

NBR Review Committee

5/24/17 5.00-6.30pm

Village Hall

MINUTES

Members Present: Jo Margaret Mano, Dennis Young, William Murray, Don Kerr, Jacob Lawrence, Sue Wynn. Absent: Brad Barclay, Floyd Kniffen (Barclay submitted a statement re items on the agenda).

1. There was no public comment.
2. Dennis Young motioned the approval of the 5-10-17 Minutes and Don Kerr seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. The committee discussed recommendations from the Public Workshop and Behan's summary of the consensus about building heights in the zone.

Chair Mano noted the full building height history in the NBR has been described inaccurately many times. The true story is that limit had been 3 stories, 25' in the B3 zone from 1978 to July 2013 when it was raised to 45' & 4 stories for the North Chestnut Gateway, and then in October 2015 it was raised to 50' with 4 stories for the NBR zone. Based on the input from the public workshop, and other considerations the committee agreed that the maximum height should be 3 stories, 40' to allow for peaked roofs. The committee voted unanimously to recommend the height limit of 3 stories, max 40 feet. (Barclay had stated in his memo 40' & 3 stories was his recommendation).

4. Committee members and the public in the audience discussed "sprawl" but had trouble defining it, because it is a *relative* term. In many ways, the New Paltz community has worked successfully to limit sprawl and preserve open space through a variety of approaches over the last decade. (See New Paltz Open Space Plan, 2006 at http://www.villageofnewpaltz.org/download/archives/sustainability_resources/new_paltz_specific/New-Paltz-Open-Space-Plan.pdf)

The *rationale* for creating the NBR by describing the zone as exhibiting "sprawl" reflects an inadequate understanding of the term. The current "NBR" zone is STILL a highway business district with several uses essential to the community, and limited opportunities for redevelopment. Re-purposing the whole zone as a Mixed-Use zone may be misguided.

5. The committee discussed current parking requirements in the NBR zone and the problems the current low requirement has caused for the proposed Zero Place. Members debated whether the best metric for residential was 1 or 1.5 parking spaces per bedroom. All agreed 0.5 per bedroom was much too low. Committee members also agreed that reducing requirements for parking spaces will not result in fewer people using cars in New Paltz, given the limited public transportation available, and the per capita number of cars. The rationale of the NBR zone was that reducing parking requirements for residential & business uses would mean there was less need for parking. This idea was assessed as deeply flawed. The committee agreed it was essential that new construction should provide adequate parking so that New Paltz' current residents should not have to endure worsened traffic and parking problems caused by new developments failing to deal with their impact. Chair Mano agreed to gather more data on parking metrics in similar communities to New Paltz for residential and commercial uses before the next meeting and before members voted on a specific recommendation metric.

6. The committee affirmed the decision from the previous 5-10-17 meeting that based on the Public Workshop and considerable study, the northern and southern parts of the NBR deserve different recommendations. Moving ahead, the current NBR zone will be described as NBR north and NBR south, potentially divided by Tributary 13.

7. The committee discussed the need for different setbacks in the northern and southern sections, and the need for a larger setback on the west side to protect the WVRT with natural buffering vegetation. A "complete streets" approach is essential for Rt. 32N. In the southern section, there could be a smaller setback from Rt 32N, with potentially a greater setback north of Tributary 13. This idea is still under

discussion in considering whether the corridor needs a uniform vs. a transition from north to south, and will be revisited in later discussions.

8. Chair Mano reviewed the post 1978 history of "footprint" changes in the NBR zone. The northern portion was added to the NBR zone in Oct. 2015 without letting residents know about the change. Prior to 2015, the area at the northern edge of the Village (approx north of BOCES southern boundary & extending north and east) was in the R-2 residential zone. The zoning change meant partial properties on the east side of Rt.32N were switched from R-2 to NBR, and 3 homes west of Rt.32N were also switched from R-2 to NBR. No planning rationale was given for this and the residents are upset by the change. The committee unanimously recommends that this northern section revert to the R-2 zone that existed prior to the Oct 2015 zoning change.

Committee members are concerned also about properties at the southern end of the NBR, and will revisit that concern in a future meeting.

9. Chair Mano reported that the committee would need more funding to enable Behan Planning and Design to continue consultation. Behan sent the final Phase I document too late for the committee to review for this meeting, which will be considered at the next meeting on Wednesday May 31.

10. The NBR Review Committee was adjourned at 6.10 pm.