

**MEETING HELD OCTOBER 18, 2011**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Port Chester, New York, was held on Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 6:00 p.m., in the Village Hall Conference Room, 222 Grace Church Street, Port Chester, New York.

Present were Trustees Daniel Brakewood, Bart Didden, Luis Marino and Joseph Kenner.

It should be noted that Mayor Dennis Pilla arrived at 6:25 p.m., and Trustees Saverio Terenzi and John Branca were absent.

Also present were Village Manager, Christopher Russo; Assistant Village Manager, Christopher Steers; Village Attorney, Anthony Cerreto; Village Clerk, Joan Mancuso and Village Planning Consultant, Patrick Cleary.

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On motion of Trustee Didden, seconded by Trustee Marino the meeting was opened at 6:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL

AYES: Trustees Brakewood, Didden, Marino and Kenner

NOES: None

ABSENT: Trustees Terenzi, Branca and Mayor Pilla

The Board met with associates of Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc. (BFJ Planning), Sarah K. Yackely and Michael Keane regarding the synthesis of the Comprehensive Plan.

Also participating in the meeting were members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) Neil Pagano, Michael Scarola and Robert Weinberg on behalf of Greg Wasser of G&S.

The purpose of the meeting was for BFJ Planning to present to the Board of Trustees the proposed preliminary Comprehensive Plan vision and recommendations.

Ms. Yackel noted that BFJ Planning has held three meetings with the members of CPAC on the Comprehensive Plan provided by the Laberge Group and have boiled down the following recommendations which is streamlining the plan and will provide zoning recommendations. She spoke about the schedule which includes the Comprehensive Plan Synthesis, Zoning Amendments, SEQR adoption and publication and concurrent related studies for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP), Housing Study and Route 1 Corridor Study / Downtown Plan. Ms. Yackel noted that the Board has been provided with proposed chapters 1 through 12 of the synthesis plan and that the last two chapters regarding zoning is scheduled to be completed in November and to the Board in December.

Ms. Yackel then reviewed the three pages of the Village of Port Chester Comprehensive Plan Synthesis noting that the over plan vision is to reinforce Port Chester's existing downtown as a center, maintain and protect the composition of Port Chester's existing residential and commercial neighborhoods, identify selected areas of limited growth, downtown/waterfront areas, United Hospital and Fox Island and eliminate urban renewal areas in favor of modern zoning techniques. She then discussed

Oct. 18, '11 with the Board each of the preliminary recommendations with the first being the residential neighborhoods as follows:

- Maintain and protect existing character of 1 and 2 family residential neighborhoods.
- Decrease residential floor area ratios (FARs) in all residential districts to prevent future development that is out-of-context with existing character of neighborhoods.
- Decrease "Maximum Height of Buildings" as follows:
  - RA3 District from 8 to 6 stories
  - RA4 District from 10 to 8 stories
- To the greatest extent possible, channel future higher-density residential development to appropriate areas (e.g. downtown, around the train station).
- Explore Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as means of shifting density from the neighborhoods to the Downtown/Train Station.

The Board discussed these items with Ms. Yackel and Trustee Brakewood recommended that item number two which speaks on the composition of the existing residential and commercial neighborhoods also include restoration which Trustee Kenner also agreed with. There was further discussion on when changes to neighborhoods had occurred that caused higher density, Christopher Steers, the Assistant Village Manager commented about items that occurred in the 1980's on that issue. Ms. Yackel noted that the proposed synthesis is not talking about density but the character of the neighborhoods. She said that from staff there is the recommendation to eliminate the urban renewal areas and put forth modern zoning techniques. Michael Scarola, a member of the CPAC said that the CPAC has discussed this with the consultant and they concur with that approach. Trustee Brakewood spoke further about neighborhood restoration and asked if that could be model out to show removal of density in some areas with the acceptance of new residential units in other areas for example the former United Hospital site. There was further discussion between the Board on that topic and Ms. Yackel noted that it would be hard to do so in planning. Mr. Scarola noted that the CPAC is looking at this topic regarding the composition of existing building stock. There was further discussion about density, non-conforming uses, illegal uses, targets, trends, population growth and impact to school. Ms. Yackel spoke on the proposed upzoning in the original plan and noted that they have concerns with this proposal stating that there are better ways to do this. Trustee Kenner asked if the CPAC is agreeable with this direction. Mr. Scarola said that the CPAC is considering this recommendation.

