

Minutes of the Village of Rhinebeck Comprehensive Plan-Thursday, October 12, 2023

The October 12, 2023 meeting was called to order by Matt Johnston at 6:01pm at Village Hall, 76 East Market Street, Rhinebeck, NY with a quorum of voting members present:

Matt Johnston, non-voting Facilitator

Michele Grieg (Consultant)

Deirdre Burns

John Clarke

Ernesto Martynek

Steve Rosenberg

Eleanor Pupko

John Traver

Louis Turpin

Usual notetaker Elijah Bender is absent, so Lydia Slaby, liaison to the village board, offered to take minutes. Steve Rosenberg offered to be timekeeper.

Matt Johnston referred to the vote in the last meeting to keep him as facilitator even though he has resigned as a voting member of the committee due to his move to the town of Red Hook. The total number of voting committee members is now ten (10), so a quorum is six (6) people.

**Approval of Previous Minutes.** September 14, 2023 minutes were not distributed, so Committee deferred approval thereof to the next meeting.

**Open Topics Conversation.**

Matt reviewed the objection process as defined in the January 20, 2022 meeting.

**John Clarke Drawings and Presentation.** Committee will be given these drawings and requested to share comments by next Friday, October 20.

John Clarke went through a series of conceptual sketches that help to illustrate many of the principles espoused in the proposed recommendations focusing on: 1) the need for housing, 2) the need for housing and businesses for local residents, and 3) the importance of green spaces.

- Drawing of a walkable community as defined by a 0.5-mile walking radius from village center – long established planning principles.
  - Discussion of multiple “centers” – there can be multiple nodes of activity (hospital, schools) but a village “center” is defined as a mixed-use housing, commercial businesses, sidewalks, and attached or closely-built buildings lining the sidewalk.
- Drawing of the existing sewer system (needed for attached housing or housing on smaller lots)

- The NW quadrant of the village, connections to Wells Manor, Village Green, as well as the current sketches for the proposed workforce housing development in the town. Possibility of incentive zoning or mandates can be used to make it work.
  - Only 4-5 parcels with 2-3 owners that could be developed according to this plan.
  - Conversation of sewer capacity needing to evolve.
- The “octagon house” parcel. 13.75 acre parcel (one of the largest single parcels in the village). Historic site, so ideas were shown that avoid impact on the historic home and setting. Under current zoning, an additional 35 lots could be carved from that property, but with admitted damage to the quality of the land, large trees, and historic setting of the house.
  - Alternate idea under existing zoning: using “cottage development” and a mix of housing types that has 35 units but highly clustered to the rear of the property to maintain the entire historic frontage of the main house from Route 9.
  - Alternate idea also under existing zoning with an affordable housing incentive: also using “cottage development” and a mix of housing types with a multi-housing unit of 39 apartments totaling 62 housing units.
- Discussion of the need to provide empty nesters with smaller housing types.
- The Bulkeley School, 1.4 acres in the middle of the village. Historically a large brick building in the middle of the village. Also, the Union Iron Works building was a large 3-story brick factory building on the corner of Center and E. Market. It was torn down to make way for Village Hall/Fire Department. Establishing precedent of large brick buildings in the center of the village.
  - Alternate idea with apartments in the building, four single family homes, and a corner public green space on South/Mulberry (the septic field for the original school). Achieved in part through shared driveways.
  - Alternate idea with an affordable housing incentive if parcel is connected to the sewer system – bring the 2.5-story brick building back on the corner of Mulberry and E. Market and have a 22-26-unit multi-family building and put municipal offices and community space/gym/stage in the original Bulkeley building – four townhouses and a single-family home on South Street. Public greenspace on the corner of South/Mulberry.
- Village Center. Visuals of the demolition of buildings for parking lots began in the 1970s and continued into 2004. The largest impact on the pedestrian experience in the village center are the “gaps” in the streetscapes that are parking lots.
  - Idea: reclaim the parking lots and close the driveway gaps.
  - Fosters corner where the “White Corner” used to be (torn down in 1960s/70s for a gas station eventually removed for a parking lot). Large concern about one of the main corners of the main intersection being a parking lot.
  - Putting in diagonal parking on W. Market Street and curb bumps.
  - Infill possibilities along W. Market to the west of the Beekman Arms and the corner of Oak and W. Market
  - Integrated village green along the greenspaces in front of the Beekman Arms and the Post Office with some re-landscaping to bring it back to the traditional pre-1960s design.
  - Add an infill building to the gap of the bank parking lot on E. Market. Loses four private parking spaces and gains three public parking spaces.

