



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC)

Thursday, February 7, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Name	Present	Name	Present	Name	Present
Breana Gersen <i>Chair</i>	✓	Rich Jordan <i>Planning Board</i>	✓	Claudia King <i>Council Liaison</i>	-
Becca Casey <i>Vice Chair</i>	✓	Sandra Lipsey	-	Theo Holtwijk <i>Staff</i>	✓
Dimitri Balatsos	✓	Sam Rudman	✓	Meredith Sells <i>Staff</i>	✓
Paul Bergkamp	-				

Other Councilors attending: Ted Asherman, Caleb Hemphill

Others attending: Nathan Poore, Valentine Sheldon

Breana started the meeting at 6:06 pm. All attendees introduced themselves and welcomed the new committee member, Dimitri Balatsos. Dimitri noted that he would have to leave early at 6:45 pm. Theo noted LPAC's regular meeting schedule as the 1st and 3rd Thursday's of each month at 6 pm.

Theo reviewed the typical protocol for the meeting, where he first explained the handouts, after which Breana would open a public comment period, followed by the committee's working session.

1. Review of Draft Minutes of January 10, 2019 Meeting

In response to a question if there was a quorum, Theo responded that there was because 5 of 7 committee members were present. Theo explained that when the committee expands to LPAC+, the quorum requirements expand proportionally. The draft minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting were approved as written.

2. Continuation of Growth and Density Review

Theo provided an overview of the handouts that he had prepared. The first map showed some neighborhoods in the RA district as suggested by Councilor Amy Kuhn. The accompanying chart displayed the number of parcels, average lot size (in acreage), total area, and average road frontage for each category on the map. Theo noted that something seemed amiss with the average road frontage data, and would follow up with Judy to see if that required a correction.

Theo then explained the second idea on the map, which was Paul's reference to walkability in trying to distinguish between higher density and lower density RA zones. Four central locations to either services or businesses had been plotted: the intersection of Johnson Road and Route 88, the intersection of Depot Road and Route 88, the intersection of Route 1 and Route 88, and the intersection of Depot Road and Lunt Road. Concentric circles representing an additional 3 minute walk time were added from those locations.

Theo then provided an overview of the second map, based on Sam's request for greater classification of lot sizes. The new map contained nine categories of lot sizes, with in parentheses in the legend the number of parcels in each category.

The third handout Theo provided was the chart staff had created that compared the dimensional zoning standards in the RA district from 2016 to current, with a 2019 option presented at the 1/10 LPAC meeting for the committee's consideration. The staff updated the chart since the 1/10 LPAC meeting to incorporate all proposals thus far, including the five options presented by Valentine Sheldon at the 1/10 LPAC meeting, Sam Rudman's proposed option, and four additional options from Valentine Sheldon staff received on 2/7. Two additional columns were added to compare the dimensional zoning standards in the RB district from 2016 to current for reference.

Theo finally noted that Councilors were interested in LPAC providing a status update at the second Council meeting in February, which is on 2/25/19. Sam asked if the next LPAC meeting could be moved up. Theo noted that the current scheduled date for the next LPAC meeting was the date with the least scheduled conflicts for committee members.

Breana asked if there was any public comment.

Valentine distributed a handout of his new proposed options to divide the RA district into 2, 3 and 4 zones that he had put together as different neighborhood zoning options. Valentine believed 2 zones would solve some of the problems, but felt that 3 zones would be better. The 4th zone option would change parts of RA district to RC. Valentine felt the current 1 zone approach doesn't fit the Town's RA district, as the Town is 300 years old and complicated.

Sam asked Valentine which of his proposed options he would advocate for. Valentine said that the 3 zone option is the way to go, because the 2 zone option is too simple and the 4 zone option could not happen in his opinion and should be set aside.

Becca believed the maps were an interesting way of cataloguing neighborhoods, because it is hard to draw boundaries. She believed residents on Johnson Road might have pushback with some of the proposed options. The committee noted some similarities between the consultant's maps and the maps that Valentine had prepared.

Valentine believed if the Town created a "smart zone," some commercial uses should be added to the residential districts.

Sam asked Valentine if he would be okay with staff removing Valentine's 1/10 options on the RA analysis chart and replacing with the 2/7 options he presented. Valentine agreed, stating that the 2/7 options were an updated version.

