

**PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 9, 2014 at 7:30 PM
TOWN HALL, 41 SOUTH MAIN STREET**

In attendance:

Members: Kate Connolly, Judith Esmay (Chair), Joan Garipay; Nancy Carter (Selectmen's Representative)

Alternates: Kelly Dent, Brian Edwards

Staff: Vicki Smith, Judy Brotman

Others: See Attendance Sheet

1. DISCUSSION OF WEST WHEELOCK GATEWAY ZONING AMENDMENT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR TOWN MEETING 2015 [Previously discussed by the Board 12/02/2014]

ESMAY said the issues raised previously include: location of the district boundary, building heights and setbacks, density, parking, and aesthetics.

Chris Kennedy of the West Wheelock Working Group (Group) displayed sketches of various properties built-out in accord with the proposed amendment to visually assess impacts to Sargent Street.

Board Comments/Questions:

- CARTER asked if the lower levels depicted represent English basements.
 - Kennedy said no, use of the lower levels is envisioned as garages or small dwelling units.
- DENT asked if a 6-8 unit building is currently allowed at 7 West Street.
 - Brotman said no, only three units are allowed on that particular lot.
 - CONNOLLY said parts of the proposed amendment are to (1) eliminate the relationship between lot size and density and (2) eliminate the lot coverage restriction within the West Wheelock Gateway District (WWGD).
 - ESMAY said another significant change is to allow more than one principal use per lot.
- ESMAY asked why the WWGD boundary does not go all the way to the river.
 - Kennedy said the Group focused on the area that could allow for increased density.
 - Smith said the area close to the river would ultimately be developed if included in the WWGD.
 - CONNOLLY added that one of the riverbank properties has a Downing Road address and is located in the SR district.

Public Comments/Questions:

- Carolyn Radisch of Sargent Street said it is the position of the Sargent Street residents that the boundary for the WWGD belongs where the current GR-2 boundary is. The

single-family neighborhoods in GR-1 should be protected. The inclusion of West Street is solely to enable more dwelling units at 7 West Street. High density housing is not going to occur on the lots around it. There is already a lot of student housing in this area. They are not the best property managers. There's a certain ambience and a different type of gateway experience when you come up West Street. The garages at 7 West Street are a link to Hanover's past.

- Sue Reed of West Wheelock Street and member of the Group clarified that the inclusion of West Street was not to address the garages at 7 West Street. She said West Street is much quieter than West Wheelock Street. The Group thought that extending the proposed design standards up West Street would create a transition between the density and massing of West Wheelock Street and the residential neighborhood above.
- Jane Soderquist of Sargent Street said it is impossible to separate Sargent Street from West Street. She said not having rear access to these buildings will not stop students from hanging hammocks, stringing up lights and having a pool table back there.
- Connie Anderson of West Street said she watched as houses on Sargent Street got bigger and bigger and more visible. She said she would like to see the garages at 7 West Street gone. They do not have character nor provide a wonderful experience for people coming into Hanover. Replacing the garages with small residential cottages would provide housing without having to construct the tall buildings depicted [in Kennedy's presentation]. It would be a way to improve our neighborhood.
- Jim Doig of Sargent Street said last spring he suggested that the Group consider putting some housing in the parking lot area down at the river. There is also a substantial parking lot area across from West Street that could house 2-3 story residential buildings.
- Jolin Kish, owner of 7 West Street and member of the Group, commented on the amount of work that has gone into developing this proposal and the public outreach efforts that occurred. She said rather than focus on what people don't want, it would be worthwhile to look what they would like in terms of a transition area.
 - Anne Downey of Sargent Street said she did not read the emails sent to her because she assumed the project was limited to West Wheelock Street. There is very little discussion in the Group meeting minutes about West Street.
 - Radisch added that the Group met during the workday, which is convenient if you are a property owner and have a lot to gain by going and lobbying. The process seemed to be structured so that regular people with kids, jobs, and work deadlines can't always make those meetings. A better process would be to hold public meetings at times when working people can attend.
 - Robin Nuse of Sargent Street said the solution is simple, take West Street out of the WWGD. There is no reason why an existing lot with a 3-unit apartment building on it deserves to have more buildings.

Board Follow-Up:

- CARTER said the Group is not wed to this proposal. If the public is not impressed with the direction they are taking, they have plenty of other good things to do with their time. Group members also have families and deadlines to attend to. The design charrette really gave this town a great place to begin to tackle things like affordable housing and what to do in the presentation of your town. There are so many pieces to this. Development is not going to happen overnight. If you want to plan, you've got to start somewhere.

- CONNOLLY spoke in favor of keeping the present zoning demarcation between GR-1 and GR-2 as the zoning demarcation between the WWGD and GR-1. She said changes to West Street should be considered separately at a later date.
- DENT said anything on West Street will affect Sargent Street. She said she would like to keep the visual impact as single-family.
- EDWARDS commended the Group for their hard work. He said the WWGD should probably be restricted more to West Wheelock Street, and not encroach on West Street quite as much.
- CARTER said Sargent Street and its much smaller lots really benefit from the property of others. She shared her experience of having a misplaced sense of proprietary ownership over an adjacent lot to her property.
 - Radisch said she understands that to be true, due to topography, but also due to the zoning that was in place when we purchased our homes. We like the zoning the way it is. You can still accommodate more units without ruining stable single-family neighborhoods.
- GARIPAY said what she heard from the charrette was to try to improve the density closer to downtown. How do you reconcile this need for more housing and not infringe on what people have invested in their neighborhood community? Do we want to push forward and get more housing downtown or just improve what is already there? GARIPAY said she never considered West Street as being part of West Wheelock Street but rather the doorway to the neighborhood above it.
- ESMAY said the West End Overlay District was created two years ago. It recognized virtually all of West Street as part of that overlay. Now to say that the character is something entirely different and is of the same character as West Wheelock Street seems to require more cogitation than we've given it. ESMAY said she wants this district to run along West Wheelock Street.
- Tim McNamara of Dartmouth College and member of the Group said it seems a shame to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Let's not lose momentum and the good work that has been done on West Wheelock Street due to issues raised for West Street.

ESMAY said the Board is of consensus that the work should go forward but that it be constrained to the lots fronting on West Wheelock Street. Kennedy finished his presentation of a full build-out of West Wheelock Street.

Public Follow-Up:

- Radisch expressed concern for having buildings on both sides of the streets and the lack of design standards in Kennedy's presentation. She said to nestle these big buildings on these downward slopes is not an easy task. Sketches shown previously did not realistically address parking. There is a lot that still needs to be done.
- McNamara said the proposed 50' building height represents a worst case scenario for a 4-story building. Maybe the Group should discuss height in terms of number of stories with a cap on it.
 - Nuse said some of the infrastructure needs to be talked about before you get into how many stories and where to locate the buildings. The intersection of West Wheelock/West Streets is dangerous. She asked about parking for all of the people that will be living in this area.
 - ESMAY said street design is a matter for the Selectboard to consider.

- Kennedy said a lot of the Group's discussions took place around the level at which we wanted to see something happen. There had to be enough incentive for people to redevelop their properties.

ESMAY proposed that the next discussion on this amendment focus on dimensions, uses and allowing more than one principal use on a lot. DENT asked if there is a way to manipulate some of the massing. Is the massing depicted the identity Hanover wants for its gateway?

Discussion of this amendment will resume on January 13, 2015. Smith will generate a direct mailing to Allen Street residents and property owners. Discussion of the amendments proposed by Kendal at Hanover and the Zoning Ordinance Technical Review Committee will resume on December 16th.

2. OTHER BUSINESS: None

3. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Rivard