

Zoning Working Group meeting 5/7/2019

Town Hall 7PM

In Attendance, 2019-05-07:

- Charlie Ryan, President of Town Council
- Matthew Sisk, Resident
- Andy Kaye, Resident
- David Killeffer, Resident
- Kathy Corbo, Resident
- [], Resident
- Tricia Keegan, Resident
- Susanne Hamilton, Resident
- Tim Burke, Resident
- Richard Brian, Resident
- Dick Wentzel, Resident
- Robert Harnais, Planning Board Chairman

VOLUNTEERS

John M. Millholland
Rich Bielecki
Greg Quinn
Andrew Kaye
Richard Bryan
Greg Wilson
Matthew Sisk
Lee Castignetti
Kathy Corbo
David Killeffer
Trisha Keegan
Jen Wadland
Susanne Hamilton
Tim Burke
Dick Wentzel

Meeting kick off by Charlie Ryan town council president. He shared his background and how he got started to become politically active in town when he attended a meeting that impacted the water and sewer commission when he knew he could contribute value. He stated that he loves living in Braintree and pledges to do what is best for the residents and the town.

There have been tough times for town zoning. After four public hearings it is clear that the residents are asking the town council, the planning board and the leadership for a Master Plan, a vision.

The mayor has come forward asking for a reset. The job of the working group is to get the opinion of residents and citizens.

1. The planning board will make a recommendation
2. The council will not hold up what they are doing to wait for the advice of the committee
3. Charlie stated that they want to identify the “good things” about the proposed zoning document
4. Wants to see action taken on zoning ordinances
5. When it is time to vote, council will vote
6. Would like to pick and choose what everyone agrees is good. Seeking input on what are the good parts of the proposed document.

Try to stay positive and meaningful, keep it collaborative. There will be no bullying. Take the time to do good.

Members in attendance introduce themselves

Matt Sisk – lifetime Braintree resident, supports the Blue Hills Vocational Technical HS, wants to contribute and wants to see no harm to the town.

Andy Kaye – Has three children college aged, Had lost a son and in memory of his son he is an organizer of the “touch a truck” program in the town which hundreds of children take part in each year, He is active with St. Colletta’s school. He works in strategic planning for a corporation (emphasizes that he does not have specialty in town planning).

David Killiford – 6 children at all ages in the Braintree public school levels.

Kathy Carbo – nurse lives near Weymouth landing and takes the greenbush, kids at East jr; hasn’t been very politically active

John Millholland – commuter to Cambridge, not into politics feels it is time to step up for this important effort

Susanne Hamilton – Kids at Flaherty 8 years in Braintree, north Braintree civic assoc, familiar with the 40B process through this, believes in inclusionary housing and how to better plan; housing affordable trust should be formed

Tricia Keegan – got involved when she saw the Recycle Works come to town in violation of existing zoning laws, and sees the new zoning laws will allow more similar industrial uses in a town. Not consistent with the town residents wishes. 16 years in town, kids in high school and East middle school

Tim Burke – child and grandchild in Braintree sees the proposal bringing it more to city than a town, wants to preserve the character of the town, been here since 1978

Richard Ryan – 18 years, work in Quincy came to Braintree to get away from Quincy, still great feels like it is going the other way. Quality of life is important, fire fighter

Dick Wentzel – 4 kids BHS graduates, had participated in town meeting finance committee, former sewer commissioner, retired Mass Public Health, character of a town is important, not a city for Braintree

Bob Harnais- 22 years in Braintree, coached pop warner, has law practice in Quincy, planning board member, represents developers, his wife is from Braintree, he believes in development in a city that wants to be developed. Angst at the planning board with all the concerns thrown at them. There was change after 2 meetings, the 6 story to 4 story, 5 corners the blue house has been taken out of the zoning change. It is a town with malls and stores, Grove St, invite people in, ask his vision, lots of patch work, no rhyme or reason, good for taxes, more shopping here. Weston has no shopping malls. Bring town together, things change because people voice their opinion, not behind closed doors. It is all volunteers, not paid, interested; raised family here; invest in this town, never be disrespectful, said sorry if he had come across that way; he is patient and tries to never cut people off. Tries to do his best, not always right, still sees patch work [on the zoning map].