The public comment period was closed.

Breana stated that she was not sure that she felt comfortable making recommendations to the Council yet. But she felt the RA analysis chart Theo reviewed was great and helped to make suggestions to the Council on how to move forward. Breana suggested identifying key options and creating a list of pros and cons for each of those options in an effort to arrive at one of more malleable options to present to

the Council without having to come to a formal conclusion or recommendation. Sam agreed, and stated that there seemed to be two notions: a one-size-fits-all approach or splitting up the zone. Sam believed the challenge was in determining the boundaries for any splits. Sam noted there seemed to be a discreet sort of neighborhoods, but even those will contain varying lot sizes. Sam noted how some of the Route 88 area had several small parcels near the shore that were historically seasonal cottages but are now lived in full-time, with larger parcels more inland.

Sam said he was struck looking at the map how frontage caused changes in patterns in character or development. He stated that rectangular lots allowed for development closer to sides because of changes for allowable frontage. Sam noted that the frontage requirements before the zoning changes in 2016 had been around for a long time, which left him wondering what conforming really meant. He stated that if conformity was only based on frontage standards, 76% of parcels would conform with previous frontage requirements. He believed that reducing frontage requirements to 50 feet did not conform to 80% of lots. Sam finally noted his concern about data on the first map and chart Theo reviewed, based on the problem Theo noted about the accuracy of the frontage data. In summary, Sam believed that the committee should really think about frontage. He noted 76% of all parcels have 100 feet or more of frontage, and 62% have 125 or more feet.

Theo asked Sam to discuss his proposed option that was included on the RA analysis chart. Sam reviewed his proposal, noting that 20,000 sf was used as the starting point for single-family lot sizes based on pre-July 2016 zoning. Sam noted that he was less confident in his ideas for the multi-family zoning standards. Sam agreed with Paul that side setbacks should be key for the committee to review, as front and back setbacks did not seem as critical.

Rich was impressed with Sam's time and effort on this analysis. He asked Sam if his proposed option was one zone or included sub-zones. Sam responded this option would probably be part of exploring sub-zones. Sam emphasized that he thought of the overall character of neighborhood by frontage. Rich emphasized the goal of conformity for any of the new options.

Rich asked what the rest of the committee members thought about how they should weigh proximity as a criteria for defining zones or sub-zones. Breana stated that walkability aligns to the Comprehensive Plan and efforts by LPAC completed in the past. Breana believed walkability may not be the only consideration, but that it could be another factor to consider.

Dimitri left the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Breana liked the idea of splitting the zone into two or more zones, and thought the committee should try to think about if this is an option that should be presented to the Council. Sam was not sure how minimum lot size would fit on a multi-zone map, but thought categories should be made based on zoning standards. Sam would advocate for density and frontage as two categories.

Theo suggested that smaller lots may ultimately not be the issue, because most lots are larger and most smaller lots are built out. He suggested that the committee focus on what the zoning should be for the larger lots.

Rich wondered if the goal of conformity would still stand. Breana said that the more zones created to maintain conformity, the more future development would be constrained to what currently exists. Breana added that one zone would allow for planning for future development, and a pro of this model

would be that development would be encouraged in the area it should occur, and a con would be that the development might be different from what currently exists.

Becca agreed with Sam on making adjustments to the current standards. She thought a single zone would be a compromise option. Becca added that one could adjust the numbers for the standards for either a single or multi-zone option. She thought that the neighborhood boundaries drawn on the maps included areas beyond just the areas that are most dense, which would allow for future growth. Becca suggested moving towards a recommendation to 2 zones and then fine tune those. Becca noted her hesitation as to how any adjustments to the RA zone standards would relate to RB. She added that she understood the pressure for LPAC to address these issues quickly, but was cautious about making a decision too soon.

Rich asked Theo what Ethan thought about splitting the RA zone into more than one zone. Theo could not speak for Ethan, but thought he would be hesitant about sub-zoning and would also emphasize focusing on the larger lots. He added that staff thought that efforts to make smaller lots conforming would be a large job for perhaps not a lot of gain. Theo suggested that the committee could test the non-conformity and development potential on any option to determine how much growth would be allowed.

