

MILLIS PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, December 11, 2013
Room 229, Veterans Memorial Building, 900 Main St., Millis, MA
(JOINT MEETING WITH MASTER PLAN COMM & BOARD OF SELECTMEN)

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Mr. George Yered, Acting Chair/Clerk.

Members present: George Yered, Acting Chair/Clerk
 Robert Cantoreggi
 James McKay
 Nicole Riley
 Richard Nichols, Associate Member

Members Absent: Catherine MacInnes

Also present: Master Plan Committee Members
 Board of Selectmen
 Charles Aspinwall, Town Administrator
 Mark Racicot, MAPC
 Chris Ryan, MAPC

MILLIS CENTER ZONING PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Smith provided a summary of the Downtown Development Study Committee and the use of zoning to spur mixed use growth of the Ann & Hope and GAF properties in Millis. In addition to a Town Center Properties Market Study, a Community Forum was held on May 23, 2012, to allow development scenario input from Town residents. Mr. Smith stated that the Master Plan Committee has been working with MAPC to propose zoning changes. The intention, he said, is to take the information presented tonight to other Boards and Committees and hopefully go forward with bylaw changes at Spring Town Meeting.

Mr. Chris Ryan from MAPC presented the proposed zoning project. He stated that the current zoning landscape makes it confusing and difficult to attract developers to the property. Mr. Ryan presented and discussed the “Town of Millis Zoning Project Reference Sheet, Updated to December 11, 2013.” In summary, it is proposed to:

- Eliminate the overlay district (MCEOD-E) and create two base zoning districts; one residential district located on the GAF parcel (R-V-C) and one commercial district located on the Ann & Hope and Herman Shoe parcel (C-V-2).
- Eliminate some Zone A areas within Zone II and amend the Groundwater Protection Districts section of the bylaws
- Establish Smart Growth Special Permit option and establish a process for phased and consolidated development proposals

Advantages and disadvantages were discussed.

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Mr. Ryan reviewed the specific recommendations listed in the “Summary of Millis Zoning Amendment Recommendations.” During the discussion on replacing the MCEOD-E Special Permit with a Special Permit applied to development in the proposed R-V-C and C-V-2 zoning districts, Mr. Yered requested that the word “thoroughfare” (3.2 Ground Floor Uses) be clearly defined. This will be discussed further. Mr. Ryan would like the Committee/Board to consider removing the design criteria section to a separate referenced document to reduce the size of the bylaw and allow more flexibility.

Mr. Aspinwall stated that the major point is the re-zoning of two parcels (Ann & Hope/GAF). There is also application process changes proposed with an Assisted Living Component. Something to consider, he said, is how much detail/regulations are wanted.

Mr. Cantoreggi stated that he does approve of the phasing and concept plan idea. He asked if there was any guidance on Town utilities (groundwater/stormwater/utilities, etc.) or insight on how other communities have dealt with this issue as the overall, whole concept would have to be taken into consideration. Mr. Ryan stated that this would be handled during the subdivision or site plan review process. The idea behind the concept plan, Mr. Ryan said, would have to be robust with tie-ins to water, sewer, etc. The concept plan should include the information to some extent. All stormwater would have to be addressed at the concept level, he said. Mr. Ryan stated that if the Committee feels more guidance is necessary, they could provide more text. Mr. Aspinwall suggested that the Planning Board could look into a land development agreement option. Mr. Ryan stated that the reason for the Special Permit is so the Planning Board can get the information in depth and be comfortable with what is proposed.

Ms. Riley stated that she has been working with a committee on developing an Assisted Living Bylaw. She asked whether the creation of the two new zoning districts would limit the potential use of an Assisted Living facility. Mr. Ryan stated that it would be allowed in five different districts.

Mr. Smith proposed that all involved Boards/Committees review the information presented and report back to the Master Plan Committee. Mr. Aspinwall stated that the warrant for spring town meeting closes in late February. A joint meeting was scheduled for Thursday, January 30, 2014, to address final comments.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Ryan and Mr. Racicot for their hard work on this project.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion and on a motion made by Mr. Yered, seconded by Ms. Riley and voted unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Camille Standley
Administrative Assistant