- Add a greenhouse/flower business to the pocket park in front of the CVS with a public space – incentive to the property owner to open the space to the public.
- Village Parking lot is under village control, so the best spot to do much of this work. From simple ideas to more complex. All add more parking and public restrooms. The more complex adds a true village green space with a mixed-use building (considered a “liner building”), public restrooms, a better backdrop for the Dough Boy and war memorial. More commercial, more residential, enclosed green space, same(ish) number of parking spaces.
- Sidewalk along E. Market Street – more parking, tree wells, wider sidewalks.
- General consensus that these illustrative drawings are very helpful and should be included as “examples” or “samples” of what can be done subject to further comments.
  - Request to include the Ruge’s parking lot illustration and the Garden Street extension (“SW Quarter”) concept as proposed by the land use subcommittee.

**Parking Permit Conversation.** The Committee has declined the approach of grandfathering the existing parking permits on Livingston Street. Concerns that private permits are exclusionary and privatizing a public good. According to the 2004 minutes when permit parking was enacted, the most difficult time for that area is the evening hours. Concern was also registered about delivery trucks idling in front of homes and the Terrapin parking lot reduction in size causing spill-over that wasn’t anticipated because the permit parking exists.

- Consensus that the committee wants to give a large policy to the village not specific to one block or another.
- Subcommittee recommendation aimed to resolve the idea that the subcommittee didn’t want to have permit parking become a precedent duplicated by other areas in the village.
- In general, there was consensus around the concept of not privatizing public goods. Comments were made about all of us having to sacrifice something personal as the village evolves.
- Ideas:
  - paid parking (with free for residents),
  - allow permit parking to continue in that area but end it in the evening hours
  - striping – parking spaces and curbs
  - shorten the permit parking area (end it further west of Center Street than it is currently)
  - no parking allowed at all
  - fee for the permit?
- If permits are recommended at all, then that sets a precedent for other opportunities to appear in the village, which the committee wants to avoid.
- Proposal?
  - Grandfather the existing permits, but only during certain evening hours for Livingston Street and specifically recommend no other permitting allowed.
  - We are recommending an approach to this one area, and we are considering this area a non-conforming situation that is not to be duplicated.
  - Policy principal: public streets are public resources, and we should in general not limit public parking in public streets except in evening hours to accommodate the human impact of late-night businesses. Such as 8pm-8am.
- Public comment:

- Request from resident of Livingston Street to consider the amount of commercial traffic through Livingston, including leaving them parked and idling and blocking the driveways. Currently eight children who live on Livingston and trying to keep them safe (e.g. concern about the use of driveways for u-turns while children are playing in the driveway).
- Concern from another resident that highly restrictive parking permits on public streets are illegal under state law.
- Is there a way to develop a parking policy for residential areas that are in highly commercial areas?
- Further committee discussion
  - Enforcement and public safety should be decoupled from the parking issue
  - Striping should be implemented in all commercial districts and residential areas near commercial districts (Livingston, Center, South) – with striping and more parking, it will also visually narrow the street and slow traffic

**Review intermunicipal partnership ideas in the wake of the town supervisor conversation.**

Is there anything from the 11-point list that the Committee would like to remove from the plan given the information gleaned from the conversation with Elizabeth?

- Only one to remove would be the TDR recommendation.
- Otherwise, the list appears to be sound and reasonably possible with partnership from Town of Rhinebeck and beyond.
- Strong alignment around an intermunicipal task force as well as inviting John Clarke to coordinate with the Town Planning Board was met with general approval.

**Name of the new residential district.** Ideas were brainstormed – discussion and vote will happen in the next meeting:

- Astor Heights District
- Residential Infill District
- Village Expansion District
- Cottage Neighborhood District

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51pm. The next meeting will be held on November 9, 2023.