

PLANNING BOARD OF THE CITY OF BANGOR

FEBRUARY 3, 2015 MEETING

MINUTES

Board Members Present:

**Paul Bolin, Chairman
Charles Boothby
John Kenney
Wayne Mallar
Dora McCarthy
John Miller
Pete Parizo, Alternate Member
Julie Williams**

City Staff Present:

David Gould

Chairman Bolin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Item No. 1: **Drive-in Use**

Chairman Bolin asked Staff to provide a brief summary of the proposed language. Planning Officer Gould discussed the intent to provide some clarity within the Conditional Use Standards relative to drive-in uses such that changes in type may warrant review by the Board. The language also addresses changes in architectural elements when under review and approved as part of a conditional use. Staff was seeking Planning Board input prior to this being introduced.

Ms. McCarthy noted that she felt language which used "significant change" to be too broad and would lead to potential inconsistent outcomes.

Other Members of the Board concurred that some basis in numerical trips needs to be the base line.

Mr. Miller noted that with busy arterials changes in drive-in uses could have a greater impact and the Board often does not get the ability to re-review certain use changes. Member Kenney thought it would be best to review actual traffic numbers.

Mr. Miller was concerned that often applicants utilize national statistics and presume those numbers work here.

Mr. Gould noted that the City, not having specific traffic measures of its own, relies on MDOT's Traffic Movement Permit (TMP) requirements as its basic test as to whether traffic improvements are warranted.

Mr. Gould noted the feedback from the Board was good and he will get some additional data and try and clarify what changes would trigger re-review.

Item No. 2: Residential Districts

Chairman Bolin asked Planner David Gould to overview the proposed changes. Mr. Gould described the changes which were proposed for High Density Residential (HDR). The primary intent was to sort out some inconsistencies which were generated with the original language in 1991, and some further inconsistencies which were added more recently. There are a number of terms used in the district which are undefined but have unique development standards. While definitions have been discussed they have never been added. With a range of housing types each with slightly different density standards and minimum acreages it has become problematic to mix types. It also makes a difference what you call your building type because with several options it can dramatically alter density and units in a building. Since Zero Lot Line development has been in the Code since 1991, but never even discussed, we propose to remove it. In addition, our experience with cluster developments with no minimum lot size has caused problems with subsequent building. Both of those elements are within HDR and LDR so we propose to include some changes to LDR even through it's not the primary focus of this revision.

Chairman Bolin asked why the Statement of Purpose varies in the two districts. Mr. Gould noted they have little weight relative to the regulation, but we can see if they can be more similar.

Ms. McCarthy asked why some minimum acreage was being dramatically lessened. Mr. Gould noted the housing type initially associated with that acreage is being changed to a different density and the base acreage is changing as well.

Mr. Miller asked if allowing some denser housing further away from existing single-family homes might make it less problematic. Mr. Gould stated that in his view, the requirement to direct dense development to the serviced part of the City is a sound one which tries to limit sprawl and long-term costs to provide service to

residential units. Bangor has a great deal of investment in infrastructure and it should be our development policy to support that investment.

Ms. Williams noted that she understood the concept but found that there are issues with redevelopment in the urban core where development on grandfathered lots is limited. Mr. Gould noted that the development standards try to balance densities, and at what level does it become overcrowded or overburdened with cars on the public street due to limitations in the lots to accommodate them.

Mr. Boothby asked if the City would need to come back subsequently and define the housing types. Mr. Gould indicated he is hopeful that the new language will eliminate the need for the types to be defined and have the code not set different standards based on the arrangement of units, long term it causes more problems than it solves.

Mr. Gould noted that the concept of "open space" as a lot development standard is beginning to be phased out. Presently, open space per unit is calculated per unit and per bedroom in some districts. While it is rarely an issue in HDR and LDR it can be a huge dilemma in the URD-2 and M&S Districts, especially for older lots.

Mr. Mallar was concerned that the open space standards would be eliminated. Mr. Gould noted that what is being looked at is a different means to measure the green space on a lot more like the Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR) standard used in the developing portion of the City. While a ratio has not been arrived at, it would offer some flexibility as to how the green space (percentage) would be calculated. The present standards do not measure setback areas as open space.

Ms. McCarthy asked where the related parking standards were. Mr. Gould noted that parking requirements, design, sizes and setbacks are not in the district standards, but in a different section of the Land Development Code.

Mr. Kenney asked if congregate housing could be developed on a smaller scale that would not require five acres. Mr. Gould noted historically there have been larger 100 + units, but we can see if an alternate set of guidelines would allow congregate care at a smaller scale, less units and less than five acres.

Ms. Williams noted there are small group homes throughout the City, and asked if they fit into this scheme. Mr. Gould noted that they might be state mandated group homes of limited size (Community Living Arrangements) which by State law has to be allowed as a single-family dwelling.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Item No. 3: **Planning Board Approval of Minutes.**

Chairman Bolin indicated that the Minutes of the January 20, 2015 Meeting were in order. Ms. Williams moved to approve the Minutes of the January 20, 2015 Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Boothby noted there was an error in the minutes that should be corrected. He asked if EMCC was paying a fee in lieu of taxes. Ms Williams agreed to have Staff make the noted correction to the Minutes. The vote was unanimous in favor of approving the Minutes as corrected.

There being no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.