

**Town of Ulysses
Planning Board
Final Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2019**

Approved: December 17, 2019

Call to Order: 7:04

Present: Chair Katelin Olson, Jonathan Ferrari, John Wertis, Rebecca Schneider, Town Board Liaison Rich Goldman, Clerk Maria C. Barry. **Excused:** Steven Manley

Agenda review; Minutes review (minutes from the last meeting were not available): None.

Privilege of the floor: None

Business

The Board reviewed the following letter to be sent to the Town Board about the Draft Zoning.

**Recommendations to Modify Draft Zoning
From the Town of Ulysses Planning Board, 4 June 2019**

Declaration of Policy

- **Page 1:** Delete the words “form” and “bulk” as descriptors of a building. Both are vague as a way to measure a building and cannot be regulated, like height and area.

Building Permits

- **Page 5, 212-5, F; reappears on Page 49:** Draft rescinds building permit waiver for structures less than 144 square feet. Will permitting now be required for installing a small shed or playhouse on a property? Seems overly burdensome to property owners and might significantly increase staff time and/or result in routinely violated code. (Can the Town reasonably enforce this proposed provision?)
 - Definition of “Structure” - would benefit from more clarity; overly ambiguous in its current form. Seems to suggest all manner of items, including fences, patios with foundations, etc.

Site Plan Review

- **Page 13:** Recommend including stormwater plans and proposed septic locations at the site plan review stage. Members would like such plans to be a standard part of all building proposals in Ulysses.
- **Page 16:** Members found the criteria “harmonious with the surrounding area” a vague descriptor that cannot be measured or enforced. Recommended that the zoning language includes

guidelines/definition to what constitutes “significant natural, cultural, heritage, and scenic” assets, linking them to specific maps/surveys/adopted documents whenever possible.

- **Pages 16-17:** Recommend adopting Incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) practices, as used by the Environmental Protection Agency, and adding sustainable requirements like solar orientation, bike rack provisions (where appropriate), and other similar options to the review process.
- **Pages 18-19:** Ideally, the location of drainage tiles, if available, should be identified in any building proposals.

Terminology

- **Page 26:** The common way to determine building height is to average all four elevations. Otherwise, substantially large buildings that otherwise intended could be approved based on current proposed language.
- **Page 32:** Recommend reviewing the list of examples of home operations (i.e. dress-maker), as they seem antiquated and unlikely to match 21st century uses.

Permitted Uses (Accessory Dwelling Units)

- **Page 47 and 138:** Recommend accessory units be limited it to a 900-square feet footprint, which is in keeping with size regulations in other sections of the code. (This would allow a 2-story building to be a maximum of 1,800 square feet.)

Lakeshore Zone

- **Page 57:** A maximum footprint of 20,000 sq. ft. for agricultural buildings may harm the more fragile land in the Lakeshore Zone. Recommend a lower maximum that is based on the maximum lot coverage of 5%.

Conservation Zone

- **Page 64:** PB members have concerns about the size and type of buildings that will and will not require special permits in the Conservation zone. Most members said the maximum footprints for buildings (4,000 sq. ft. for residential and 6,000 sq. ft. for commercial) are too large and wanted to recommend lower limits.

Lot Area and Yard Requirements

- **Page 76:** Recommend that the height of buildings remain at 32 feet. A higher number for the Hamlet Center could be appropriate in the range of 40 feet.

Form Requirements

- **Page 77:** Employ the phrase “such as” in design standards for commercial buildings in the Hamlet Center instead of **Part E**. Mr. Ferrari notes that this language allows architects and builders more creativity in making a vibrant town center.
 - Ms. Olson further recommends the development of architectural design guidelines to shape the visual character of development in the Hamlet. This would help guide the aesthetic development of the zone.
- **Pages 77-78:** Members oppose requiring a special permit for some of the uses included in the Hamlet Center Zone. PB recommend reviewing allowed uses to ensure that they will not generate extra and unreasonable traffic, have environmental impacts, and potential adverse impact on surrounding neighbors.
- **Pages 77-78:** Recommend the Town Board review maximum square foot limits for residences and commercial buildings in the Hamlet Zone and in other zones as well. Recommend a maximum of 6,000 square footage for commercial buildings and 2,000 square feet for residential. (For instance, the 6,000 square footage language has been added to the Lakeshore District on **page 60**, which was likely by accident.)

Marina Zone

- **Pages 84-85:** Recommend deleting farm operation as a permitted use in the MZ.

Standards for Vegetated Buffer Areas/Stream Protection Setback

- **Page 131:** Recommend adding that all new private property construction in the Town should be required to abide by the stream protection setback to ensure water quality and protection.

Cluster Development

Definitions Section

- Define “significant tree” - provide clear size requirements, similar to how “tree” is defined.
- Clarify “corridor” to specify protecting certain animal pathways. Unclear in its current form. (Do deer qualify, for instance?) PB is unclear on how to take this into consideration in a site plan review.
- **(Page 168, 212-142.4, 7)** Resource analysis as it applies to subdivision procedures --- requiring it for all major subdivisions (even with relatively few parcels) -- may prove cost-prohibitive for owners who are not engaged in substantive cluster development. Clarity needed over which professionals are considered competent to perform such resource analysis.
- Recommend the Town adopt a specific list of documents/maps/surveys on the variety of resources prioritized, including wetlands, soil maps, viewsheds, historic and cultural resources, etc. This would allow both the Planning Board and land owners to operate from a shared set of documentation. This does not preclude a resource analysis of a particular property, but could help reduce costs, streamline the process, and help ensure that both the Planning Board and landowner are using a shared set of documents.
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- **Page 163, 212-142.2, C:** Consider a graduated time frame for preserving open space, allowing density bonuses for longer time frames. Perpetual protection under an easement may hinder appropriate develop decades from now. For instance, it may make sense long term to encourage development around existing development, as we’re now attempting to do with Jacksonville. Locking up land forever--as opposed to 20, 30, 50 years---may prove undesirable long term and inadvertently encourage sprawl.

Ms. Schneider MADE and Mr. Ferrari SECONDED the MOTION to approve the letter to be sent to the Town Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wertis announced he is retiring from the Planning Board. Ms. Schneider spoke to Mr. Wertis' service saying "I've come to truly respect what you offer. We all have different things to add to this process, and John is the one who truly knows the [Town Planning] documents. It's the nuance of meaning that is really law. I know I can count on him to know exactly what documents say."

Ms. Olson MADE and Mr. Ferrari SECONDED a MOTION thanking Mr. Wertis for his service. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Schneider then MADE and Ms. Olson SECONDED the MOTION to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Maria C. Barry, December 19, 2019.