

The Master Plan Steering Subcommittee met on January 20, 2022, at City Hall room 200A.

Meeting called to order at 6:38pm.

Present: Planning Board members Peter Brunette and Stacy Soucy, citizen representatives Mike Foote, Gary Dionne and Gail Ober, and City Councilors Bruce Cheney and Henry Lipman. Also, present Planning Director Dean Trefethen and Assistant Planner Rob Mora. Absent: Planning Board member Rich MacNeill and Mayor Andrew Hosmer.

Minutes of previous meetings of October 19, 2021, and November 16, 2021 were declared accepted as presented.

Under New Business, the group discussed proposed changes to the Table of Dimensional Requirements with a proposal by Trefethen. (See attached proposal) Staff has reviewed "green space" requirements from nearby towns and three other cities that are similar in population (Somersworth, Keene, and Lincoln). Laconia is more stringent, i.e., requires more green space, than the adjourning towns, in most instances, and significantly higher than the three "peer" communities. Discussion centered on the correct number for the CR (residential) line, with 40% proposed and 30% to be the right number by consensus.

Part of this discussion concerned the new buss word "upzonng" that is in national planning narratives, meaning to allow increased density in all zones, like duplexes in single family zones, etc. Does the proposed decrease in green space allow for upzoning? Trefethen stated that was not the intention but would potentially facilitate a change like that if the community so desired. The real reason was two-fold. First, to get our numbers more in line with surrounding towns and peer communities and second to get more properties to be conforming, as particularly in the RG zone many present lots would not be conforming to green space requirements (and other requirements as well like setbacks).

Concerning the proposed changes to residential units per acre there was general agreement to the proposed numbers except for the RG zone. Possible drawback in that zone was the available capacity of existing infrastructure...water/sewer/drainage... and the age of that infrastructure. No concrete agreement was reached.

Trefethen explained that the maximum structure height issue came out of recent discussions at the Planning Board level and a couple of approved projects that some abutters and a couple of board members thought might be too tall. One alternative to having a set number would be to have some type of a formula, with new structures not more than a certain percentage higher than neighboring property. Perhaps instituting "form based code" could also address the issue. It was pointed out that with Performance Zoning in the UC and now the CR zones, that height is not a set number, and the Planning Board could have greater oversight in proposals based on their location and thus the neighboring properties. Again, no conclusion.

Staff will continue to work the proposal and will bring in proposed adjustments to lot sizes as part of the equation.

Next meeting will be scheduled in February.

Adjournment was declared at 8:18pm.