



**City of Saratoga Springs
Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
Technical Review Advisory Committee (TRAC)**

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday May 30, 2017
3:00 p.m.
Music Hall**

PRESENT:

Susan Barden, Senior Planner; Brad Birge, Admin of Planning & Economic Development; Tina Carton, Parks, Open Space, Historic Preservation /Sustainability; Vince DeLeonardis, City Attorney; Amy Durland, Planning Board; Tamie Ehinger, Design Review Commission; Meg Kelly, Deputy Mayor; Kate Maynard, Principal Planner; and Susan Steer, Zoning Board of Appeals.

CONSULTANTS: John Behan and Michael Allen, Behan Planning and Design.

ABSENT: None

CITY OFFICIALS: Tony Izzo, City Attorney

RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings; the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

Approval of 5/9/17 TRAC Meeting Minutes

Vince DeLeonardis moved to approve the 5/9/2017 TRAC meeting minutes. Tamie Ehinger first, Susan Steer second.

Ayes- All. Kate Maynard abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brad Birge opened the public comment period at 3:03 p.m.

Susan Rivers, representing the Beekman Street Art District, commented that the 50% draft does not mention the arts district. She cited the precedent for this since the arts district is mentioned in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. She then distributed to the committee a document with the citations noted. She asked that the NCU-1 district language be modified to include in the district's intent the proposed changes and modify the use table for these acceptable uses.

Beekman Street Art District founder Amejo Amyot then commented that the current 50% draft does not say anything about the 15 year old arts district. Beekman Street has plenty of commercial space to house the creative economy if there was support from planning and zoning. Zoning could then support buildings with first floor art's retail – galleries, etc. – and second floor offices for arts related businesses such as graphic designers.

Richard Lockwood also spoke in favor of the Beekman's Street Art District. He stated that he and his wife, Cecilia Frittelli, have been owners of the Textile Studio at 143 Grand Ave. since 2001. It is a working studio and gallery not currently part of the arts district. He would like the zoning to include language supporting the Beekman Street Arts District and consideration of his parcel as part of this district.

Matt Jones asked questions regarding the UDO deliverable schedule. He wanted to understand the procedural process for the changes to the land use maps and if the changes were being completed by the consultant or if it would be a collaborative process. He also wanted to know if the expectation was still to complete the UDO by June 30th and if it was the expectation that the zoning map and use table would be updated by then.

Geoff Bornemann, Chair of the Housing and Urban Planning Committee, of Sustainable Saratoga, summarized Sustainable Saratoga's written comments. Sustainable Saratoga is pleased to see the "big" picture emerge but still noted that there were key sections missing. In the current draft, there were large changes proposed and he is concerned that a list needs to be kept during the process of the substantial changes. He also noted that there were additional opportunities to make Articles 2 and 4 more user friendly.

Discussion on UDO Draft Schematic Materials

Michael Allen opened the discussion. On May 19th, Behan Planning and Design delivered the 50% draft schematic of the UDO. New to the draft are Article 2, 4, and 9 as well as the appendix. The 50% draft only addresses a few of the TRAC comments to date. Behan hopes to address comments in the next draft.

Michael Allen then described that their intent in Article 2: Districts to create a separate page for each district to summarize their intent. With Article 4, they introduced Street Types, Frontage Types, and Façade Types. Article 4.1 Street Types defines the existing and desired street types curb to curb. 4.2 then lays out frontage types. Michael Allen stated that they were experimenting with the idea of breaking out the Right of Way (ROW) separately from frontage. This would allow the Planning Board to have more latitude to mix frontage and streets types when making recommendations to applicants. Behan is not "sold" on this approach but would like the City to consider this approach. He also explained that some of the graphics in the document are temporary.

Amy Durland stated that she has issues with the organization of the draft, especially regarding the subdivision section. She also recommends giving the subdivisions their own article and believes that separating them would be easier for applicants. In the form presented, they are difficult to navigate.

Michael Allen stated that subdivision are often intertwined

John Behan went on to explain that there are trade-offs to many of these types of decisions. He stated that the committee did need to decide which direction to go – they did not want to move the material twice.

Kate Maynard then spoke about staff recommendations on the subdivision regulations and how the material is laid out. In its presented draft form, it does reduce redundancies. As a web based document, the applicant could hopefully use intuitive, easy links to content within the document that will assist applicants navigate.

The committee then discussed design and procedural considerations and best methods to present them in the UDO. The committee was pleased with the consolidation of noticing.

Michael Allen stated that the appendix would contain technical information and standard details. Behan requested AutoCAD files of the street types and standard details. Michael Allen and John Behan then described the new street types proposed in the document with their rationale as well as changes to the existing language to existing street types. The committee asked what guidance Behan used to layout these street types.

Brad Birge noted the inconsistent approach within the document to ROW. Behan described that this was due to it was not decided if they would stick with the traditional or new frontage/street type approach. Vince DeLeonardis questioned the use of types of graphics and photographs in the document and the lack of consistency. In the final product, Behan stated that it would be consistent and the pencil sketches are placeholders at this time.

