

Arundel Planning Board Comprehensive Plan Review Committee

Route 1 Corridor Public Workshop

Minutes

January 23, 2014 at 7:30 pm
Mildred L Day School Library

Planning Board: Bob Coon, James Lowery, Marty Cain, John Der Kinderen, Roger Morin, Rich Ganong, Tom McGinn, Tad Redway, Planner, Ann Tardif, Board Secretary

Comprehensive Plan Review Committee: Donna Der Kinderen, Dorothy Gregoire, Simone Boissonneault, Dan Dubois, Shawn Hayes, Diane Robbins, Philip Printz, John Bell, Kitty Bassett

Public: Charles Bassett, Jan Tewksbury-Belz, Robert Belz, Jared Rist, Tim Searles, Pamela Drew, Velma Hayes, Tom Danylik

Call to Order Chairman Morin called the meeting to order. Attendance was taken and the agenda was reviewed.

I. Public Workshop

Item 1: Proposed Zone Changes: Creation of the Downtown Business District 1 and Downtown Business District 2 on properties currently in the R-1, R-2, R-4, CCS, HC, and NRC districts and located within the Route 1 corridor from Searles Lane to the Kennebunk River and along portions of Limerick Road, Campground and Log Cabin Roads, River Road, Walker's Lane, and Old Post Road.

The Planner gave an overview of the proposed DB1 and DB2 districts to the audience. He explained that the revision came about due to the general opinion of the Board of Selectmen that there was a need in the Town of Arundel to increase the commercial tax base to help ease the burden on the residential taxpayer.

Tad reviewed the existing zoning map and explained the Board's intent to increase the business development potential along the Route One corridor.

Tad presented and explained the proposed map depicting the zones as well as the map that shows the possible locations of inter-connective roads. These roads would run parallel to Route One and provide connectivity between DB 1 and DB2 as well as the lots in those zones. He also showed the areas on the map that are considered valuable wetlands.

Public input:

Tim Searles introduced himself as a resident who has lived in town for 63 years. He owns 28 acres in the area between the Hissong property and Searles Lane. He indicated that he has no intention of developing his property commercially. He expressed concern about what the proposal might do to his taxes if he is considered a commercial property.

The Planner identified Mr. Searle's parcel on the map of the proposed zones and explained that, as proposed, the amount of his property in the commercial zone would actually decrease. Presently the HHC zone extends inward from Route One, 1,000 feet and as proposed the DB1 zone, which is the only commercial zone his parcel would be in, only goes back 350 feet. As far as his property tax concern the Planner had asked the Assessor about that issue prior to tonight's meeting and was told that until you change the use of the property to a commercial use or until a revaluation is done then the taxes shouldn't be significantly impacted.

Diane Robbins thanked Mr. Searles for his comments and for bringing his concerns forward. She stated that the CPRC has been very concerned from the outset with protecting private property owner's rights. She further commented that this proposed ordinance is not a done deal and that the Boards will be working together and considering public input before submitting a final version of the proposed ordinance to town meeting vote.

Jared Rist is a property owner on Route One and asked the Board if they had considered the traffic impact of the proposed changes. Coon explained that when an application is before the Planning Board for approval one of the items that is looked at is traffic impact. Often times traffic studies are required of the applicant and the board reviews it as part of the approval process. Often times the DOT will require the applicant to make certain improvements for projects that will have an impact such as installation of traffic signals or perhaps turning lanes.

McGinn wanted to go on the record as saying he is more inclined to keep the tax burden on the individual taxpayer if increasing the business district is too much of a negative impact on the residential property owners in that area.

Chip Basset asked the Planner to clarify the difference between the DB1 and DB2 districts. Tad explained that smaller commercial and retail uses are proposed for the DB1 district with larger, more intense uses, as well as those uses allowed in the DB1 district, for the DB2 district.

Chip further commented that having the appropriate infrastructure, specifically sewer would be important to attracting business to the area. Tad explained that bringing in sewer is a known factor and various options are being researched in an attempt to have sewer service coincide with bringing in new business.

Jan Tewksbury-Belz is present this evening and asked the Planner if her parcel located in the vicinity of Walker's Lane is included in the new proposed zoning. Tad located her lot on the map and it was determined that it is outside of the proposed zone change area. If she would like it included, that is certainly something that could be looked at.

Pam Drew is present this evening. Her mother, Rita Drew owns two large lots along Portland Rd. Tad pointed out that one of the lots is entirely in the proposed DB2 district and the other only has a portion of the lot in the DB2 district. The Planner noted that if Mrs. Drew would like her lots excluded from the DB2 zone that would be possible as the lots in question are on the border between the residential district and the proposed DB2 district.

Mr. Searles asked when the Board intended to present it to the voters. Morin replied that the goal was to present it at June town meeting but most likely the earliest would be Nov of 2015 or the following town meeting.

Searles questioned the notification of residents. The Planner explained that he had mailed notice of tonight's meeting to every property owner in the proposed DB2 district as well as parcels that abut the district. There are notices posted on the website and on the bulletin board at town hall, the Town makes every effort to get people to come out to give input at these public meetings, and welcomes that input.

Diane Robbins commented that she felt the letter wasn't very clear that the proposed changes would impact the property owners. Simone Boissonneault countered that the second paragraph of the letter clearly states "These proposals will essentially rezone some or all of your current parcels from Residential to Downtown Business District 1 (DB1) and Downtown Business District 2 (DB2). She feels the statement in the letter makes it very clear to property owners.

Diane suggested that perhaps the Town should mail another letter to each owner with a copy of the map with their lot highlighted and a letter explaining the proposals and an invitation to attend a meeting or submit written comments to the Planner. She feels this approach might get a better response from the property owners.

Dan Dubois suggested that a follow up phone call might be in order prior to the meeting to remind people.

Velma Jones Hayes asked if the DB1 & DB2 district extends all the way to the Biddeford line. Tad explained that it goes as far as it is shown on the map presented. Beyond the boundary is the current BI district.

Cain asked if anyone in the audience had any recommendations for the committees as to how Route One could be improved. Mr. Searles commented that bringing sewer down Route One would be very important to attracting business to the area.

Shawn Hayes questioned the inclusion of his parcel in the DB1 district. Tad explained that this was an error when he was doing the map and it will be corrected.

Simone Boissonneault commented that she would like to see architectural standards developed for the districts. Tad indicated that the Planning Board has developed these standards and they are part of the draft sections the CPRC was provided.

Velma Jones Hayes inquired if the single residence allowed in the DB2 district could be a duplex or include an in-law apartment? Tad explained it could be if it is a mixed use district.

The Board thanked the audience for attending and for their valuable input.

The Planner invited those attending to add their name and email address to the list that was circulating during the meeting if they wish to be informed via email of upcoming meetings.

Adjourn

Ganong moved to adjourn at 9:05p.m. McGinn seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.