Planning Board & Residents Working Group Meeting Minutes 2019-05-23
Braintree Town Hall

In Attendance:
Susanne Hamilton
David Killeffer
Lee Castignetti
Kathy Corbo
Jen Wadland
Richard Bryan
Dick Wentzel
Matthew Sisk
Andrew Kaye
 Jen Wadland
Greg Wilson
Rich Bielecki -arrived late
John M. Millholland

Not Present:
Tim Burke
Trisha Keegan
John M. Millholland
Greg Quinn

Meeting Minutes:

Motion to open meeting, seconded, meeting opened

Secretary of Meeting Trisha not present, David Killeffer will act as secretary

Review of Public Meeting Law, Open Meeting Law, etc. with Jim Casey

Mr. Casey spoke about how to conduct a meeting, for all members discussion should be limited to the topics on the agenda (don't wander to other areas)

Secretary needs to complete a meeting notice form, sign and date it, and present it to the town clerk's office to display on the meeting notice board at least 48 hours prior to a meeting (weekends and holidays don't count towards that timeline)

A committee cannot hold a public meeting if you miss that 48 hour deadline to inform the public

Meeting Minutes should be posted in a "reasonable amount of time" - if meet 2x/month, the first meeting of the following month must approve the minutes

Any public records request for this committee will come through Jim Casey's office (they receive 10 public records requests per business day, 255 business days per year, over 2600 records requests go through Jim Casey's office)

Use Robert's Rules of Order for conducting meetings

Chairperson is always in charge; at all times the chairperson has the floor

If a member is currently speaking, don't interrupt the speaker - raise your hand, wait to be recognized by the Chairperson and be called upon

For a committee of this size (15), all members should have an opportunity to speak before a person gets to speak a second time

All members need to be "to the point", and limit comments to 2 minutes or less

Rick arrived at 7:18pm

If you use your personal email address or your personal phone/cell phone as part of this group, they become public record

However, a town email address has been created for this group

   Sidebar: How can other residents correspond to out group? How can the group access those communications? If that list has our personal email address, then it becomes public record.
      The town can set up braintreema.gov email addresses for everyone in the committee

Per Jim Casey - after tonight, any emails sent as part of the committee will become public, so use the town-provided email

If more than 5 individuals participate in an electronic communication (e.g., email thread) about an issue before the committee, it becomes an open meeting violation

Text messages also are apply to the open meeting law rules and regulations
   Bob Harnais said anytime you deal with public business, your communications are discoverable and potentially open

Jim Casey: all committee members must complete an online ethics training, will take about an hour (last page of the Mandatory Ethics Training and Education). Members must send the certificate they get upon completion of the training to the Committee Secretary, and the Secretary must send all those certificates down to the offices of Jim Casey (Town Clerk)

If the committee wants to go into "Executive Session", which is not open, must talk with Jim Casey and/or Town Solicitor

Our committee is called the "Zoning Working Group"

Email addresses will be: first initial, last name, @braintreema.gov
    Instructions will be given to all committee members for how to gain access to their new email town addresses
    Committee requested to create a distribution list which sends to the group

    An email distribution list can be used for sending out meeting agenda, and also to get input from citizens

On any voting matters, the majority is based on the number of committee members in attendance - must have at least 7 members in attendance to have a quorum

Before we leave tonight, all committee members should let the Secretary know whether they want to use a @braintreema.gov email, or use a personal email
    Instructions will be sent out to the individual email addresses of everyone with instructions on how to get your new town email and what your new town email address is

Committee may need to put on the agenda how to read and discuss any emails that are sent to the committee from residents

Jen Wadland is willing to sort and categorize any emails from residents as they come in to organize them by theme, and can present to the committee at the meeting

Can put on agenda "Any matters not known at the time agenda was created" as an item on upcoming agenda as a placeholder for discussion

Committee can allot 15 minutes at the beginning of each committee meeting to discuss any resident emails coming in

Will make an email auto-responder so that any residents that email the committee's distribution email will be told that we have received their email and will discuss it at an

upcoming committee meeting

Meeting Agenda for Tonight:

1. Discuss Proposed Zoning Changes to "Pork-Chop" Lots
2. Transition District
3. Accessory Apartments (probably won't be able to get to this tonight)
4. Inclusionary Housing (probably won't be able to get to this tonight)
5. Discuss Definitions   (probably won't be able to get to this tonight)
6. Discussion of Current Comprehensive Zoning Proposal to be Withdrawn by Mayor

Christine Stickney spoke about "pork-chop" lots, followed by discussion amongst the committee:

- There are frontage requirements, lot width, lot depth requirements, etc.
- A pork chop lot can result in a "house-behind-a-house"
- New zoning has expanded frontage requirements to "discourage" pork-chop lots
- Bob Harnais: although zoning "discourages" pork-chop lots, people can still get a variance
- Mayor has asked committee to discuss issue of pork-chop lots and come up with a recommendation on how to address them
- Difference in proposed zoning vs. current zoning is under the proposed zoning "pork-chop" lots must have at least a 40 ft. minimum width
- Proposed zoning changes will reduce likelihood of future pork-chop lots having houses built on them
- Under Proposed Zoning:
  - Frontage on Res A: 100 minimum ft. required (increased over current zoning)
  - Frontage on Res B: 75 minimum ft. required (increased over current zoning)
  - Frontage on Res C: 100 minimum ft. required (increased over current zoning)

Discussion of Transition District (overview presented by Christine Stickney of Planning Department, followed by committee discussion):

- Planning Department took a look at approx. 60 lots which would be impacted by the change to a "Transition District"
- Proposed "Transition District" would be comprised of some storefronts, dentists, tanning salon, Nashawaty Building, old post office, etc.
- Planning Dept. said this corridor is within walking distance to MBTA, and if they could introduce some daytime businesses that are mostly 9am-5pm you could have businesses on first floor of buildings and residential on floors above

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- Several members discussed major issues they have with the proposed Transition District

Town Councilor Charlie Ryan joined meeting mid-way (was attending Inclusion Awards)

Discussion: How does our committee want to proceed at the next meeting?

Focus the next meeting on definitions, table of uses

Andy Kaye mentioned that 40B is the boogeyman that is lingering over all of us - would like to discuss town's strategy would be for protecting residents, strategy for addressing it, etc.

Next meeting will be on: June 13, 2019 at: 7pm until 9:30pm

Committee members should review all the definitions at the back, and also review the Table of Uses

Bob Harnais: Might want the committee to consider what we DO want to keep and make recommendations to the board, rather than what we DON'T want to keep

At next meeting, committee should discuss 5-10 things that we all want for the future of the town, a "mini-master plan" that can guide the committee when making zoning recommendations

Motion made to adjourn, seconded, meeting ended at 9:31pm