



The Town of Fenwick Island

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AD HOC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PLANNING MEETING NOVEMBER 21, 2019 AT 2:00 PM

MINUTES

In Attendance

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

Also in Attendance

Jeff Schoellkopf, Terry Tieman, Pat Schuchman, Linda Martin

Audience

Nadia Butler, Tim Collins, Amy Kyle, Jackie Napolitano, Roy Williams

Richard called the meeting to order at 2:02 PM.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Bill to approve the minutes from the October 30, 2019 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Introduction

Richard began the meeting by noting that the Committee has met twice since the draft guidelines were presented and there are issues that need to be addressed along with some guidance that is needed from Jeff on certain items.

Review and Discussion

The "Possible Changes for Consideration" checklist was reviewed again.

Richard commented that for rooftop mechanical units, the goal is to have them centrally located as possible as to not be a disturbance to neighboring properties.

Richard noted that the Committee is not definite on acoustical screening since it is visually unappealing. Bill questioned if each individual unit on the rooftop would need screening or if there was a way to have a central screening to block all units on the roof. Jeff responded that in Rehoboth their guidelines state that screening is to be provided to obscure view, so central screening on all sides would be acceptable. Bill noted that most of the screening that he has observed is from the street side only. He also added that a protrusion above the height requirement is needed for screening.

Richard noted that as for some levels, there are concerns about how to measure. Amy commented that sound buffering would not work on loud noises and continuous buzzing noises. She added that the Town should ask for the design of the mechanicals during the permit application phase. Bill asked Jeff if he has ever had to address some levels on other designs he has developed. Jeff said no, since most pieces of equipment don't exceed 65-70 dB, which is the minimal. He added that new compressors are a lot quieter. He did suggest that in our guidelines, vent fans, rated at a certain number of sones, could be recommended to be installed in kitchens to eliminate some noise. Aging units could also be considered, requiring maintenance of these units.

Jeff questioned about the allowable height for noise buffering options. Pat responded that behind commercial, fences can be no higher than 7' while landscaping can be no higher than 8' or 12'.

Nadia commented that she would like for it to be considered that mechanicals be screened from view on all sides. Richard confirmed that the draft guidelines do include screening on all sides. Pat commented that she has spoken to installers that do not recommend screening on all sides due to the loss of air flow. Reid commented that the guidelines could be changed to recommend screening for visual impact.

Jeff commented that on changes to parking spaces, he does not think we needed to mark both "possible design guidelines" and "possible ordinance change". Parking spaces should need ordinances only to regulate while the guidelines will show examples of different parking options. He added that 90° parking with 9' spaces works well with 22' or 23' aisle widths.

As for the parapets, if they were to be allowed on the front of the buildings, Bill asked if that could be considered screening of the mechanicals on the roof. Jeff responded yes, that this could be a good way of screening. As for requiring the parapets on 1 story buildings, Jeff suggested just to encourage the usage but not require.

Pat confirmed that the mandatory freeboard is 1'. Jeff commented that our ADA ramps could be shared between shopping center so there would be no need to build ramps everywhere. Reid mentioned for the slope of ramps, maybe it should be considered giving commercial properties space in the setbacks for the ramps so they can be as high as possible over the flood plain.

On mixed uses, Richard noted that the Committee felt that it is up to the owner on how they want to develop their property in the commercial zone, but at the last meeting Tim shared information from the business community that they prefer to keep the commercial zone as commercial properties only. Richard also noted as for allowing residential above retail that it would be considered affordable housing. Bill commented that if mixed uses are to be considered, residential parking (in particular with how many spaces are allowed per unit) and residential trash service would need to be addressed.

At a previous meeting it was discussed to allow townhomes in the commercial zone, which was a more acceptable form of residential development.

Jeff commented that he feels the commercial zone could be made stronger if the guidelines would suggest allowing businesses on the west side of the highway and only allow residential in the commercial zone on the east side of the highway.

Jeff noted that all items discussed today will be incorporated into the draft guidelines.

Public Comments

Roy questioned that if the guidelines would allow dormers to protrude, how far in the setbacks would they be allowed. Jeff replied typically 2', which is the size of a bay window.

Amy suggested the following:

1. Accessibility needs to be addressed along with visibility.
Jeff asked if Amy was looking into going above the required Federal guidelines. Amy replied no but feels that accessibility is being lost in the detailed checklist on the design guidelines.
2. Setbacks are not what they should be from commercial to residential properties. Visual impacts, noise, and odors need to be taken into consideration and more needs to be addressed to minimize impacts. She feels that HVAC in setbacks is an issue and she would like the Committee to remove them in this area.

Bill responded that this has already been addressed a few years ago. To minimize the impact on residences, commercial properties were given 10' more in the front to encourage buildings to be built closer to the highway.

3. Something needs to be done to not allow a giant building to be built next to a smaller building. For visual purposes this should not be allowed.
4. Buffers needs to be described better.
5. Better standards need to be put in the guidelines for what the back of buildings should look like.
6. Visual impairments for people crossing the highway as well as for vehicles turning onto the highway needs to be taken into consideration.
7. The height limit needs to be clarified in the Code.
8. Nothing obnoxious (like HVAC's) should be allowed to be placed near or in the setbacks.
9. "Blocky" buildings should be discouraged.

Next Meeting

Jeff commented that he will need time to incorporate the changes discussed today into the draft guidelines. Bill noted that he would like time to review the draft before the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on January 22, 2020 at 2:00 PM. Jeff hopes to have a draft available for review by the beginning of January.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Reid to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 3:35 PM.