007 Special Town Meeting – Motion to recommend approved 6 – 0 with 1 abstention
- Article 17 – Motion to not recommend if article 16 passes approved 7 - 0

Discussion

Articles 13 and 14

Articles 13 and 14 are due to be dismissed as the Planning Board and the Coalition for Sustainable Neighborhoods have crafted a compromise article that both support, and that goes beyond the scope of either article 13 or 14. The resulting article is article 1 on the 11/28/2007 Special Town Meeting

Article 1 11/28/2007

Article 1 has 3 parts. First, the article includes a series of design criteria to protect abutting residential areas from potential effects of neighboring office uses. These protections are placed in several appropriate areas throughout the zoning bylaw. They primarily address driveways, lighting and screening landscaping. Second, the article amends a footnote in the dimensional

table to increase setbacks for office development that abuts residential property. Third, the article creates defined distinctions between administrative offices and low visitation offices and addresses the permitting process (Special Permit in Residential Village Center zone and Site Plan Review in Professional Research Park zone)

Wording in the article also mandates that Town Water and Sewer must be available on site before development can occur. The article does not say who has to install the services.

Article 17

The Coalition's article 17 provides an alternative vision for the Planning Boards Article 16 for the College Street South East Street area. The Planning Board article would correct some illogical zoning lines along College Street and Belchertown Rd so that they follow existing property lines rather than an arbitrary 200 ft setback from Route 9. It would also rezone 6 properties on South East Street to Business Village Center and 1 property to Residential Village Center.

The Coalition article would also correct the illogical zoning lines on the route 9 corridor but would only zone 2 properties to Business Village Center and would rezone 5 properties to Residential Village Center. The coalition fears a creeping of the "strip development" down South East Street and prefers to see a Village Center geared more to residential development than commercial development. Mr. Oldham stated that both 16 and 17 offer the possibility of tax base expansion but differ in the look of the development. He said article 17 ensures a more vibrant village center by encouraging residence over business. Mr. Tucker stated in response to a Finance Committee question that a build out analysis to compare potential revenue increases under either article and under various scenarios has not been done yet.

Mr. Tucker reported that the Planning Board voted 6 – 3 to oppose article 17. The majority felt that BVC zoning offers a greater potential for more business and residential development than the RVC zoning. If more properties are rezoned to BVC, then lots could be combined and could allow for more effective use of the developable portion of the area. BVC allows for more types of business uses but allows for residential use as well. RVC allows for offices only on the first floor with residence above. The majority also felt that this was a small area being rezoned.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Tucker reported that the ZBA would likely move some amendments to article 12 and 15 related to site plan review vs. special permit for some uses. Article 15 might be divided by different people for different purposes. The ZBA might divide hotels from inns and motels and Mr. O'Conner might divide the parcels into separate sections.

At this point, the Committee decided to pause the meeting at 7:35 PM in order to attend Town Meeting. The meeting was not adjourned at this time in case we had to take action on anything coming before Town Meeting.

Adjournment

Adjourned at 10:20 PM

Respectfully submitted

Brian Morton

Acting Clerk

approved 12/06/07