

**VILLAGE OF NEW PALTZ PLANNING BOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING JANUARY 20, 2007**

**Call to order:** The meeting was opened 9:34am

**Members Present:** George Danskin, Chair; Ray Curran, Marion DuBois, Ms. Elwell.

**A. Proposed Affordable Housing Planned Development District Law**

**I. Introduction by Planning Board Chair:**

Mr. Danskin said this informal meeting presents an opportunity for Palladia to give a presentation and the Planning Board to discuss both the proposed law and the proposed project at the same time. He reminded the audience that this is not a public hearing and that the role of the Planning Board is not legislative, but to review any proposed zoning legislation and make recommendations to the Village Board.

**II. Proposed Law: Affordable Housing Planned Development District: John Behan, Behan Associates.**

Mr. Behan was asked by the Village Board to review and make recommendations/changes concerning the local law submitted by the applicant. Some of the topics included, but were not limited to the following:

**Overlay/Floating Zones and the Legislative Process**

Mr. Behan said that overlay zones (for site specific development) would allow more discretion to the Village Board and Planning Board in denying individual applications and creating specific zones within the B-2 and B-3 districts. At this time, the proposal is for only the B-2 and B-3 districts. As prescribed by code, the Village Board has asked the PB for its recommendation prior to making a decision. A public hearing will be held to provide the community an opportunity to review and shape the proposal at the conceptual level. A public hearing is scheduled for 1/24/07 (four days from this meeting) pending comments from the Planning Board. After the hearing, the Village Board could adopt, reject or modify the proposed legislation.

Ms. Elwell pointed out that overlay zoning is a very different process than standard zoning changes as there are many complex issues that need to be considered. She asked for flexibility and a possible extension on the 62 day response period so the Board could study the issues more thoroughly and prepare a response and also inquired about restrictions on the Village Board to over-ride the Planning Board's recommendation. Mr. Behan said the review time could be negotiated. He hoped the Village Board and Planning Board would be in agreement and would not like to see a project proceed if they did not agree since that would indicate dissention in the community. The Palladia project is requesting funding by a NYS grant (through the income tax law) and one of the principal review criteria in this very competitive and time sensitive process; is community support.

Ultimately, if the Planning Board, in its advisory capacity, recommended against a particular overlay, the Village Board could still create the district. Mr. Zierler noted that a super majority of the Village Board vote was required to override recommendations from the Ulster County Planning Board.

If the proposal moves forward, Mr. Behan conjectured that the Village Board would probably be the lead agency in the SEQR process and the Planning Board would have input in the process. A master plan would be submitted with a conceptual site plan. The Village Board would prepare a Findings statement to create the district and address the housing law in the village.

Mr. Danskin asked about the correlation of the proposed law and the existing law (that requires developments of a certain size to provide a certain level of affordable housing) and the designated gatekeeper for the proposed law. Mr. Behan said this would supplement the proposed law and each applicant would set forth their own program administration (thus varying for each project).

**Board Concerns:**

Board members voiced several concerns including but not limited to the following:

**Unknown Consequences:** Mr. Curran said that a "project master plan" was too limited; the Boards needed to consider the future development of the adjacent areas. Future and probably permanent changes/impacts from the proposal on the adjacent properties and the downtown community as a whole have not been conjectured, presented or addressed in any fashion. Members felt it was imperative that such changes to the surrounding residents and business district be reviewed prior to implementation; as well as the proposal's correlation to the Master Plan directives emphasizing mixed used in the business district. Not to pursue these avenues would be irresponsible to the future of the village. (Mr. Behan could not address the future of the adjoining properties.)

**Implementation:** Ms. Elwell noted that neither the Village nor Planning Board has any experience in implementing overlay zones. Since the evaluation of each proposed AHPD application is a potentially complex review process, she questioned whether the proposed timeline was realistic.

Density: The proposed law does not specify a minimum number of units or establish a density. Ms. Elwell said that a reasonable minimum acreage and maximum residential density based on sound land use criteria should be used, not the specification of a particular project. Mr. Behan noted that the Village Board and Planning Board can decide not to accept doubling the density and establish another threshold.

Residents/Income Requirements: Unlike their other projects, Ms. Velez confirmed that the only special population housed at this development would be a small number of seniors (8 units) and that there would be no on-site services for the population. She clarified that although rents would not be subsidized, the buildings would be subsidized to guarantee the integrity of the interior and exterior of the structures. Board members noted changes/discrepancies regarding the definition of the residences as "workforce housing" and asked for a clearer definition. The applicant said although residents need some income to pay the rent, they don't necessarily need to be employed. Pensions and or government vouchers (e.g. from the Housing Authority) would be accepted to fulfill the income requirements. Regarding oversight of income requirements, the Board learned that an increase in income would never require an existing resident to leave the project.

