

Meeting Minutes Committee on Planning and Development

February 6, 2024

Page 1 of 3

Meeting Recording:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Jsa8_GIFW3FLoahI2SvCUkrUuFZMYFJ2bbaeFbtRK0A9xRv9bmcGDmTAGOHRgSdN.GE8YvXYmRCydaRH

Members

Cllr. Heather Shand, Chair
Cllr. Connie Preston (At-Large) - present
Cllr. Mark Wright (At-Large) - present

Other Participants

Cllr. Jennie Donahue (Ward 2) Zoom
Council President Ed Cameron (At-Large)-
present
Cllr. Ben Harmon (Ward 4) Zoom
Cllr. Heath Granas (Ward 3) Zoom
Cllr. Sharif Zeid (Ward 1) Present
Cllr. Afroz Khan (At-Large) Zoom
Cllr. Jim McCauley (Ward 5) Present

Agenda:

ODNC00164 Zoning-Amendment-Global-R3-Multi-Family Amended (COTW)

COMM00529 Letter from Jim McCarthy re: Request to update codified sign ordinances

Meeting started at 6:04

Chair calls the meeting to order and starts with ODNC00164

Public Comment

1. Jared Eigerman, 83 High Street

Supports proposed development process and the deed restriction between Global and the potential developer. Concerns are the upzoning of R3 and the design review that the ZBA is not required to have. Wants to make sure a peer review/design review completed by an architect. Wants to make sure this site is done correctly.

1. Atty. Lisa Mead, Law firm representing proposed developer Mead, Talerman and Costa
Stated zoning board has the right to ask for a peer review and her client has no issue paying for that effort.

Closed Public comment and continued with deliberation

Cllr Zeid speaks to his concerns regarding multiple structures on one lot, 6C and the lack of council inclusion with development agreement being signed by the mayor. Would have preferred an overlay district and is concerned with broader impacts of changing multifamily definition. He is in favor of this site being redeveloped, not in favor of current process.

Cllr. Preston speaks to the multifamily change, not R3. Asks what the cost of a peer review is typically. Dir. Port answers. Asks about the timeline for the council vote with regards to the planning board closing their public hearing in November and when the 90 days actually ends. Asks about the P&S agreement and its extension to the end of February as the council zoning needs two readings.

Meeting Minutes Committee on Planning and Development

February 6, 2024

Page 2 of 3

Cllr. Wright speaks to the deed restriction only going into place if the council approves the zoning. States in favor of the project but questions the implications regarding multifamily and MBTA communities.

Cllr. Zeid speaks to implications of multifamily definition change to WMD and WMU zoning. Asks about timeline for both readings of the council to be completed. Questions who holds the deed restriction.

Cllr. McCauley asks about the parcel two lot designation and making it one parcel for zoning purposes. Speaks to 6C options. Concerned with the development agreement being signed by the mayor without council input. Speaks to unintended consequences of changing the multifamily definition. Supports the site being developed, not in favor of the current process.

Cllr. Khan questions implications regarding the definition and asks how other communities define multifamily. Dir. Port states it is not a consistent definition by the state and each municipality can make their own definition for zoning purposes.

Cllr. Zeid speaks to how an overlay would resolve all councilors concerns regarding the project.

Cllr. Donahue asks for further clarification from the Ward 1 councilor regarding unintended consequences. Cllr. Zeid speaks to concerns regarding infill.

Cllr. Preston asks Dir. Port why an overlay district wasn't considered in the beginning. Dir. Port speaks to the other three corners being R3 and how this doesn't meet the criteria for spot zoning. Discussion regarding 6C continues.

Cllr President Cameron speaks to his support and sites the written decision by the planning board as reason to approve the zoning change as is. Discussion regarding the Planning Board decision continues.

Cllr. Zeid speaks to modifying the multifamily definition to be only applicable to the R3. Speaks to overlay and how long that would take to go through the process if current ordinance did not pass.

Chair reopens public comment

1. Jim McCarthy, 17 Russia Street
Former chair of the planning board, supports the update to the multifamily definition. MBTA communities will have its own separate zoning.
2. Jared Eigerman, 83 High Street
Concerned with council delaying vote for concern a developer will walk away and states the one way to fix the issue is to change this specific multifamily definition in the use table as applicable only in R3.
3. Lisa Mead, MTC law firm
Her client is looking to get the project moving and is concerned with further delay in zoning.
4. Marge Kaczala, 109 State Street
Only knew about zoning updates because of Stephanie Niketic updates to the residents

Meeting Minutes Committee on Planning and Development

February 6, 2024

Page 3 of 3

Chair closes public comment.

Cllr. Wright states he will support as he too wants to see the project move forward.

Cllr. Preston makes the motion to approve, Cllr. Wright is the second.

Vote is 3-0 to approve the as amended zoning ordinance to the full council.

COMM00529 - Letter from Jim McCarthy re: Request to update codified sign ordinances

Mr. McCarthy speaks to his communication regarding signs, explaining how there are discrepancies in the city ordinances regarding public and private ways. Dir. Port speaks to the memorandum sent by Chief of Staff Levine regarding what the city could do to make updates. Doesn't think A Frames should be regulated the way they currently are downtown.

Public Comment

1. Jared Eigerman, 83 High Street

Speaks to his work with Clear Channel as a client and their outdoor advertising being a big business. Cautions the council and city on "picking and choosing" and making sure first amendment rights are considered when making updates to the ordinances.

2. Jane Snow, 9 Coffin Street

Wants to keep A-frames regulated

Committee agrees to keep the communication in committee so Planning Department and Mr. McCarthy can work together on what updates to ordinances could be. Will bring the communication back up in a later committee meeting for updates.

Cllr. Preston motions to adjourn, Cllr. Wright is the second,

Vote is 3-0 to adjourn

Meeting ends at 8:04.