



DRAFT MINUTES

MANSFIELD TOMORROW ZONING FOCUS GROUP

AUDREY P. BECK MUNICIPAL BUILDING ■ 4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD

THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2016 ■ SPECIAL MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: A. Booth; A. Hilding
MEMBERS ABSENT: G. Padick; E. Pelletier
STAFF PRESENT: L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development; J. Mullen, Assistant Planner; J. Kaufman, Inland Wetlands Agent

Painter opened the meeting at 9:03 am.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. MARCH 16, 2016 – SPECIAL MEETING

As two members were absent, no action was taken with regard to the March 16, 2016 minutes.

DRAFT APPROACH TO MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING REGULATIONS

Painter provided an overview of the draft approach to updating regulations related to multi-family housing and distributed copies of written comments provided by members Padick and Pelletier. The following comments/issues were raised by Hilding and Booth regarding the proposed approach:

- *Definition of Family.* Booth and Hilding disagreed with the recommendation that the definition of family be amended to allow for more than 3 unrelated adults to be authorized in managed multi-family apartment complexes. In particular, they expressed the following concerns:
 - A change from 3 to 4 adults would result in a 25% increase in population density, which could have significant impacts on traffic generation, parking, impervious surface, water and sewer usage/capacity.
 - The proposed change would draw more students into the neighborhoods by accommodating off-campus housing, which is contrary to the national trend of universities providing more housing on campus.
 - There is less oversight of students living off-campus, resulting in behavioral issues, public safety concerns and property damage.
 - The proposed change would not guarantee any change to affordability of units.
 - Change would have a negative impact on the character of the community and the natural environment.
 - Concerned with potential impact if court determines that a municipality cannot establish different regulations for different areas/types of development.
- *Minimum Unit Size.* Hilding questioned whether minimum floor area requirements for units would be included in the regulations.

- *Affordable Housing.* Hilding did not support inclusion of a fee-in-lieu option for the affordable housing component, concerned with the potential of such an option to create segregated housing that create disparate impacts on schools and neighborhoods.
- *Flexibility.* Questions were raised as to why flexibility in regulations was suggested/needed.
- *Management Plans.* Hilding expressed concern that the proposed requirement for management plans would be unenforceable and therefore not achieve the desired goal.
- *Compact Residential Districts.* The following concerns were expressed with regard to the proposed approach to creating Compact Residential (CR) Zones:
 - The approach is predicated on having appropriate land use designations. Hilding indicated that some of the areas designated for Compact Residential use in the current plan are inappropriate and questioned how the POCD would be updated as conditions change.
 - Members were concerned that the approach would limit public involvement in the process.
 - Impervious surface maximums need to be identified based on the subject watershed and take into account existing conditions.
 - Town should start evaluating air quality in addition to other environmental concerns.
 - Resulting traffic patterns and impacts on neighborhoods.
 - Approach and regulations should encourage design and marketing of units to families and professionals, not students.
 - Water use should be prioritized for business zones; a cost/benefit analysis should be conducted with regard to proposed water use for individual projects
 - Concern that a preliminary plan will not provide sufficient detail and could result in problems when a more detailed plan is provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Charles Vidick, Ashford. Questioned the legality of establishing different standards for what constitutes a family in different zones/development types; indicated that communities do not have the ability to regulate minimum unit size pursuant to a CT Supreme Court decision; supported updating open space requirements and identified a need to define the purpose of open space (passive, recreation, etc.); and suggested that the Town may not want to use a 3rd party sustainability verification system such as LEED as some of the standards raise the cost of housing.
- Tom Fahey, Fahey & Landolina, Attorneys LLC. Confirmed that East Hampton case eliminated minimum floor area requirements; supported proposed fee-in-lieu option for affordable housing;

indicated that many towns allow more than 3 unrelated adults to be considered a family, such as Glastonbury which allows 6.

- Anthony Giorgio, Keystone Properties. Supported a holistic approach to updating regulations; indicated that when done consistent with an overall vision, development can enhance the quality of the community; identified need for a balance between nature and man; referenced the Simsbury Design Development District as a similar approach; indicated that the uniqueness of Mansfield needs to be taken into account as regulations are drafted; and expressed interest in working with the Town to update the regulations.
- Rebecca Shafer, Echo Road. Identified need for any increase in students in managed apartments needs to be evaluated with regard to neighborhood impacts, particularly in certain neighborhoods; indicated that the Oaks on the Square were not necessarily well-managed given the private security now being employed; requested that any increase in the number of unrelated individuals in apartment complexes be considered concurrently with a reduction in the number of unrelated individuals in other housing types and that an amended definition of dormitory also be added to limit student housing in neighborhoods; suggested that additional multi-family development on Hunting Lodge Road would be a disaster and encouraged new development to focus on the addition of single-family homes to diversify the neighborhood; and expressed a desire for the town/university to implement buy back/conversion programs.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Painter, AICP

Director of Planning and Development

Linda M. Painter

From: Gregory Padick <padickgj@snet.net>
Sent: Tuesday, July 19, 2016 6:00 PM
To: Jessie Richard; allison Hilding (aahilding@gmail.com); e.pelletier@datumengr.com; Aline Booth
Cc: Linda M. Painter; Janell M. Mullen; Jennifer S. Kaufman
Subject: Re: Zoning Focus Group Meeting: Thursday 7/21 @ 9am

