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5 **Stratham Planning Board**
6 **Meeting Minutes**
7 **January 8, 2014**
8 **Municipal Center, Selectmen's Meeting Room**
9 **10 Bunker Hill Avenue**
10 **Time: 7:00 PM**
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13 **Members Present:** Mike Houghton, Chairman
14 Bruno Federico, Selectmen's Representative
15 Jameson Paine, Member
16 Tom House, Member
17 Mary Jane Werner, Alternate
18

19 **Members Absent:** Bob Baskerville, Vice Chairman
20 Steve Doyle, Alternate
21 Christopher Merrick, Alternate
22

23 **Staff Present:** Lincoln Daley, Town Planner
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26 **1. Call to Order/Roll Call.**

27 The Chairman took roll call and asked Ms. Werner to be a full voting member. Ms.
28 Werner agreed.
29

30 **2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes.**

31 a. December 18, 2013

32 Ms. Werner made a motion to approve the minutes of December 18, 2013. Motion
33 seconded by Mr. House. Motion carried unanimously.

34 **3. Public Hearing(s).**

35 The purpose of the following public hearings are to review and solicit public comment on
36 the proposed amendments to the Stratham Zoning Ordinance which would amend the
37 follow Sections:

38 a. **Town Warrant Article – Town Center District.** To see if the Town will amend the
39 Zoning Ordinance to add a new section, Section III. Establishment of Districts and
40 Uses, Subsection 3.9 Town Center District and amend Subsections 3.4.5 District
41 Purposes, 3.6 Table of Uses, 3.8.6.a Review and Permitting Process, 3.8.7.a. and c.
42 Building and Site Design Standards, Section IV. Dimensional Requirements,

1 Subsections 4.1.3 General Requirements, 4.2 Table of Dimensional Requirements, 4.3
2 Explanatory Notes, and Section VII. Signs, Subsection 7.3 Administration.

3 The intent of the proposed amendments is to offer zoning to enhance the economic
4 vitality, business diversity, accessibility, and visual appeal of Stratham’s Town Center
5 District, in a manner that is consistent with the landscape and architecture of Town’s
6 agrarian tradition and historical significance within the community.

7 Mr. Daley explained the process for warrant articles to the Board and recommended the
8 Board start with Articles b – d.

9 Mr. Daley said tonight he would like to ask the Board for a few additional areas of
10 guidance. He started with Section 3.9.vi.a. which addresses the review process. He
11 explained that currently the Gateway Technical Review Committee (GTRC) reviews
12 any applications that fall within the Gateway district. Mr. Daley thinks it would be a
13 natural progression to have any applications for the Town Center to be reviewed by this
14 committee also. He suggested changing the Committee’s name to Technical Review
15 Committee for simplicity. He added that the Heritage Commission had suggested that
16 one of their members should be on the committee also.

17 Mr. Daley turned to Section 3.9.8.a. Permitted Uses within the Town Center district.
18 He said the Heritage Commission suggested some additional uses to include farm
19 stands under Commercial along with food vendors. Ms. Werner asked about food
20 vendors and whether Mr. Daley meant portable food trucks. Mr. Daley confirmed that
21 was what he meant. Ms. Werner felt that was a good idea and asked who would give
22 the final approval. Mr. Daley said probably the Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Daley
23 said they should think about design standards and put criterion in place so it doesn’t get
24 out of hand. Mr. Paine asked about whether having livestock in the Town Center
25 district would be realistic with the suggested form based code. Ms. Werner suggested
26 that the Board stays with what is already in place and should problems arise then the
27 Board should address them then. Mr. Houghton agreed with Ms. Werner. Mr. Paine
28 suggested replacing farming with crop production. Mr. Daley said it will read “crop
29 production, customary accessory uses forestry, (tree farming, commercial timbering,
30 non commercial harvesting of forest products), community gardening. Ms. Debbie
31 Foss said she would leave livestock in because a responsible person wouldn’t raise
32 cows if the room is not available to do it.

33 Mr. Daley said that coinciding with Section 3.9.8 are the amendments to the Table of
34 Uses in Section 3.6. Mr. Daley listed the amendment for the Board, inviting any
35 comments they may have. Mr. Paine asked if Mr. Daley wanted to reword the Table to
36 reflect the discussion just had about farming. Mr. Daley said he would add a footnote to
37 reflect that. Mr. Daley checked that the Board supported the idea of not allowing any
38 more gas stations in Town. Mr. Houghton asked what would happen if an existing gas
39 station wanted to add on a service and repair aspect. Mr. Daley said it is not allowed
40 currently. He mentioned that conference centers and movie theaters/entertainment
41 complex would now be permitted under commercial uses.

