

**BRUNSWICK PLANNING BOARD
FEBRUARY 12, 2013**

MEMBERS PRESENT PLANNING BOARD: Chair Charlie Frizzle, Vice Chair Margaret Wilson, Dann Lewis, Dana Totman, and Richard Visser

MEMBER PRESENT VILLAGE REVIEW BOARD: Chair Emily Swan, Jane Crichton, Betsy Marr, and Brooks Stoddard (arrived at 7:03)

STAFF PRESENT: Anna Breinich, Jeremy Doxsee and Town Attorney Pat Scully

A meeting of the Brunswick Planning Board was held on Tuesday, February 12, 2013 at the Municipal Meeting Facility at Brunswick Station, 16 Station Ave. Vice Chair Margaret Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

WORKSHOP – The Planning Board and the Village Review Board will hold a joint workshop session to discuss potential amendments to the Town Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 2, Section 216, Village Overlay Zone. This workshop will focus on the issue of geographic and substantive jurisdiction of the Village Review Board.

Anna Breinich read her Memo to the Planning and Village Review Boards dated February 7, 2013 and stated that what they would like for an outcome tonight is direction on what option they prefer; staff has a placeholder at the next Town Council meeting to present the same options and get their feedback.

Option 1

Keep Village Review Board jurisdiction as is, both geographic and substantive, including jurisdiction of demolitions, with improved review criteria.

Anna clarified that wherever it states review criteria, it pertains to all review criteria not just demolitions. Margaret Wilson agreed and stated that whatever they decide in terms of jurisdiction, the standards are going to be written in a clearer way.

Option 2

Same as Option 1, but expand the Village Review Board jurisdiction geographically as suggested in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan (include the west side of Maine Street between Pleasant Street and Bath Road/Noble Street).

Anna Breinich stated that the area of Cedar Street will have to be revisited.

Option 3

Same as Option 1, but alter VRB jurisdiction to apply only to the portion of the existing or expanded VRZ that is designated as an historic sub-district.

Anna Breinich stated that there would still be the VRZ either expanded or as is and within that VRZ there are currently 2 Nationally Registered Historic Districts with the potential for

Brunswick Commercial Historic District; this would not include northwest Brunswick neighborhood or Pleasant Street area.

Option 4

Change the Village Review Board's jurisdiction to make it more of an Historic Preservation Review Board with jurisdiction over all MHPC designated contributing properties within the Town's three National Register listed Historic Districts, National Register listed properties, as well as professionally designated local historically significant structures outside the listed Historic Districts. Demolitions, modifications, alterations, additions and new construction involving non-contributing properties within the three Historic Districts would be subject to specific design standards administered by the Planning Department or the Planning Board (in the case of projects otherwise triggering Planning Board jurisdiction).

The focus would be the Historic Districts and historic landmarks. The three Historic Districts include Pennellville and possibly 4 if the Commercial District is approved.

Option 5

Same as Option 4, but limited geographically to the existing or expanded Village Review Zone.

Anna Breinich stated that they would stay with the current VRZ and separate out contributing versus non-contributing, historic landmarks, and the most significant 100. Margaret Wilson asked if option 5 included contributing structures not in the VRZ; Pat Scully replied that it does not and option 4 is more town wide.

Margaret Wilson asked Dana Totman if he still had questions on what exactly the charge was or if he was comfortable. Dana replied that clarification would be helpful. Anna Breinich replied that the original charge had asked them to take a look at demolitions in the context of VRB and give recommendations. Anna stated that in order to take a look at demolitions they also have to look at the type of demolitions which is why they have to also review the issue of jurisdiction. Anna stated that staff is advocating for a review of the overlay because it needs to be done. Anna stated that the direction she was given at the Council Agenda setting meeting, was that the Council Leadership is in support of redoing the entire overlay revision at this time. Anna read from the October 1, 2012 Town Council packet item 103.

This item seeks recommendations on how to improve the process for reviewing demolitions in the Village Review Zone. Chapter 2, Section 216 of the Town Zoning Ordinance designates the Village Review Zone, establishes the Village Review Board, and vests in the Village Review Board the power to grant Certificates of Appropriateness for new construction, additions, alterations, relocations or demolitions. The granting or denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition is currently based on the criteria in Section 216.9 as well as findings based on factors listed in Section 216.10.C. The Planning Board will be asked to review the Ordinance, taking into account the purposes of the Ordinance, the Comprehensive Plan update, and the history of implementing the Ordinance. The Board will be encouraged to receive comment from the public, the members of the Village Review Board, and Town Planning Department staff in developing recommendations to the Council. The Planning Board will be requested to make a recommendation to the

Town Council no later than November 14. Copies of relative sections of the Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan are included in your packet.