Sam asked the committee if anyone present was advocating for one zone, because he did not feel that anyone was. Rich agreed with a two-zone approach, and liked the simplicity of Sam's idea of 20,000 sf required per unit. The committee agreed that with two zones, the committee would tweak the numbers of the existing requirements and add a new set of requirements for the new zone. Becca noted that the committee could then make adjustments to all requirements if need be.

Rich asked if walkability should be removed as a factor to consider. Sam added that there was not much in the area to walk to. Breana noted that walkability was an interesting idea to consider, but that the circles on the map may be a too simplistic way to analyze. Becca noted that walkability is still an important piece to examine, because it lends to where development potential should be, and that walkability included children's ability to walk to their friends' houses, in addition to walking to any services. Breana would like to keep walkability on the table and go through the process of analyzing the good and bad for each option in terms of pros and cons before deciding what to advise as a recommendation.

In response to a question about whether the earlier proposed staff option was a one-zone approach, Theo reviewed that option as something that had been based on existing zone set-up and requirements, and that it could be a one or two zone approach. Breana thought the staff proposed option would be a quick and simple fix, and might be a way to address changes in development.

Becca believed most problems the committee had heard so far were based on square footage, and suggested starting the minimum lot size for single-family homes at 15,000 instead of 10,000. Theo noted that any of the exact zoning standards can be adjusted, and suggested comparing any proposals to past and current development projects to see if those projects would still be able to occur. Theo gave the example that with the staff proposed option, some of the development projects would still be able to happen, while others would not.

Sam clarified that he felt the zoning standards for two family homes also had issues. He stated that he wanted what the committee ended up with recommending to stand the test of time. Sam also felt that the case studies of current projects are examples of what is possible for the future.

The committee discussed the idea for a recommendation if the Council wanted a 1 zone option. The committee liked the idea of a development type hierarchy, as well as making frontage and lot size adjustments, including for single-family and two-family standards. For this idea, the committee at this time did not want to set on any specific standards yet and emphasized that the committee would need to review the exact standards in the future. Breana emphasized she did not want to give a recommendation of 1 zone versus 2 zones, but would rather analyze options and present the pros and cons of each. Breana said she would be open to reviewing a 1 zone option.

Valentine asked about the committee's focus on neighborhoods as he felt that was what the Council was looking for. Sam believed the committee needed feedback from the Council on whether to review a 1 or multi-zone approach. Rich said that the committee could review a 1 zone approach to align with conformity goals.

Councilor Ted Asherman liked the idea of pros and cons for each option. The committee agreed with Breana's idea to compare options through pros and cons. For the one zone approach, the committee discussed possible pros as simplicity, continuity, and uniformity. The committee discussed possible cons as not responding to character, or as a compromise to all the different lot sizes and types in the zone. Breana said she was unsure if the lack of response to character would be a pro or a con. For the multi-zone approach, the committee discussed possible pros as better aligned to character, more conformity, and more criteria that could be included, such as walkability. The committee discussed possible cons as more complex, and challenging for future development. Nathan Poore mentioned he thought that planning for future development would be harder for multi-zones, and Breana agreed. The committee also agreed that multiple zones might place additional burdens on Town staff.

The committee discussed if there were other criteria it should consider to increase conformity. Councilor Caleb Hemphill added that it is important to think about specific issues heard by the Council or the committee, and determine which option or criteria better addresses those issues. Theo noted that the answer to that question will really depend on the exact zoning standards determined. Caleb added that he recognized the committee was not going to solve it all tonight, and restated that one of the goals of previous zoning amendments was enhancing opportunity for development in the growth area. Ted asked Theo and the committee what would happen if conformity decreased. Nathan Poore stated there may be other tools that can be used in the Town Ordinances to address non-conformity.

Becca asked if anyone wanted to review approaches for more than 2 zones. Breana responded that she was willing to review options for 2 and 3 zones. Theo noted that there were potentially three groups of categories in the map that Judy, the GIS consultant, prepared of the categories suggested by Councilor Kuhn. Those three groups of categories could be used as a possible starting point for three zones.