Charlie Ryan – Bob H is here to help, chairman of the planning board, Christine Stickney is a resource too. Tells Bob that “our thought process is what counts”. The Zoning Work Group – active contributors, it is a reset. Address concerns and Map changes, provide input and changes to current proposed zoning. There is a variety of ideas to be shared. Protect character of the neighborhoods. Wants to learn and be open minded.

Dan Clifford – (not a member of the ZWG) expressed concerns about not having a timeline; no date certain; keep eye on the prize – residents want a master plan. Town Council – resolution 1st to have a master plan before any zoning changes – he then dismissed himself from the meeting.

Resolution supports master plan voted by the town council.

Matt – how does the vote effect the committee -PB make recommendation May 14th open the hearing; if no recommendation from the PB – will it continue?

This will not hang out there; will be voted on before a Master Plan. Old stuff stays active. Can get permits under the new plan.

Everything is not bad, the table of uses changed

Master Plan = no 6 story buildings. Things we can do. Looks to future – because of a Master Plan. Zoning is Lw, can get sued because of it.

1998 = 500 units to be built

Andy K – the plan is 21 years old. It is poison in the community, this plan is too much. Too hard to pick what we like.

Pork chop lots – has minimal impact or effect, not a bit compromise

Bad things are not being addressed – sitting on building permit – 3 to 4 years, converting 2 bedroom in a small neighborhood to 5br McMansion. FAR = Floor ratio

Susanne H – hard to tackle it – inclusionary housing should have been a part of all prior projects, allowed without it

New zoning – allow “similar use” for new uses; very liberal allowance

It took 6 years to work on it, we need to consider breaking it into small pieces. Matt Sisk suggests we make priorities of what we want to do

To do a Master Plan – who did it? Town meeting, need access to all the reports that have been compiled that [Christine Stickney had stated] are the elements of a master plan

Let’s ID the top problems with existing zoning, what are the problems with the existing bylaws?

Ordinances – Bob Harnais states that zoning can give variances on ordinances, even after planning board votes “no”

Do we want to set norms for this committee? Voting, chairperson, etc?

Question asked about dormitories being allowed in town? Near Thayer?

26 pages of definitions – need to know them in context

Susanne Hamilton voted Chairperson (Matt Sisk and Tim Burke seconds) ;Tricia Keegan voted as secretary (Matt Sisk and Susanne Hamilton seconds motion); Andrew Kaye Deputy Secretary ; Matt Sisk vice chair (Tricia Keegan and Dick Wetzel seconds)

Affordable units discussion about inclusionary, the Landing has none. The concept of a trust is important for any developers that do not have inclusionary housing.

Christine Stickney – Cast Academy = accessory use dormitories. EXEMPT uses – no review – have in bylaw as accessory.

ZWG says get the bylaws in order – then go to the zoning map after – this makes sense to the ZWG

Set limit to adjourn next meeting by 8:30PM

Christine Stickney – if denied cannot come back for 2 years, can bring parts forward, ONLY if substantially different than it is today (Jill advises that the solicitor and assistant solicitor - what we propose could be considered substantially different, it is liberal interpretation)

Question – can the planning board rescind? So the option is to Reject, Accept or the PB rescind it??

Bob Harnais says - pushed to put it forward; so that they have to vote it down now

Must ask town solicitor the process

WE ask if the PB can rescind it? Or if maybe the mayor can rescind it

Bob Harnais – every decision can have precedence

Susanne H – requests that Charlie Ryan follow up on rules about a 2 year stay, can it be rescinded?

Discussion – ask the mayor to rescind this, so that we can have time to make suggested edits

MOTION: Tim Burke makes a motion: ZWG ask the mayor to withdraw the comprehensive zoning plan in an effort that the working group have time to collaborate with the planning board, planning department and town council to make thoughtful recommendations. Matt Sisk seconds the motion all agree

Plan to review definitions next meeting