In response to a question related to including mixed market and affordable housing at this location, the applicant said their funding criteria was exclusively for affordable housing although within the development, there would be a slight mix of incomes. The applicant also stated that the apartment size would correspond to their income level. As the lowest median income residents would reside in the smallest apartments, board members were concerned that families with smaller incomes would not be accommodated. Ms. Elwell asked the applicant to clarify this issue in relation to HUD guidelines. Mr. Behan noted that although income levels were set by NYS Guidelines, they could be set differently by the Village Board.

The Chair said he would correspond and summarize the members' comments by emails during the following week and present a draft recommendation for discussion at the February workshop. Ms. Elwell appreciated Palladia's tight schedule to receive its funding to proceed to the next phase, but felt this did not allow sufficient time to review the proposal. It was noted again that the proposed law should be in the best interest of the Village as a whole, not just in the best interest of this particular project. Mr. Curran reiterated his concern that future impacts were not addressed and at this point in time, was not sure how they would be addressed before completing this review.

### III. Proposed Site Plan for Palladia of New Paltz. Rick Alfandre, Alfandre Architecture

Based on community response and the changes in the proposed law, Mr. Alfandre had revised the site plan to reflect the following changes: an increase in the size of the units, the addition of one (two-bedroom) unit, a 10' decrease in maximum building height, the elimination of the entire commercial portion of the project, a reconfiguration and increase of parking spaces from 101 onsite spaces to a combination of 157 spaces (75 onsite and 82 offsite/street parking), and an increase in open space for the entire development.

In general, the buildings were more spread out and useable; buildings were pulled away from the bank thereby preserving the hill without a need for excavation. Mr. Alfandre felt this was a better layout. He said the commercial component was eliminated to provide a layout that was more usable and spread out (less dense) as well as a greener and nicer environment for the residents. Mr. Curran was not sure how the development fit into the Village as a whole. He noted that with the exception of the buildings facing Hasbrouck Avenue, the other three buildings "turned their backs" on the Village by facing an interior courtyard. He said there was no connection between the buildings and the Village Streets on two sides of the development and questioned how this would impact on the Village. He noted the previous design faced and joined the Village Streets. Mr. Danskin liked the concept of having parking along Hasbrouck and would like to see it evaluated within the proposal to re-route eastbound traffic (one way) through Hasbrouck. He felt having the units' face Hasbrouck was a good approach in relating the development to the park and college. He too expressed concern over locating 50-200 people in the downtown area without commercial resources to meet their needs in walkable distance and reiterated his concern about the relationship between a financially stressed population and the active college nightlife of the Village Business district.

Mr. Alfandre noted that many people in the village do not live within walking distance of commercial services and that this location was walkable for those employed at the college or at Village Hall. He also referenced the Village initiative to provide additional transportation/bus service both within the village/town and to Poughkeepsie train station. To reduce noise from the close proximity and pathway to/from the local night life, he said some buildings were placed to face the quiet side of the park and all units were equipped with good windows, insulation, and air conditioners so occupants could keep their windows closed during the warmer weather. He noted that an inward facing facility provides a nicer place for families.

There was a brief discussion about the location and uses of the community building by residents and the community at large.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the audience. Speakers expounded on the above concerns especially regarding the targeted population and the selection criteria/process. (Ms. Rhodes asked for written clarification since this the project was no longer classified as 'workforce housing'.) Ms. Velez said that once the project is accepted, the targeted population

and selection criteria could not be changed. She confirmed that the target population would be local (with priority for New Paltz residents) and that residents would not be imported from NYC boroughs. She reiterated that the seniors would be the only special population at the development and noted that this is Palladia's first project in the realm of totally non-supportive housing. Other comments included, but not limited to, were traffic and parking, especially along Hasbrouck, drainage, landscaping, underground stream. Mr. Schnitzer gave a brief history of the site since the 1960's and felt this was a better proposal than the previous ones.

The Chair thanked the Palladia team and the audience for attending this session.

**B. Other Planning Board Business:**

Resolution Regarding the Village Board's Extension of the Restaurant/Bar Moratorium.

A motion was made by Ms. Elwell to accept and submit the Chair's memo requesting the extension of the moratorium regarding restaurants/bars to the Village Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. DuBois and carried unanimously by the Board.

**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Curran, seconded by Ms. Dubois and passed unanimously by the Board at 12:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Shestakofsky  
Secretary to Village Planning Board  
Copies to Trustee Michael Zierler  
David Clouser, Engineer  
Bob Chamberlin, Traffic Engineer

Drayton Grant, Attorney  
Ted Fink, Planner