

LUC Meeting Minutes 6/7/2023

DEPT/BOARD: Land Use Committee

DATE: Wednesday June 7, 2023

TIME: 7:00 PM

PLACE: Burlington Town Hall Annex

Member(s) in attendance: David Webb, Patricia O'Brien, Zi Wang, Mimi Bix-Hylan, Gary Mercier and Monte Pearson.

Recording Clerk in attendance: Julie Girolamo

Assistant Conservation Administrator in attendance: Eileen Coleman

Planning Department Director in attendance: Elizabeth Bonventre

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 PM.

1. Introductions:
 - a. Chair David Webb introduces new Recording Clerk Julie Girolamo.
2. Discussion of Winn View Heights II 40B proposal:
 - a. The structure consists of under 30 units for seniors 55 and older housing and the Select Board is taking a vote at their next meeting on Monday June 12, 2023 for or against a letter of support. The town Board of Appeals has the final decision.
 - b. Elizabeth Bonventre and David Webb discussed how the proposal was initially denied by the SB. The proposal was resubmitted so that the full Board could vote on it. The LUC addressed the issues of the structure causing water issues and flooding to houses existing in the neighborhood. The issues brought up from the project that would affect the neighborhood included egress, slope, switchback, flooding issues, blasting and sledgehammering for months. There would also be 30-40 mature trees removed.
 - c. The Town would be held responsible for any liability issues. The LUC asks Planning Director Elizabeth Bonventre for a proper plan and to speak to residents who oppose the plan.
 - d. Gary Mercier discussed how the town is at approximately 14% of affordable housing, above the state minimum. There should be a survey of the neighbors/abutters about their basements to see what kind of shape they are in and if they could sustain flooding issues due to the project.
 - e. There was a discussion about asking the town lawyer about liabilities of dry basements and other issues. The Town Administrator is the person to ask the lawyer about these liability issues.
 - f. The LUC agrees that the abutters should show up in person at the Select Board meeting and voice their opposition to the project and/or get together and sign a letter and provide other documents about opposition of the plan.
3. Discussion of resolution supporting Conservation's Sustainability Action Plan:

- a. Assistant Conservation Administrator Eileen Coleman gave an update that she will hear in August about whether the state will approve the town's action plan.
4. Planner Elizabeth Bonventre discussed the MBTA multifamily housing topic.
 - a. She discussed how all communities in the MBTA catchment area are required to have a zoning map of 15 units per acre, not age restricted, and suitable for all people.
 - b. It was discussed that there is a great commercial core at the mall and Middlesex Turnpike but other commercial properties in Burlington have outlived their intended uses. There are many empty office buildings and unused parking lot areas. These commercial properties and lots could be used for housing or new uses such as Labs.
 - c. The mall is a retail property only and there was discussion about The District in town extending its hours to be more robust and a 24/7 place for people to go to.
 - d. The LUC discussed issues about making 24/7 business in town and how creating more housing and businesses could lead to more traffic. Burlington has approximately 26,000 people. Bonventre pushed back saying the town has been at this same population for the past 20 years. This is due to permitted housing units and the size of households are smaller.
 - e. The timeline of approval of MBTA zoning overlay and amendment to zoning bylaw is May 2024 with a completion date of December 2024. The LUC can help by promoting ideas as a member of a steering comm. starting this fall.
 - f. The Mall Road report is to come out at the end of 2023 for the January 2024 meeting. The Town Meeting of May 2024 will be used as the deadline.
5. Assistant Conservation Administrator Eileen Coleman and Planner Elizabeth Bonventre discussed grant money:
 - a. Burlington is eligible for grant money and the Attorney General put out a notice enforcing laws about grant money.
 - b. Eligible grants discussed were the PFAS filter building at Mill Pond, the Mass. Housing Partnership grant 3ATA, the MBTA zoning/mapping grant of \$20,000, a grant for more robust outreach which will be heard in the fall for \$70,000 with the department matching some money.
 - c. The Blanchard/Wheeler Road project was discussed and the final report from engineering will come out by the end of June 2023.
6. Liaisons reports:
 - a. Conservation (Zi Wang) - Zi reported on The District rezoning initiative to have 2 new buildings which would be staying away from wetland area. There is also a landscaping project next to the Vine Brook which would include removing invasive trees and shrubs to plant native trees and shrubs. The project also includes adding 20 more electric chargers for cars.
Also discussed was the Conservation letter against the Winn Heights project, environmental issues of the proposed Fox Hill/Pine Glen school project(s), and improvements being made with redevelopment of a building on Wall Street.

b.

7. Subcommittee Reports:

a. Bylaw revision (Pat O'Brien)-
Plan to present the new bylaw at the Jan. TM. Will send to LUC the new version along with the crossout version so we can see changes.

b. Sustainability (Monte Pearson)- Monte reported how there was smoke in the air coming from Canada due to climate change, and the baseball games in Philadelphia and New York were canceled because of the air quality and visibility being so poor. Monte said to keep in mind that in the future anything could happen in Burlington that could disrupt normal day-to-day living and everything the LUC does is in part of the whole effort of improving the town.

8. Advisory Reports (David Webb)- David reported on the Mall Road corridor rezoning initiative. Vacant and former industrial land and parking lots along the Mall Road could be rezoned to allow for housing, retail, and/or green space. Buildings and lots typically have 10-year leases; when these expire they would come under the new zoning rules.

9 Chair's comments:

- a. Chair David Webb expressed that he will be stepping down as Chair.
- b. Patricia O'Brien will stay on as Vice-Chair.
- c. There were no volunteers at this meeting to become Chair.
 - i. The work of being Chair includes handling many emails, settling up meetings, and handling the meetings and the meeting minutes.
 - ii. Webb mentioned the bylaws say the LUC should have an annual election and June is a good time. The Chair can be rotated among the members as it is with other town committees.

10. Approval of Minutes

MOTION- To approve the Minutes from the LUC meeting of March 27, 2023. The Motion passed with a vote of 6-0-0.

11. Next meeting date was set for July 18, 2023 at 7 PM.

- a. Topics for July meeting:
 - i. Discussion on editing the LUC Bylaw Revision and presenting it to the General Bylaw Committee for their comments. Aim to submit it to January TM for approval.
 - ii. Election of a new Chair for the LUC.

MOTION- To adjourn the meeting – The Motion passed with a vote of 6-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Julie Girolamo, Recording Clerk.