**Form Based Code Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**April 22, 2015**

**DRAFT**

Committee members in attendance: Ingrid Nuse, Jollie Parker, Kylie Hill, Charles Flaum, Dan Langevin, Scott Meyer, Glenn Callahan, Walter Pomroy, Mark Nielsen, Kyle Nuse

Other attendees: Paul Dreher, David Butler (Planning Commission Chair), Lea Kilvadyova (Community & Economic Development Coordinator)

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***Public outreach***

David Butler said that Johnson Planning Commission needs the Steering Committee’s help with public outreach. He would appreciate if a few Committee members volunteered to help run the public meetings and explain the code. These public meetings will most likely occur once a working draft of the code has been completed.

Paul said that he would like to have the working draft ready by the end of May. Lea suggested that once the draft is ready a printed copy could be available for viewing at the Town Clerk’s office. Lea volunteered to take questions from people who come to the office to review the draft.

***Review of Building Envelope Standards***

The Committee reviewed the materials, district by district. The review included the following comments/questions:

Village storefront district:

* Build to line: Was reduced from 0’-8’ to 0’-4’ feet to reflect the wide right-of-way along Main Street. The build-to-line range applies to the primary wall of the structure and not to things like steps or porches.
* David thought that the Village storefront district should be bigger. For example, Marvin’s store should be brought into the storefront district.
* Ground floor height: minimum of 14 feet. Paul explained that the reason for 14 feet is to provide flexibility for future uses such as restaurants. A restaurant needs 14 feet in order to install ventilations systems. The minimum ground floor height requirement does not mean that the ceiling has to be at 14 feet. For example, a finished ceiling can be at nine feet and all the ducts and ventilations systems can be hidden above.
* Ground floor height: maximum of 20 feet. Walter asked what someone would do if they wanted to put in a movie theater. Would the maximum ground floor height kill their project? Paul suggested that they would go to the development review board to explain that they need a maximum height of more than 20 feet.

Village general district:

* Build to line: Was adjusted for 0’-4’ on Main Street and 0’-8’ on Railroad Street
* Dwelling units per acre: no maximum. David asked: “What if someone decided to buy ten 15 ft. wide buildings?” Paul said that if we are worried about multiple buildings, we could make the code say that there would be one primary structure and one accessory structure per lot. Walter said that he is not worried about what will be happening at the back of the lot. His only concern is with how the lot front relates to the street. Paul suggested that placing a lot of tiny low performing houses in a downtown area which typically has the highest taxable value would be a bad economic decision. Walter added that every unit would have to hook up to sewer and water which would be expensive. In the end the group decided not to put any limitation on the number of structures in this district.

Village neighborhood district:

* Paul mentioned that there will be instances where environmental factors, such as the existence of floodplain, will overrule the code. If somebody would like to build in the floodplain, they would have to comply with the town’s flood zoning bylaws.
* Minimum units per acre: 4. Paul said that the reason behind this to encourage development where municipal services (sewer, water) exist so that the acreage is not wasted.
* David thought that there were some areas in the Village where the Village neighborhood district could be expanded. Good criteria for expanding the code into new areas could be a walking access to the store, availability of municipal utilities and a location away from the floodplain.

Village rural district:

Currently not included but Paul will include it.

***Wrap up***

Prior to the next meeting, Paul asked people to review the non-conformity and parking documents. He would like people to mark up the documents and ask questions.

Paul also said there may be a valid reason to regulate building use to some extent. For example, there are properties that are not taxable such as churches or other nonprofits and the question is whether we would like to use the premium taxable space on Main Street for a use that will not contribute to the tax base.

Next meeting will be on May 6th.

----------- Notes taken by: Lea Kilvadyova