1 Mr. Daley said he had been working with the Heritage Commission with reference to
2 historical properties in the Town Center. He supports their wish to have language for
3 the Town Center district that encourages the preservation of the architectural features of
4 those buildings without being too restrictive. Mr. Daley shared that he found out
5 recently that if a building is on the national register, it doesn't mean that the building is
6 protected as such and could still be razed. Ms. Werner said it would have to be
7 declared a historical district plus they would have to put some ordinances in place to
8 prevent that from happening. She added that you get onto the national register by
9 proving the building is of historical significance, but there is no restriction put on it. It
10 does offer some financial assistance too.

11 Mr. Daley said the Town ordinance doesn't really include descriptive language strongly
12 encouraging the preservation of these structures. He read out suggested new language
13 to encourage the preservation and then read out language suggested by the Chair of the
14 Heritage Commission also. The Board discussed the 2 paragraphs the Heritage
15 Commission was suggesting.

16 Mr. Daley addressed the topic of Town Center district design standards and roadways.
17 He reminded the Board that they had discussed a minimum lot size based on soil based
18 lot sizing and the possibility of Municipal or shared water and sewer coming to the
19 Town Center. That size would be quarter of an acre or 15,000 square feet which would
20 encourage greater density in the area and allow current property owners to subdivide
21 their properties should they wish to do so. The Board found the suggested lot size to
22 be acceptable. Mr. Daley discussed maximum foot print and certain types of uses.
23 There are restrictions on multi family units which entails a minimum of 3, a maximum
24 of 8 units of a maximum of 8,000 square feet footprint. The building footprint for
25 residential and mixed use would be a maximum of 10,000 square feet. Mr. Daley
26 reminded the members that there is a maximum height of 25 feet which is about 21/2
27 stories, which is essentially 25, 000 usable square feet per structure. He said also that
28 there will be maximum block sizes that can be created which are 40,000 square feet
29 which is just under an acre.

30 Mr. Daley talked about roadway design and showed on a plan the conceptual design the
31 Board had discussed previously. He added that he would like the Board's input as to
32 whether they would like one way streets or let developers dictate that as they build.

33 Mr. Daley ran through building dimensions and setbacks and then talked about
34 streetscape designs. As part of the TE grant a type of ornamental light will be
35 prescribed to keep it standardized for the entire district to avoid a jumble of lighting
36 styles in that area. Mr. Houghton asked who pays for the operation of the lights. Mr.
37 Daley said the Town will. Mr. House suggested using solar. Mr. Daley said it would
38 be considered as a possibility, although the trade off is an unattractive panel. The
39 Board was happy for a lighting design standard to be included.

40 Mr. Daley addressed public spaces. He said the new regulations would prescribe 15%
41 of total area should be dedicated to public space and a minimum of 10% to open space
42 if the development is less than half an acre. For developments greater than that, a

1 minimum of 15% would be required for open space. Mr. Paine asked if open and
2 public space can be the same. Mr. Daley said they could be, such as a park. Mr. Paine
3 asked about a trade off for those spaces such as planting extra trees or building a play
4 ground area elsewhere in the district. Mr. Daley said he would include that in the
5 relevant section.

6 Mr. Daley asked the Board to look at the street design standards and to decide if they
7 wanted anything else adding to them. Mr. Daley said he supports the idea of a bike
8 lane on the 2 way street itself, but given the limited area for development in those areas,
9 he feels bikes could utilize the road to give more room for on street parking. There will
10 be a bike lane on Route 33 as part of the TE Grant. Mr. Paine asked if that meant more
11 heavily traveled lanes would have bike lanes. Mr. Daley said yes as part of the TE
12 grant. Ms. Werner said she felt it was more important to have sidewalks and on street
13 parking than a bike lane. Mr. Daley asked if the Board wanted sidewalks on both sides
14 of the street for two way traffic. The Board said they did. Ms. Foss asked if there
15 would be stores on both sides of the street or would one side be residential. Mr. Daley
16 said that could potentially happen. Mr. Daley confirmed that the Board would like
17 lighting on both sides of a two way street too. The Board agreed. Mr. Daley confirmed
18 also that the Board prefers on street parking where available. He suggested that if it
19 isn't possible for a developer to provide parking spaces, the developer should have to
20 provide something in lieu of those spaces somewhere else in the district. At some
21 point in time, shared parking will be required. Mr. Paine asked if an escrow account
22 will be created for developers for parking or open space. Mr. Daley said there would
23 be a fund of some sort.