Ms. Yackel then explained to the Board the proposal for FAR (floor area ratios) modifications to residential zoning districts ratios noting that for site plan review for two family homes it is not done now. She said that there are FAR recommendations for other districts including R20, R7, R5 and the multiple family districts and that this recommendation was taken from the Village of Mamaroneck's residential zoning districts which are similar to our Village. Ms. Yackel gave explanations why it would be a good reason to have these FAR modifications noting single family properties could be brought and demolished and a mc-mansion be built. Mayor Pilla noted that the Comprehensive Plan is a vision of the community and we all want to preserve the vision. Trustee Brakewood spoke about multi-uses and said that he does not think that is the best use giving an example of a car lot next to a residential property. Ms. Yackel explained the maximum heights of buildings for the residential neighborhoods noting that to the

greatest extent possible channel future higher-density residential development to appropriate areas for example the downtown and around the train station. She continued that the last item under residential neighborhoods was to explore the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) noting that they need research about considering the TDR for vacant sites so they are not recommending this now because there needs to be more study on this aspect. Ms. Yackel stated that they are proposing to eliminate the conservation subdivision (cluster development) regulation noting that it is not applicable to the Village.

The discussion continued under the topic of the Downtown with the following proposals:

- Reinforce Port Chester's existing downtown as a center.
- Allow mixed-used commercial / residential development
- Abendroth to Route 1:
  - Decrease building heights to 5 stories (1 commercial / 4 residential) between Route 1 and Abendroth Avenue
- Port Chester Train Station:
  - Maintain building heights to 8 stories, possibly bonusable to 10 stories, between Route 1 and the rail line / Broad Street, generally bounded by Mill Street and Westchester Avenue.
  - Density bonus could be permitted in exchange for public benefits 9 i.e. public parking, open space etc.)
  - Support a new parking garage in the vicinity of the train station.
- Modify the Planned Railroad Station Plaza Development floating zone to reduce maximum building heights from 23 stories to 8-10 stories, or consider eliminating zone completely.

Ms. Yackel spoke on the allowance of the mixed used of commercial / residential in the downtown area. She noted that the commercial uses would not be industrial uses and there will be required zoning text amendments impacting this proposal. Mr. Cleary noted the large amount of applications for restaurant use outside of the downtown area noting that this type of use is moving into the residential areas. There was further discussion about how that issue could be regulated. The Board discussed with staff and Ms. Yackel the topic of more residential downtown and the issue regarding traffic flow and alternatives regarding traffic flow. Robert Weinberg of G&S Developers made comments about a vision to get developers to come that would not include restrictions of the building heights in the downtown. There was further discussion on Mr. Weinberg's comments and it was noted that the consultant is working on the vision from the Plan. Mr. Steers spoke of the term not to give it away when you speak about heights and certain level of heights being proposed not to exceed 8 stories then a bonus for a public benefit with the approval by the Board of Trustees. He said that it would come down to does the Board want the maximum height or not. The Board further discussed this topic of height in the downtown and the notion of the consideration of density bonuses. Ms. Yackel spoke on the proposal regarding decreasing the building heights on between Route 1 and Abendroth Avenue. The Board further discussed this proposal and concerns regarding parking in the downtown area.