Suggested Motion:

Motion to request that the Planning Board review and make recommendations to the Council regarding the Town Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 2, Section 216, relating to the review of demolitions in the Village Review Overlay Zone.

Emily Swan stated that she feels the last 3 options do not address what the Comprehensive Plan or the Downtown Master Plan list. She stated that the Comprehensive Plan does mention expanding the geographic limits of the zone as a short term goal and key objective but the other, to explore expanding the authority of the Village Review Board to include the review of activities, involving identifying any structures or site anywhere within the community will be extremely time consuming and will require a lot of work. Emily stated that the focus should be the VRZ. Margaret Wilson, as Comprehensive Plan Chair, replied that the recommendation that Emily pointed out is a key action item recommended by the Village Review Board at the time the Comprehensive Plan was written. Charlie Frizzle pointed out that his suggestion at the last meeting was that however the VRZ is geographically defined, it would remain and the Design Guidelines as they currently exist would be enforced within the zone by the Planning Board; he is trying to give both Boards clear jurisdiction and consistency. Richard Visser asked who would be responsible for demolitions; Charlie replied that demolitions would be the responsibility of the Planning Board for non-contributing structures and Village Review Board would be responsible for contributing structures. Pat Scully replied that this is what they were trying to accomplish in Option 5. Margaret Wilson stated that she believes that the Village Review Board does a good job with their charge within the VRZ and would like to expand the area to include those recommended in the Comprehensive Plan but she does not see the need to split responsibility between the two Boards or contributing versus non-contributing; she likes Option 2. Emily Swan stated that at first she was leery of specific standards but she has realized that the problem is that people do not know what is expected of the Village Review Board; Emily likes the ordinance for Keene, New Hampshire. Dana Totman stated that he agrees with Margaret's comments and does not see any reason why they would not expand the zone per the Comprehensive Plan; he prefers Option 2 as it is clearer, cleaner and works well. Richard Visser stated that he prefers Option 2 as well but is worried about the demolition aspect; he suggests that for demolitions, the Village Review Board remain advisory to the Planning Board. Betsy Marr stated that she also agrees with Option 2 and hopes that the issues that have risen in the past in terms of demolitions will not occur. Charlie replied that he would support Option 2, but in terms of demolition, he did not want to make a recommendation on that until they can see what comes out of the standard writing process; members agreed. Anna Breinich and Emily discussed the voluntary landmarks program that has been pushed to the side due to manpower.

Vice chair Margaret Wilson opened the meeting to public comment.

District 4 Town Councilor, John Perrault, stated that both the Planning Board and the Village Review Board have always done a stellar job at doing what they are charged with and understands that they want to make things smoother, more comprehensive and easier to work with especially when it comes to the demolition aspect. John stated that he would like to see that the Village Review Board can report to Codes Enforcement to meet certain standards.

Bob Judd, resident of the Lincoln Street Historic District, stated that there is an importance in the role of education that the Village Review Board and the Planning Board can and should play; there needs to be a serious amount of education about the importance and the value of good communities where people and businesses work and live in harmony and also where a sense of history is maintained. Bob asked that the Boards keep this education in mind since there is so much that the public doesn't know.

Town Council Vice Chair, Margo Knight, and resident of Page Street, stated that at the Leadership Agenda Setting Meeting, that they were not trying to change what the Town Council had decided which was to address the demolition portion of the ordinance as well as meet the June 1st deadline, but she has heard and it is reasonable as they address these issues that maybe they also want to address other issues. She stated that if the Boards cannot address anything other than the demolitions by the due date then that is OK, but that Council did not want to micromanage in a way that would keep more from being done.

District 4 Town Councilor, John Perrault, stated that what he believed the charge was by Town Council was to address the demolition portion of the ordinance and not about expanding the zone.

Vice Chair Margaret Wilson closed the public comment period.

Jeremy Doxsee discussed the differences in architecture in the town and Margaret Wilson replied that much of the development was pre-ordinance.

Minutes

MOTION BY DANN LEWIS APPROVED THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 6, 2012, SECONDED BY CHARLIE FRIZZLE, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY AMONG THOSE PRESENT.

MOTION BY CHARLIE FRIZZLE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 27, 2012, SECONDED BY RICHARD VISSER, UNANIMOUSLY AMONG THOSE PRESENT.

Adjourned

This meeting was adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Attest



Tonya D. Jenusaitis
Recording Secretary