24 Mr. Paine asked about power lines. Mr. Daley said they would need to be underground.

25 Mr. Daley finished by talking about architectural and site design standards. He added a
26 little more detail about preserving the historical character of the area and the integrity
27 of the Town Center district. He then mentioned that other minor amendments would
28 need to be made to reflect the Town Center changes elsewhere in the Ordinance where
29 applicable.

30 Ms. Werner asked how the Town was going to make residents aware that these changes
31 would be discussed and voted on at the Town Meeting. Mr. Daley said property
32 owners in the district had been notified, and it was posted in public places. Thus far, he
33 had not received any negative comments. Ms. Werner suggested involving other
34 committees and possibly have the Heritage and Conservation Commissions give their
35 blessing in a newspaper article.

36 Mr. House made a motion to continue the discussion to January 22, 2014. Motion
37 seconded by Ms. Werner. Motion carried unanimously.

38 **b. Town Warrant Article – Dimensional Requirements for the Gateway Commercial**
39 **Business District and Town Center Zoning Districts.** To see if the Town will amend
40 the Zoning Ordinance, Section IV: Dimensional Requirements, Subsection 4.3
41 Explanatory Notes to further clarify and reference the dimension requirements for

1 structures and developments within the Gateway Commercial Business Zoning District
2 and Town Center Zoning District.

3 Mr. Daley explained that for all other districts, dimensional requirements are listed in
4 Section 4.2 of the Ordinance. For the Gateway Commercial Business District, they are
5 framed differently. This warrant article is so users of the Ordinance will know where
6 they need to go to find out the dimensional requirements of the Gateway District and
7 the Town Center should the new form based code be adopted for the Town Center. Mr.
8 Daley read out the suggested amendment.

9 Ms. Werner asked what would happen if this new language was adopted, but the Town
10 Center form based codes weren't voted in. Mr. Daley said this particular amendment
11 would follow after the vote for the form based code for the Town Center so if the form
12 based code isn't adopted, this amendment would be changed accordingly.

13 Mr. Federico made a motion that the Board moves this article to a Town Warrant.
14 Motion seconded by Ms. Werner. Motion carried unanimously.

15 c. **Town Warrant Article – Signage.** To see if the Town will amend the Stratham Zoning
16 Ordinance, Section VII. Signs, Subsection 7.9 General Regulation, b.viii.4.
17 Wall/Building Signs to further clarify the square foot area calculation for permitted
18 wall/building signage

19 Mr. Daley explained that a small discrepancy had been found in the methodology used
20 to calculate wall signage. This Warrant Article simply changes one portion of
21 Subsection 7.9.b.viii.4. Wall/Building Signage. Mr. Daley said that currently the wall
22 signage is based on one linear foot of the frontage of the lot. Mr. Daley said the word
23 “lot” would be changed to “building”.

24 Mr. House made a motion to recommend this proposed article to the Town Meeting.
25 Motion seconded by Mr. Paine. Motion carried unanimously.

26 d. **Town Warrant Article – Sanitary Protection and Septic Ordinance, Criteria for**
27 **Conditional Use Permit.** To see if the Town will amend the Zoning Ordinance,
28 Section XX: Sanitary Protection & Septic Ordinance, Subsection 20.1.5.e to further
29 clarify the criterion for issuing a Conditional Use Permit.

30 Mr. Daley explained that the ZBA and Planning Board felt that the Planning Board
31 would be a more applicable Board to govern this subsection and that the criterion
32 should be further clarified.

33 Mr. House pointed out an acronym and wondered if it could be written out in full so
34 people could understand. Mr. Paine asked if Town voters only see the heading of the
35 Article and requested it be presented in full so they understand better what they are
36 voting for or against.

1 Mr. Paine made a motion to recommend forwarding this on to the Town Meeting with
2 the corrections stipulated. Motion seconded by Ms. Werner. Motion carried
3 unanimously.

4 **4. Miscellaneous.**

5 a. Report of Officers/Committees.

6 There was nothing to report.

7 b. Member Comments.

8 There were no member comments

9 **5. Adjournment.**

10 Mr. Paine made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 PM. Motion seconded by Mr. House. Motion
11 carried unanimously.

12 **6. Next Scheduled Planning Board Meetings.**

13 January 15, 2014

14 January 22, 2014

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