

## MEETING OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE 6-24-2021

The meeting was called for 7 pm on Zoom. Present were Lees Hartman, chair; Tom Collins, Kathy Flaxman, Sybil Freedman, Rod Henderer (by phone), Dedun Ingram, Stuart Sessions, David Valenstein, and Ellen Cornelius Ericson, Council liaison.

Minutes of the April meeting: Dedun Ingram moved to approve as circulated with edits. Seconded and passed.

Public comments: None.

Thrive Montgomery 2050: Dedun reported that there are two related County initiatives in progress.

- 1) The first of two County Council public hearings on Thrive was held on June 17. Mayor Barney Rush testified on behalf of the Town. There will be a second hearing on June 29 at which Vice-Mayor Irene Lane will testify, but as an individual. Municipalities may only have one person testify on their behalf. The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development committee will hold work sessions in July, more in September, and then a vote.
- 2) At the Planning Board meeting earlier in the day (June 24), planning staff presented their recommendations for multi-family housing coming from the Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative. Following their presentation, community leaders, county residents, and other stakeholders were allowed to present comments. Most speakers represented municipalities and most spoke in favor of the concept of Attainable Housing, but against specific recommendations and the rushed process. The Planning Board does not believe the process has been rushed. Work sessions are scheduled for July 8 and 22. Ellen noted that residents are still encouraged to write to the Planning Board and County Council members.

Sale of the 4-H Center property: Ellen updated the committee. The winning bidder for the property has not been announced. There have been several recent meetings with Thornapple Street residents.

Canopy Tree Working Group: Lees reported that there will be a July 14 work session with the Town Council, to talk about the tree list and the County Pesticide Law. The possible tree census will also be discussed.

Applicability of County Legislation: Lees reported that he went through the County Code and observed that many chapters have not been adopted by other municipalities. This includes the chapters the LUC has reviewed: 10A, 22A, 31C, 33B, and 55. The Town's Long-Range Planning Committee has also reviewed three chapters: 5A, 36A, and 54. Lees will write up a summary with the committee's recommendations for the reviewed chapters, present a summary of the recommendations at our July meeting, and then pass it on to the Town Attorney.

ARPA Projects: Congress has appropriated money as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to address the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis and to stimulate a strong economic recovery. ARPA in part will provide emergency funding to State, local and tribal governments.

One of the ways that local governments may invest the money is in a broad range of projects to improve stormwater infrastructure systems, including green infrastructure initiatives. The Town will receive approximately \$2.5 million, half this year and half next year. The money must be obligated by 12/31/24 and spend by 12/31/26. The Town is looking into whether funds can be transferred to other entities (state/county governments). The Town is also checking to see if it is possible to spend the money outside its own boundaries assuming the project would be for the benefit of Town residents, for instance stormwater management work for the Farm Women's Market project.

The Town Council has asked the Land Use and Climate and Environment Committees to develop a list of potential stormwater management projects to consider. The list will be reviewed by legal counsel to assess consistency with ARPA rules. The vetted list will then be discussed with residents in the Fall.

Lees presented an initial list of stormwater related projects for the committee to consider including: 4-H Site Development, Farm Woman's Market Development, Zimmerman Park, Rosemary Circle Inlets, Thornapple Sump, Coquelin Run near 7504 Lynn Drive. There is also the possibility of green infrastructure projects. It was noted that some residents feel that as a wealthy enclave, we do not need and should not accept these funds. It was pointed out that the funds were intended to create jobs and inject money into the local economy to stimulate recovery. The Town pursuance of one or more projects could potentially help the local economy and the use of small businesses, those most adversely affected by the pandemic was discussed. The committee discussed the pros/cons of spending the money to correct stormwater issues on private property. It was noted that the Climate and Environment Committee feels strongly that any project should have an impact outside the Town. For instance, by having a positive impact on downstream water or as a model for an innovative green infrastructure initiative. Other committees like the Public Safety Committee would also have interest in some of the green infrastructure initiatives, like stormwater bump outs. They would help to channel/treat stormwater and at the same time have a traffic calming impact that would be a safety enhancement. The committee expressed the strongest interest in the Farm Woman's Market Development and the green infrastructure projects. Lees will write up notes on the committee discussion and send it out next week for committee comment. Next steps will be to compare notes with the Climate and Environment Committee. Members were asked to communicate any further thoughts to Lees and Ellen.

Final meeting for the current year will be Thursday, July 22.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.