The committee then discussed 4.1.1 Complete Streets. Tina Carton questioned what the drivers are for some of the direction proposed in this section and what the process for the City to coordinate the proposed improvements. Kate Maynard then discussed issues that the Planning Board often finds when implementing street improvements. After citing examples of issues that have arisen in trying to implement incremental street improvements, she asked for guidance from the consultant on best methods used to overcome the issues raised. Brad Birge and others in the committee would like greater specificity and greater clarity on what is required of applicants in this section. The committee also discussed the lack of guidance on sidewalk connectivity for applications that are not subdivisions. This is one example of an issue raised in the Diagnostic Report that does not seem to be addressed in the 50% draft. Susan Steer asked if sidewalks could be triggered by building permits. Kate Maynard asked what the threshold could be to trigger this action.

Tamie then directed the committee to review Architectural Design 4.5.3 Height and Roof Design, 4.5.4 Facade Composition, 4.5.5 Windows, Doors and Façade Openings, 4.5.6 Entranceways, and 4.5.7 Colors. She asked if it should make reference that the applicants property or historical district that the applicant should go through design review process. She asked if these also applied to non-historical review properties. Michael Allen stated that these requirements of 4.5 were currently for Transect Zones and could be seen as recommended guidelines for other districts. The committee then discussed renaming this section to makes its intent clearer. Brad discussed 4.5.5.E. and the need for flexibility for commercial properties to have sliding doors. These are often used in restaurants and he does not believe that the City should discourage this use.

The committee then went back to discuss Article 2. Michael Allen described the creation of the new use tables. In the 50% draft, all uses reflect the current uses of each district. Behan has started to add new uses into the table but has not incorporated all new uses proposed. Brad Birge then questioned the changes and rationale of lowering the building heights in residential districts. Tina Carton also noted that accessory heights were added to the commercial districts but not the residential districts. Michael Allen clarified for Susan Steer that TRAC comments to date had not all been incorporated but were planned to be incorporated in the 75% draft.

The committee then discussed the Guiding Principles and the Design Consideration sections in Article 2. The committee was confused by the Design Considerations being posed as questions and recommended removing these from the document. The committee also questioned how the

guiding principles would be interpreted by applicants. Behan has selectively listed principles that are not inclusive of all district requirements. This may limit applicants in their interpretation and do not provide the nuances in different districts. If the principles are listed, it should list all and not be selective.

The committee then discussed the overhang note at the bottom of each of the district tables. The general consensus was to clarify the overhang setbacks in the definitions.

The consultant asked the committee if they could reconsider the more detailed guidance previously included in Article 6: Variances. Susan Steer stated that variance language is guided by state code and the proposed language is not vetted. The committee agreed not to reinstate the previously proposed language.

Brad Birge noted that the density bonuses for affordable housing had been removed for SR-2 and UR-1. The committee agreed that these should be reinstated into the UDO.

The committee then discussed the need for the consolidation of zoning districts. It was noted that in the 50% draft the consultant did not consolidate any districts. The committee recommended that the consultant should consider combining districts such as SR-1 and SR-2 as well as OMB-1 and OMB-2 since their differences do not warrant separate districts. The consultant would like to meet with staff to discuss both updating the zoning districts and zoning maps. It was noted that this should be a TRAC discussion and not merely a staff discussion.

Susan Barden noted that the overview of residential districts in 2.1 was new to the zoning ordinance. The committee requested that the consultant should consistently mark new text in green throughout the document. Susan Barden also noted that the overview of the residential districts could be more positively presented.

Brad Birge asked the committee to review page 2-60. He brought to the committee's attention that the City has been directed to consider the State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) Model Landmarks Preservation Local Law for New York State Municipalities. Brad Birge also questioned adding into the zoning ordinance the language from the City's historic preservation tri-fold. He recommended consolidating 2.4.2.G.18 and 2.4.2.G.19 into 2.4.2.G.8 Fenestration.

Brad Birge then noted that "official" be removed from references to the zoning map.

The committee then discussed 2.4.10 Country Overlay Area. Behan created this overlay based on language in the comprehensive plan. There are design aspects to implementing this new overlay that were not detailed in the comprehensive plan therefore it makes the implementation of the recommendation up to interpretation. Amy Durland suggested looking at the design standards in the conservation subdivision section as possible guidelines for the country overlay area. She asked if this might be feasible.

The committee then discussed 5.3: Subdivisions. Brad Birge described all of the new processes being proposed and asked for Behan's rationale for these additional steps. The committee agreed that the proposed process was not clear to them. The committee agreed that this section would benefit from a flow chart to assist applicants through the process. In addition, it was noted that 5.3.2.C is currently a one sentence paragraph.

The committee discussed in length administrative actions and their triggers as well as minor and major subdivisions. Brad Birge clarified that lot line adjustments are not subdivisions. Lot line adjustments should be broken out separately. The committee suggested removing the pre-application conference for major subdivisions.

The committee also discussed Conservation Subdivisions. The committee agreed that sketch plans are an important part of the process.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bradley Birge opened the second public comment period at 5:55 p.m.

No public comment.

FUTURE MEETING

The TRAC committee will be holding two meetings in June – June 13th and June 27th at 3 p.m.

Committee meetings are posted to the UDO website and the City of Saratoga Springs website.

ADJOURNMENT:

The next TRAC meeting will be held on June 13th at 3 p.m. Tina Carton will be securing the venue and will post to the City website.