Greeting all;

Unfortunately, I will not be present at Thursday's Zoning Focus Group meeting. I have reviewed the meeting packet and offer the following comments for your consideration:

1. I support the elimination of existing multi-family regulations and the establishment of new "Compact Residential" special design district provisions that would link a zone change to a site specific development plan. This approach, similar to the Storrs Center regulatory provisions, will allow PZC members maximum flexibility to take into account and address site and neighborhood characteristics, infrastructure capacity, architectural design and sustainability criteria and flexible setback and dimensional provisions. This approach will not be easy to implement but the results will justify the effort. Developers will still need to address site and neighborhood issues but this approach will encourage creative designs and compatibility with Plan of Conservation and Development recommendations. Eliminating a subsequent special Permit requirement will provide more certainty for financing appropriately designed multi-family developments.
2. The staff identified requirements for establishing a "Compact Residential" special design district (starting on Page 7 of the packet) appear to be comprehensive and appropriate and serve as a good starting point for drafting implementation regulations. As was the case with the Storrs Center Special Design District Regulations, the drafting will need to be carefully coordinated with the Town Attorney.
3. I strongly endorse increasing the maximum number of unrelated persons per dwelling unit. The current limit of 3 is inappropriate for a well designed multi-family project that is within a area designated for higher density development. Due to a limited area served by public sewer and water systems, allowing increased density in these areas will promote public transit opportunities, enhance commercial viability and help reduce pressure on single family conversions from owner occupancy to rental occupancy.
4. The new regulations need to carefully incorporate overall density provisions. Perhaps a range can be provided with incentives for higher densities based on locational factors and design merit.
5. Allowing increased building heights for sites within or in close proximity to commercial areas should be considered
6. I support flexible setbacks between buildings to allow for more creative design. The current setbacks between building were enacted based on Fire Marshal recommendations which will need to be reviewed.
7. I strongly support the incorporation of stringent property management requirements, particularly for projects designed for student occupancy. All managements requirements will need to be legally documented and binding.

8. The current affordable housing provisions (tied to unit size) were adopted after determining that the PZC and staff would have a very difficult time addressing, on an ongoing basis, income verification. If the Housing Authority is willing to assume this responsibility, incorporating an income approach would be preferable due to State affordable housing appeal and exemption provisions.

9. Authorizing limited accessory commercial uses in conjunction with a multi-family development is not considered a design or management problem. I do question whether such a limited commercial use would be economically viable.

I look forward to the ongoing challenge to update Mansfield's regulation of multi-family housing

Greg Padick

On Tuesday, July 19, 2016 8:37 AM, Jessie Richard <RichardJL@mansfieldct.org> wrote:

Just a reminder that there is a Zoning Focus Group Meeting Thursday 7/21 at 9am. Please use the link below.

From: Jessie Richard
Sent: Friday, July 08, 2016 11:14 AM
To: allison Hilding (aahilding@gmail.com) <aahilding@gmail.com>; e.pelletier@datumengr.com; Gregory Padick <padickgj@snet.net>; aline.booth@gmail.com
Cc: Linda M. Painter <PainterLM@mansfieldct.org>; Janell M. Mullen <MullenJM@mansfieldct.org>; Jennifer S. Kaufman (KaufmanJS@MANSFIELDCT.ORG) <KaufmanJS@MANSFIELDCT.ORG>
Subject: Zoning Focus Group Meeting: 7-21-16 @ 9am

Members,

Please use the link below to view the Zoning Focus Group Meeting Agenda and packet material for the July 21st meeting at 9am.

http://www.mansfieldct.gov/filestorage/1904/5335/23389/34374/20160721_packet.pdf

Jessie L. Richard
Town of Mansfield
Planning and Community Development
4 South Eagleville Road
Storrs, CT 06268
(860)429-3330

Linda M. Painter

From: e.pelletier@datumengr.com
Sent: Thursday, July 21, 2016 6:25 AM
To: Jessie Richard
Cc: Linda M. Painter; Jennifer S. Kaufman; Janell M. Mullen
Subject: RE: Zoning Focus Group Meeting: Thursday 7/21 @ 9am

Good morning Jessie:

Due to my work schedule and commitments I will not be able to make the meeting today. I have reviewed the packet along with Greg Padick's comments. I concur with Greg's comments and sorry that I can not attend.

----- Original Message -----

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From: Jessie Richard <RichardJL@mansfieldct.org>
Date: Tue, July 19, 2016 8:37 am
To: "allison Hilding (aahilding@gmail.com)" <aahilding@gmail.com>, "e.pelletier@datumengr.com" <e.pelletier@datumengr.com>, Greg Padick <padickgj@snet.net>, Aline Booth <aline.booth@att.net>
Cc: "Linda M. Painter" <PainterLM@mansfieldct.org>, "Janell M. Mullen" <MullenJM@mansfieldct.org>, "Jennifer S. Kaufman" <KaufmanJS@MANSFIELDCT.ORG>

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