Breana wondered if a zone split option would be done more along a north-south line ("vertically"), splitting the east side of Route 88 from the west side, or more along an east-west line ("horizontally"), separating areas from north to south. Becca felt that vertically would create an east-west split that would be divisive, and not respect the natural neighborhood flow, where as a north-south split would be less so.

The committee discussed zoning standards based on what the area colored gray on the map (i.e. lots greater than 60,000 sf) should look like in the future. Sam and Becca debated options for what the exact zoning standards should be to use as a new proposed option. For minimum lot size, they agreed to 20,000 sf for a single-family lot, 35,000 sf for a two-family lot, and suggested 60,000 as a starting point for a multi-family lot but were unsure what number to use. For frontage (minimum lot width), Sam and Becca agreed to 100 ft for a single-family lot, 150 ft for a two-family lot, and suggested 200 ft for a multi-family lot but were also unsure what number to use. Sam asked for Valentine's opinion on what the frontage requirement for a multi-family lot should be. Valentine did not believe multi-family developments should be allowed in the RA district. The committee discussed the challenge of where any boundary lines would be drawn for multiple zones.

Theo stated that the maximum residential density per lot is another criteria to consider. In response to Sam's question if that data point is related to lot size, Theo said yes and reviewed the definition of maximum residential density per lot. The committee discussed the importance of filling in zoning standards for lot size, lot width, maximum residential density, side setbacks, and minimum net residential area per dwelling unit per lot over time. Becca and Sam suggested options for setbacks, maximum residential density and minimum net residential area per dwelling unit per lot. For side setback, Becca and Sam suggested the previous setback requirements for single-family homes as 25 ft for minimum front setback, 20 ft for minimum side setback, and 40 ft for minimum rear setback. Becca and Sam discussed the idea of 40 ft for all setback minimums for two-family homes, and 50 ft for all setback minimums for multi-family homes. The committee discussed whether the minimum net residential area per dwelling unit per lot should be 10,000 sf or 12,000 sf. Becca and Sam suggested 12,000 sf.

Theo noted that any test on the option suggested with a minimum lot size of 20,000 – 40,000 sf would not be able to apply to the lots larger than 60,000, and should be tested on some of the smaller lots. Theo also noted that the amount of non-conforming lots depending on how the zoning standard adjustments are fine tuned.

Nathan suggested a timeline for moving forward based on Council meeting dates. He stated that the Council's expectation is that this project should be wrapped up by the end of this Council session, which is the end of this May. He then suggested that any order would need to happen by May 13th, which would mean presenting to the Council on April 22nd and Planning Board on May 7th. Backing out further, Nathan then suggested that the committee could present an additional update at the March 25th Council Meeting after incorporating feedback from the update at the end of February Council meeting. Nathan suggested that the committee should present its current thinking with confidence at the February 25th Council meeting, as he is aware of the pressure to solve this by the end of May for Councilors. He believes there is a sense of urgency for some Councilors. With a different Council, the momentum may change. Theo added that realistically then, the committee had only two meetings to solve this. Theo noted that evaluating the RA zone was a tall order in addition to the other evaluations the committee had planned to do. The committee discussed that there would be less than a week between the update to the Council on 2/25 and its next scheduled meeting on 2/28.

Becca asked if the discussion should go to the public for where to place any boundaries for sub zones. Rich noted that part of the election platform of new Town Councilors had been changing the RA zone, and suggested that the sub zones could be addressed further down the road. The committee felt that the Council might understand if the added pressure caused the committee to fall back on a simple

option, and thought that testing a single zone with the adjusted zoning standard requirements debated earlier might be worthwhile.

Theo suggested that the committee meet another time before the Council meeting on 2/25 to review more data analysis. The committee liked the idea, and after discussion, agreed to meet Tuesday, 2/19 to further determine a proposal the committee can present to the Council.

3. Other Business

There was no other business.

4. Next Meeting

The committee decided on the following special schedule for the upcoming meetings:

- Tuesday February 19, 6:00-8:00 PM LPAC - Prepare zoning option(s)
- Monday February 25 at 7:00 PM: Town Council – Present Progress Report
- Thursday February 28, 6:00-8:00 PM LPAC – Continue work on zoning option(s)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Draft meeting notes prepared by Meredith Sells, February 12, 2019