



# TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD

## Planning and Zoning Commission

### APPROVED/REVISED MINUTES SUBCOMMITTEE ON BUSINESS ZONES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not verbatim transcription.

April 16, 2021

Present: Joe Fossi  
Karen Martin, Chair  
Bob Cascella  
Geoffrey Morris  
Cameron Cole Carcelan  
Stephen Rapaglia  
Steve Zemo  
Susan Buzaid

Absent: Bob Knight  
Wing Biddle  
Charles Robbins

Also Present: Aarti Paranjape, Office Administrator/ Recording Secretary

#### **I. Call to order**

At 8:32 AM, Ms. Martin called the meeting to order.

#### **II: Discussion**

##### 1. Continued discussion on proposed business zone changes, next steps

Ms. Martin talked about the overlay zone map for the CBD district which was distributed to the members.

Mr. Zemo said that the map is clear and looks logical.

Discussion ensued on the parking. It was discussed whether the parking regulations would be applicable as per the existing CBD rules or if new regulations would be incorporated. Mr. Zemo expressed concerns stating that the municipal parking lots might get overwhelmed by the visitors parking for the residential properties if there are no designated parking spaces for the residents and visitors.

Mr. Rapaglia questioned if there would be enough spaces to create the parking spaces just for the residential properties in the CBD overlay zone.

Ms. Martin stated she will formulate a language and have a parking section which will clearly state that the residential parking in the CBD overlay zone will follow the



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regulations as per the parking in other residential zones and not the CBD parking regulations.

Ms. Martin confirmed that the RVNA property is included in this CBD overlay zone. She added that the draft will be shared to all the members.

### 2. New discussion on potential future changes

Ms. Martin said that Mr. Cascella has drafted language for a potential Route 7 design district overlay zone.

Mr. Cascella informed the members that pre-pandemic, the Route 7 corridor was having issues with the vacancy, and post-pandemic the issues have multiplied. The office space is still vacant. He said that the commercial section is doing better than the retail. He added that this part of the B-2 Zone is underused. He proposed to give it a fresh look and possible find uses which will work for this section of the B-2 zone.

Mr. Zemo inquired about the proposition of drive-thru restaurants and if this was applicable for this zone or other B-2 Zones and also asked about the larger signs.

Mr. Cascella stated that the drive thru is more focus in this overlay zone on Route 7.

Ms. Martin informed the group that a pre-concept application was presented to Planning and Zoning Commission during the early pandemic regarding drive thru for a particular property on Route 7, however the Commission didn't show much support to the concept.

Ms. Martin suggested that instead of having an overlay zone, this section of B-2 could be a different business district, with the focus on the regulations for this particular zone rather than all B-2 Zones all over the town.

Members supported the idea of a having a separate district with its own regulations. This will eliminate the spill over to other B-2 zones.

Mr. Rapaglia mentioned that in the past the Route 7 corridor expansion was discussed. He expressed concerns of the big box retailers to be taking over the opportunities of the existing businesses.

Discussion ensued on the sign regulations. Ms. Martin stated that current sign regulations would be amended in the near future and will be focused on zoning districts.

Members decided to continue research on the entry corridor on Route 7. Mr. Fossi informed that an application was approved in the past called "Gateway," however, an appeal was taken and it was overturned. He said that he can share the documents with the Sub-Committee.

Ms. Martin will research on the drive-thru regulations of neighboring towns.



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Ms. Martin will distribute the draft language for the CBD overlay zone to edit the parking language. It was also agreed that the section where a Special Permit is required for the first floor residential should be removed to be as of right. It will be on the Planning & Zoning Commission's meeting agenda on April 27 for preliminary discussion.

### **III: Approval of Minutes**

- **April 01, 2021, Special Meeting**

**Mr. Fossi motioned to approve the Special meeting minutes for the Subcommittee on Business zones. Mr. Morris seconded it. Motion carried 8-0.**

### **IV. Adjourn**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2021 at 8:30AM via zoom.

Hearing no further, Ms. Martin adjourned the meeting at 9:33AM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Aarti Paranjape