



Town of Hampden
Planning and Development Committee
Wednesday October 19, 2016, 6:00 pm
Municipal Building Council Chambers
Minutes

Attending:

Committee/Council

Ivan McPike-Chair
David Ryder, Mayor
Terry McAvoy
Mark Cormier
Dennis Marble
Stephen Wilde

Staff

Angus Jennings, Town Manager
Karen Cullen, Town Planner
Myles Block, Code Enforcement Officer

Public

none

Chairman McPike called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Approval of September 21, 2016 Minutes – Motion to approve as presented made by Councilor Wilde with second by Councilor Marble; carried 6/0/0.
2. Committee Applications: None.
3. Updates:
 - A. Status of MRC/Fiberight
Town Manager Jennings and Planner Cullen gave an update on the project, primary points included:
 - Town has recently received revised plans for the road and sewer which are being reviewed by our engineers, there are a number of changes to the plans from those previously submitted;
 - Expect work to begin very soon on the first phase of road construction, which is to build one lane of the road to sub-base gravel;
 - Preconstruction meeting was held last week and went well;
 - MRC is holding a groundbreaking ceremony on Wed Oct 26 at 9:30 am at the road entrance at Coldbrook Road.

Aside: Sargent is getting started on the east road (East Carey Drive); the bond reduction for Carey Circle is being processed shortly and they will be putting up a bond for East Carey Drive.

4. Old Business:

- A. Business Park TIF: Planner Cullen handed out a map of the business park with the parcels noted as to whether they are designated in the 2014 Development Agreement as to be included in the TIF (light purple), were not specified as being included in the TIF (dark purple; the “excluded parcels”), or were already developed and thus not to be included in the TIF (blue). Policy question for P&D – should the TIF district include the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels as well as the “included” parcels? A discussion took place with the main points:
- To be competitive in marketing the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels, Epstein would like them to be included in the TIF.
 - Staff understands that inclusion of a property in the TIF district does not obligate the town to enter into a credit enhancement agreement (CEA) on that parcel, it provides the option to do so.
 - If the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels are included in the TIF district and the town enters a CEA, that would give those parcels a strong competitive advantage relative to the other parcels – internal competition among the business park parcels.
 - Want to incentivize business in town to get more businesses in, that would then benefit taxpayers. It’s important how the marketing is managed; sequencing of parcel sales.
 - If the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels are included in the TIF district, they will probably sell first.
 - As it stands now, no purchaser of any lot in the park will get any tax benefit, only Sargent will (to offset their up front investment in the infrastructure per the Development Agreement). Furthermore, the building has to be valued at \$500,000 or more for 50% of the taxes to go to Sargent, and if it hits that threshold then the entire value of the building is counted.
 - The current arrangement per the Development Agreement makes it very difficult for us to offer an incentive to purchasers of the “included” (light purple) parcels for a period of ten years, putting Hampden at a competitive disadvantage to other towns.
 - Sargent has indicated they don’t mind if we include the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels in the TIF.
 - Consensus – include the “excluded” (dark purple) parcels in the TIF District. No decision to be made tonight; these parcels can be removed later if need be.
 - Aside: covenants are in place and are thought to be restrictive to development; buffer along Route 202 is thought to be unattractive.
 - Land use question: restaurants are allowed per zoning; what are your thoughts about marketing specifically for restaurants. Is that part of the vision for the park? Would it have the potential for competition with town center?

- Staff is working on a list of eligible uses for the TIF funds.
- Timeframe: to DECD by end of Feb; our goal is to get the whole TIF to P&D Dec 7 or 21 for referral to TC.

5. New Business: None.

6. Zoning Considerations/Discussion:

A. Format of Use listings in zoning ordinance – Planner Cullen led a discussion of the use listings in the ordinance; currently set up as paragraph format by district, conversion to table format allows reader (property owners, town officials and staff) to more readily and easily understand what is allowed where. Karen drafted a use table for Hampden using all of the existing districts and the current uses (by right, with site plan approval, and by conditional use) and presented it for discussion to the Committee. She and Town Manager Jennings pointed out a number of issues that were uncovered by putting the uses into table form, including inconsistencies between uses, districts, and in at least one case state law. Karen also noted there are 26 footnotes which are qualifiers to some of the uses in some of the districts. This is a work in progress but staff would like direction on whether to continue work on this or if Council prefers the existing paragraph format. Consensus of the Committee is to keep working on this, the table format is better than the paragraph format.

B. Ballot Question 1, retail marijuana – Planner Cullen said that in the event question 1 passes on Nov 8th, staff needs to be prepared with the direction Council would like to go with the whole retail marijuana issue. While the Town cannot regulate the use of marijuana (if Question 1 passes statewide), we do have the option to either prohibit or regulate (or neither) any or all of the five retail marijuana categories included in the Act: stores, social clubs, cultivation facilities, product manufacturing, or testing facilities. It was noted the Act provides a 9 month period for the state to adopt rules, and we understand the Town can rightfully reject any applications for any retail marijuana establishments during that time; this gives us time to draft and adopt local regulations or a moratorium in the event that becomes necessary. After the election we'll know how Hampden voters feel about it, which might inform Council's decision. After discussion it was the consensus of the Committee that if question 1 passes, staff should be prepared to proceed with regulating retail marijuana businesses.

Planner Cullen also noted the town has the option to issue local licenses for such establishments; CEO Myles Block said an argument in favor of licensing is the benefit of having an annual inspection requirement.

7. Citizens Initiatives: None.

8. Public Comments: None.

9. Committee Member Comments: None.

10. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn at 7:06 by Councilor Marble; seconded by Mayor Ryder, carried 6/0/0.

*Respectfully submitted by
Karen Cullen, Town Planner*