Ms. Yackel then continued on the plan synthesis on the topic of the waterfront with the following recommendations:

- Provide 20' setback along waterfront to allow for continuous public walkway.
- North Waterfront (existing C4)
  - Allow residential (condos)
  - Allow water-related retail uses

- Decrease building heights to 4 stories.
- Central Waterfront
  - Eliminate Marina Urban Redevelopment District (MUR)
  - Limit building heights to 5 stories (1 commercial / 4 residential) between Route 1 and Abendroth Road
  - Decrease building heights to 4 stories between Abendroth / Brick Oven Road and the waterfront.
- The “Gut”
  - Fill in or deck over the “Gut”
  - Convert the “Gut” into a public park, possibly with a permanently docked boat.
  - Show the “Gut” on the Future Land Use Map as Public Open Space.
- Fox Island
  - Allow “wharf-type” development including a mix of restaurants, residential and small retail shops.
  - Limit heights to 4 stories (50’).

Ms. Yackel noted that their firm is also conducting the update for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) which will provide more details regarding the waterfront. The Board discussed the proposed 20’ setback noting that it may not be realistic along some sections of North Main Street closer to the Greenwich border. This discussion continued regarding use by pedestrians and bike routes long this setback. The Board was at a consensus to eliminate the proposed continuous walkway north of the Metro North railroad tracks. Discussion continued regarding parking concerns in relation to heights and it was noted that the northern waterfront area could go from 4 to 5 stories to 4 stories above with parking. The Central Waterfront area was discussed regarding the elimination of the marina urban redevelopment district (MUR) and the building heights. Ms. Yackel spoke on the proposal regarding the “gut” and that the vision is for open space for this area with options to deck over or convert into a public park. There was a brief discussion on the recommendations regarding the Fox Island area.

The Board reviewed with Ms. Yackel the following proposal regarding the Purdy Avenue section as follows:

- Maintain and support existing industry along the avenue.
- Reduce emphasis on residential uses in this area
- Limit building heights to 4 stories.

The proposed use and building heights recommendations for Purdy Avenue were generally supported by the Board of Trustees with no major comments or modifications made.

Ms. Yackel then went on to the proposals regarding the United Hospital site as follows:

- Allow a mix of uses (retail, hotel, restaurant, residential, office park, conference building, convention center)
- Require connectivity to Boston Post Road
- Limit building heights to 8 stories
- Rezone the site from R2F to a new mixed-use district or overlay district.

Trustee Brakewood said that there has been quite a bit of talking about residential at this site but no discussion about impacts to the school district. He said that he is not sure all of the Board will agree with residential proposal for this site. Ms. Yackel said that there is a large amount of data about the number of children from certain residential projects that can be use to determine this impact. Mr. Cleary noted that this site is very

different which requires the need to know the capacity regarding residential. Ms. Yackel stated that the current zoning allows for much more residential saying although it is not there now but these proposals would decrease the zoning allowances. There was further discussion on the topic of residential and density. It was also noted that this plan does not want the United Hospital site to pull away from the downtown.

The final topic of the Comprehensive Plan Synthesis discussion was on the Kohl's Shopping Center with a recommendation to permit a mix of commercial and residential uses. It was noted that this site has a potential and that the proposed rapid transit bus proposal by the County has been eliminated.

Ms. Yackel noted that the takeaways from this discussion will be the strategies and quantifying the information. She noted that the heights in the train area would be 8 stories with no caps with density bonuses only by approval by the Board of Trustees, and that the northern waterfront would have a 5 story height with no public access in this area. Ms. Yackel noted that the housing study is been conducted. She said that she and Mr. Keane will report back to the Board the items that they have discussed this evening that should be modified from the synthesis recommendations.

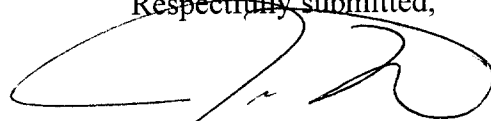
Mr. Steers discussed with the Board their next meeting on this synthesis of the Plan which should be within the next two to three weeks. The dates of November 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> were proposed and the Clerk was asked to poll the entire the Board to schedule this next meeting.

There being no further business, on motion of Trustee Kenner, seconded by Trustee Marino, the meeting was closed at 9:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

- AYES: Trustees Brakewood, Didden, Marino, Kenner and Mayor Pilla
- NOES: None
- ABSENT: Trustees Terenzi and Branca

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Mancuso  
Village Clerk