



The Town of Fenwick Island

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AD HOC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PLANNING MEETING MAY 14, 2019 AT 2:00 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance

Richard Mais, Faye Horner, Winnie Lewis, Reid Tingle, Bill Weistling

Also in Attendance

Jeff Schoellkopf (The Design Group), Pat Schuchman, Linda Martin

Richard called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Introduction

Jeff Schoellkopf, Architect and Planner from The Design Group, was introduced to the Committee.

Discussion

Richard began the meeting by stating that the commercial properties in Town are approximately 50-60 years old and are prime candidates for redevelopment. The redevelopment of the commercial district was also included in the Comprehensive Plan. Richard noted that the Committee will not dictate what needs to be done, but place items into 3 categories: things that we prefer, things that are okay as is, and things that are not okay.

Jeff noted that he would like the Committee to discuss the general idea of the character of the Town, to include hotels/motels, retail, restaurants, and residential. Richard commented that residential is a concern due to the possible loss of the commercial district if there is no limit on residential development. Bill added that the Town does not allow condominiums (by ordinance) and any existing condominiums have been grandfathered in. Pat also noted that in the past, Fenwick Suites consisted of commercial on the 1st floor with a 2nd floor residential apartment and that was not very successful.

Jeff asked if the Town is interested in economic vitality. Richard responded that some folks don't feel that way and personally would hate to see the commercial district disappear. Reid added that although some want the Town to be quiet, they still want places to eat and to shop.

As for parking and the relationship to buildings, Jeff asked how much the Town wants to control that, such as a look of a particular parking and building would yield to a particular street scape. Richard replied that the consultant that helped with the Comprehensive Plan suggested a redesign of Route 1 to include moving building closer to the street with parking in the rear of the building, and creating more green space with an addition of bike lanes.

Input from FEMA and the Fire Marshal will possibly be needed. Jeff will contact both as to their rules as most departments require ease of access to buildings. He will also question about the process the Fire Marshal requires.

Jeff noted 150' depth on the west side and 130' depth on the east side. There is a 2' freeboard requirement above the properties on the west side while on the east side it is usually defined by the slope up to the dunes and flood elevation requirements are based on the slope.

During his initial research, Jeff divided the Town into 5 sections, with those highlighted in yellow and red classified as stable, and those highlighted in yellow and orange less likely to change. Retail and restaurants not highlighted will be the focus of possible changes.

Jeff questioned if commercial parking can be in residential zones. Pat responded only if pre-existing. Jeff then asked if all corner lots require front setbacks. Pat replied that the exception was written in the code that the front of the building is on Coastal Highway.

Jeff asked if drive-thru services were allowed in Town. Pat responded that drive-thru's are restricted to banks only.

Jeff asked if the buffer is through the rear yard setback. Bill confirmed that it is in the rear since the entire commercial district backs up to the residential zone.

Public Comments

Vicki Carmean noted that she would like representation from the bayside on the Committee.

Pam Pridgeon questioned if on any of the designs will stormwater drainage be incorporated into the designs. Jeff responded that in his personal history, he has used raingardens, native plants, and other usages to absorb rainwater. Vicki Carmean noted that the Town tried raingardens in the past, but she suggested that if put into the design that barriers be added. Pat also noted that if over 5,000 square feet of disturbed land that approval from Sussex Conservation is required.

Amy Kyle is in favor of the study, commenting that it is good to take a fresh look at things. She would like for the Committee to take into consideration the design review, community-related needs, ADA accessibility, and commercial development, in particular noise (HVAC and customer noises), odors (trash), and privacy, with possibly rewriting the noise ordinance to define what is considered quiet and defining the hours. She added that transparency and public input from all of the Town would be appreciated.

Selection of Co-Chair

With Richard possibly being absent for the next meeting, he asked Reid if he would act as Co-Chair for the Committee.

A motion was made by Bill, seconded by Winnie, to approve Reid as Co-Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

Jeff commented that he would like to meet with the Committee at least once a month. For the next meeting, Jeff would like the Committee to submit picture of buildings and/or streetscapes that they find desirable.

The next meeting will be held on June 18, 2019 at 2:00 PM.

Adjournment

Reid made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 3:27 PM.