

MINUTES - Zoning Commission Meeting, 3/27/13, 5:00 PM, Literacy Volunteers' Office

This is a workshop, continuing the discussions begun 3/13, defining the “downtown commercial zone”.

Committee members

present: Evelyn Celotti, Kelly Ann King, Sandra Lovell, John Viestenz  
absent: Jeff Kelly

Others present: (none)

Follow-up on last meeting's action items:

Does the Village Office have a copy of the Elizabethtown Zoning?

Staley located a copy of “Land Use Local Law and Regulations” for Elizabethtown, and Jeff obtained a copy of “Land Use Law of the Town of Westport”. Both were given to Kelly Ann; anyone else is also welcome to borrow them or use them for reference. (These will be kept by one of the ZC members, as it was felt to be inappropriate to leave materials at the Literacy Volunteers Office, due to lack of space).

Tonight's Discussion:

Exact boundaries for downtown commercial zone;

Should there be more than just one “commercial zone”? Is it appropriate to have separate zones for “Commercial - Retail and Professional” and “Commercial – Industrial” and “Commercial - some other designation”?

For example: prohibiting certain “commercial” activity within certain blocks, but allowing or even encouraging such activities in other commercial areas. (Mac's not being converted to a car repair shop; large dry cleaners and oil distributors restricted to outer edges).

Discussion points:

Limit future “Industrial” activities to the edges of the downtown. Noise, fumes, lack of retail activities could be defining characteristics. For example, both Griffith's and the Laundry are “delivery” based, rather than “through-the-door, over-the-counter” retail.

Keep the downtown blocks “Retail”

What is most appropriate for the Dock Lane area? What should be restricted?

Emphasis on “Marina”, “Hospitality”, “Lodging”, “Sports/Recreation”, but recognize that there is existing “Industrial” (Griffith Oil).

Not appropriate: Residential

Is commercial development on both sides of Main Street appropriate for the entire length of Convent Hill, or only for portions of the area between Frank's and the Dollar Store?

If zoned “Commercial” does this hurt existing residential property? Should existing residents be protected from commercial development next-door; or does it enhance property value to be able to convert residential to commercial?

- > What do the residents of this area think ?
  - Survey? Letters?
  - Invite them to a meeting?
  - Interview ?

Action item: Sandra will draft letter(s) for possible invitations of selected members of the public, or selected owners within specific areas, for interviews or testimony, on either specific topics or on zoning in general, for the Zoning Commission's input, prior to “open house” meetings for public testimony.

General agreement, before hearing any residents of the Convent Hill area, is to allow mixed Residential and Retail.

A general discussion of “grandfathered” properties and “owner-occupied commercial” properties generated agreement that properties (such as the barber shop, or the funeral home) where the owner lives in the same building that is also used for a retail or commercial service, could convert to a residential (only) use even if located in a Commercial zone that prohibits new residential development.

A listing of “allowed” and “not allowed”, within any zone, was started.

ENCOURAGED or ALLOWED

NOT ALLOWED

IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

“Lodging”, such as B&Bs, within residential areas IF the lot size is sufficient, and the parking sufficient for the tenants.

Casino, night club, entertainment.

Industrial activities (noise, fumes, volume of truck traffic).

Need limitations on noise, fumes, lighting (how bright? all night?)

“Home-based business” as long as hours are limited to normal daytime or early evening, parking is sufficient, there are no (or limited) truck deliveries or shipments.

“Trailers” remaining on wheels. (Mobile homes require permanent foundation, skirting, and landscaping.

[ what is appropriate, and in-appropriate, fencing? No “security” fencing in Residential areas? Limits to “temporary” fencing? ]

ENCOURAGED or ALLOWED

NOT ALLOWED

IN COMMERCIAL – RETAIL AREAS

All retail activities.

Encourage 2<sup>nd</sup> hand shops,  
book store, clothing,  
and (of course !) hardware.

Professional offices and services

Existing residential remains residential,  
or can be converted to commercial.

Same building can be a mix of  
residential and commercial.

Existing ground-floor commercial space  
cannot be converted to residential (except  
if residential portion is occupied by the  
owner).

Businesses that are defined as  
“Industrial”  
[ definitions to be developed ].

Schedule next meeting:      Wednesday, April 17, 5:00 PM, Literacy Volunteer's Office

(This is one week later than originally planned or listed in the Agenda for tonight).