

Zoning Ordinance Review Sub-Committee for Form Based Codes

Meeting Date: February 15, 2012

Attendees: Kathy Corson, John Hauschildt, Sylvia von Aulock, John Merkle, and Julie Gilman

Guests: DPW staff, Paul Vlasich, Jay Perkins, Phyllis Duffy

Draft Meeting Notes

1. Group reviewed the vision and goals of form-based code zoning for Portsmouth with DPW staff. See attached goals worksheet developed by SvA. Also reviewed the mapping of land uses done by Kathy Corson. The emphasis of the discussion was in the area along Portsmouth Ave from its intersection with High St. to Walgreens area. Some of the main concerns shared were the desire to keep the smaller scale of this area, presently dubbed the “transition zone”, to ensure the multi-modality needs for all users, to create a gateway into downtown, to preserve the residential/historic character of the area.
2. DPW reviewed the project status with the group: that the project design was 75% complete, some funds left in the project budget to meet with the consultant, no formal public input session was planned, project has been put off another year, very concerned about traffic congestion, not confident that all needs could be met (referring to goals of FBC).
3. Group suggested that Julie discuss the issue with Jen Perry and the possibility of scheduling a similar meeting with the project consultant and perhaps discuss the need of a public input session with BOS in the near future.
4. Group further reviewed the maps that Kathy developed, noting the distinction in the various areas along the corridor.
5. John M. showed his large plans he had developed but discussed the need for engineered drawings. SvA volunteered to get a copy of the plans DPW, focusing in on the “transition zone”.
6. John H. showed his example of a before and after picture near the new hotel by Duncin Donuts using photoshop to create an example of what it could look like with new regs for green space and allowing for a sidewalk.

Next meeting March 7th in the Wheelright Room at the Town Office Building at 8:15.

Portsmouth Ave Corridor Improvement District

Section 1.0 Draft Goals:

- I. Recognize distinct zones within the corridor to preserve and enhance specific goals, identities, and regulations for each zone. (See Section 2.0 for detail and maps on each zone.)
 - a. Transition Zone: Southern end of Portsmouth Ave, closest to downtown.
 - i. Transition Zone should maintain a more neighborhood scale through smaller structures, pleasant pedestrian walkways, and various streetscape details. Specific transition zone regulations should also consider the historical and physical connection to downtown.
 - b. Business Zone: This section covers the largest area of Portsmouth Ave from Green Street to Holland Way.
 - i. The Business Zone should provide a vibrant, efficient, and safe business area for business owners and customers alike.
 - c. Highway Zone: This is the most northern section of the corridor and is directly linked to route 101 interchange.
 - i. The Highway Zone should focus on creating a unique gateway into Exeter while efficiently moving all manner of traffic into and out of Exeter.
 - d. Create unique requirements for each zone to encourage identifiable characteristics within each zone including building and parking setbacks as well as streetscape requirements.

II. Land Use:

Each zone within the corridor should have uses that are compatible with the abutting zoning districts. The allowed uses should also take into consideration the sensitivity of the watershed (see section V. Green and Environmental Considerations)

III. Transportation/Access;

- a. Create a multi-modal corridor that is safe for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.
- b. Reduce conflict points between user groups.
- c. Optimize coordination for improved access for all users including deliveries.

IV. Aesthetics;

- a. Create architectural standards that accentuate the unique character for each of the three zones.
- b. Develop minimum landscaping standards for each zone.

V. Green and Environmental Considerations:

The entire area is within the watershed of the Squamscott River, a river designated as impaired by NHDES and EPA. It is also part of the NHDES River Management and Protection Program. Furthermore, portion of the corridor drain directly into the Exeter's reservoir, Water Works Pond. Considering the sensitivity of these resources, improvements to stormwater collection and treatment systems should be required as development occurs.

Section 2: Portsmouth Avenue Corridor Zones

I. Transition Zone:

High Street to Green Hill Road, this zone has a mix of single and multi-family residential, business and office uses. The largest business is the Walgreens pharmacy. Other long term business include bakery, restaurant, rental equipment, bicycle, and an automotive repair shop. Offices include insurance, banking, and dentist. This portion of Portsmouth Ave. has somewhat of a more intimate, neighborhood scale, with close-knit buildings and smaller lots. It is common to see pedestrians walking in this area, including high-school aged youngsters walking to a favorite restaurant or to the drug store.



II. Portsmouth Ave Business Zone:

The Business Zone covers the majority of Portsmouth Ave beginning on the southern end with Green Hill Road and ending on the northern end at Holland Way and Stoney Brook Lane. The business along this portion include auto sales and other auto related, two hotels, various restaurants, a lumber yard, several shopping plazas of various sizes, banks, professional offices, other retailers, one multi-family residential complex, and the town's water treatment plant. This portion of Portsmouth Ave is relatively fast moving, primarily targeted for vehicular traffic.



III. Highway Zone:

The Highway Zone is the most northerly section of the corridor as well as the smallest area. Associated with the Route 101 interchange, this is a very busy and complicated roadway area. The area can be especially intimidating for senior drivers as well as for newcomers to the area. This section also has a few retail shops that are similar to that in the business zone including: auto sales, gas station, fast food, and other retail uses. The distinguishing feature within this district is that it sets the stage for vehicular movement in and out of Exeter and is one of the main gateways into Exeter.

