

A meeting of the Town of Moreau Planning Board was held on October 16, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town of Moreau Office Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York.

Present:

Ron Zimmerman	Chair
Jerry Bouchard	Planning Board Member
Reed Antis	Planning Board Member
Erik Bergman	Planning Board Member
John Arnold	Planning Board Member
Mike Shaver	Planning Board Member
Peter Jensen	Planning Board Member

Also present: Jim Martin, Zoning Administrator; Tricia Andrews, Recording Secretary

Planning Board Members absent: None

The following Notice of Public Hearing was posted in the Post Star Newspaper on October 5, 2017:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Public Hearing before the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals for the Town of Moreau will be conducted at 7:00pm at the Town Hall, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York 12828 on Monday, the 16th day of October, 2017 to accept comments on the draft copy of the 2017 Town of Moreau Comprehensive Plan.

The Public Hearing opened at 7:05pm.

Mr. Martin repeated his review of the process as at the beginning of the joint Planning and Zoning meeting. Additionally he explained who the Board members are and why they are tasked with advising him- because they deal most closely with the provisions of the plan.

Mr. Jensen commented for the benefit of the public that adoption of the Plan is up to the Town Board and they don't have to accept any of the recommendations made by this Board. Mr. Martin added that all three Boards have been included throughout the process of writing the plan.

Mike Linehan, candidate running for Town Supervisor, commented that he would be reviewing the plan closely.

Vince Sporrer, 163 Fort Edward Road, is concerned about the Route 9 to interstate traffic. How is that addressed in the plan? Mr. Martin said that it was brought up because it needs more thought, and the transportation section will be beefed up. Mr. Sporrer pointed out that it's currently like a funnel. Infill for residential areas will increase traffic density as well. Mr. Sporrer asked if he is trying to pick out every plot in that zone. Mr. Martin said the goal is to grow intelligently and try to have a pattern, avoid gaps and get infill before growing outwards. Mr. Sporrer gave an example and Mr. Martin said that it's not as

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specific as that, and Mr. Sporrer expressed he doesn't like the rapid growth. He asked whether it meant that there would be an increase in density. Mr. Arnold said that Mr. Schermerhorn's project is infill, but that's not what the term means. It just means having it closer to town. Mr. Arnold explained that Zoning will still be applied to limit apartment buildings. Mr. Arnold argues that it doesn't mean increased density but Mr. Bouchard pointed out a place on page 55 where it does say higher density. Mr. Arnold thinks it means do things in the middle of town before breaking into the Ag district. Mr. Sporrer asked whether lot sizes, etc will be redefined by the changes to Zoning and the Board agreed it's possible. Mr. Martin said the wording can be strengthened if necessary. In Mr. Martin's personal opinion, Moreau has its fair share of multi-family housing and doesn't need to add more. Mr. Sporrer reiterated that he doesn't like the buildup of apartments in the Town. Mr. Jensen said that will be addressed more in the Zoning phase and Mr. Martin said he could strengthen this document on that point. Mr. Zimmerman asked him to go ahead and do that, and that debate should be had on whether apartments are a good thing or a bad thing. Mr. Martin explained to Mr. Sporrer that the Town can decide that they have enough of any number of types of housing in that plan.

Mr. Endal suggested that Mr. Martin further define the meaning of infill.

Mr. Bouchard asked about the 'limit sprawl and dispersed neighborhoods... encourage density' language and what did Mr. Martin mean? Mr. Zimmerman thought that it was cluster vs. traditional subdivision. Mr. Arnold reads that the infill is for places already designed for 1.5 acre lots and not making smaller lots. Mr. Martin wanted to protect agricultural areas and prevent sprawl, and provide for moderately priced single family dwellings. There is high demand for affordable single family homes.

Mr. Bouchard said that if it were intended just to encourage Boards like ZBA to interpret the codes to allow non-conforming lots to be built upon, it was good.

Mr. Harry Gutheil expressed the same concerns about density and the comments on the bottom of page 52 as well. PUD has increased density above what is designed for, and we should be careful about increasing density and please clarify. Mr. Gutheil asked whether there was work done on the plan since hearings in 2016 and that the public may have stronger feelings than they did then.

Mixed uses on p. 1. It says no mixed use buildings and he doesn't support apartment buildings in Commercial districts. Historically they have been declined. If a Commercial and Industrial base is desired, don't mix apartments into commercial land. Regarding Village concepts with Commercial space on the bottom floor of apartments, he has seen the bottom levels stay mostly empty and believes it's a ploy to get apartments into that space. He has concerns that those projects may not be kept up well in the future. He wants more information on what public input has been included.

Mr. Martin told him that the opportunity has been open at every Planning and Zoning Board meeting, but this is the first time the public has been specifically invited to review and comment. Mr. Gutheil finds the maps, etc difficult to read, especially in black and white. He saw four water districts mentioned in one place and six in another. The land use charts he thinks might be out of date. He would like to see an Ag district map. Mr. Martin said they are color reliant maps so they are hard to see on the black and white copies.

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289 Burt Road, Bruce Flayer. Population projections are all retirement age brackets. The plan doesn't discuss an aging population. Old people want to sell out their agricultural land because younger generations don't want to farm. How will you make the town more accessible for old people, and if you plan things that try to bring in younger people, what are you going to do about the schools? The plan talks about sewers in the corridor, if they go in now and then the Town wants to widen the roads, what happens? With a larger road surface drainage becomes a concern, can roads really be widened without limitations because of all the existing light poles that have to be moved, etc. Why bring in retail at Exit 17 when it exists at 15 and 19, and is traffic jammed there even though the roads are already wider, and also they are sitting empty and become a tax burden when the developer walks away.

Mr. Martin replied that the traffic improvement section would need to be strengthened. Mr. Arnold addressed the idea that sewers have been considered essential but actually, many businesses have successfully maintained in the Route 9 corridor without the sewers, and he often thanks them when he is there. He sees people come from a distance for some of those unique stores such as Safety Warehouse.

Mr. Flayer: You can have commercial development that doesn't rely heavily on sewers, which disrupts the entire corridor.

Mr. Linehan: Is there concern about the water table rising? Many people want sewers because their septic tanks are getting old. Per the mixed use buildings, that's how Glen St was built up in the past. Are mom and pop shops really more reliable for tax revenue?

Page 62, Mr. Arnold asked about the analysis, are those segments an indication of how the zones will be drawn? Mr. Martin said no, they are not.

Virginia Livsey, 289 Saratoga Road. Has anyone asked whether the schools are able to add capacity if you add affordable housing? Regarding retail on Route 9, there was excitement for Cabela's once, and they went out of business so if that had been allowed, it would be sitting empty now. There seems to be a division between northern Moreau and southern Moreau, and the north is getting really crowded and it is a quality of life issue when houses are shoehorned in. This is worded that the Board could change the Zoning.

Mr. Arnold replied about the schools that they consistently research and project, and that it is included in the Plan with data from Cornell, it is projected to stay about the same. Mr. Zimmerman reiterated that it has been done, and that study can be included or referenced more specifically in this plan.

Mr. Arnold pointed out that school structure had changed. Class sizes are smaller. Educational philosophy has changed.

Mr. Gutheil had a question about the PAC acronym that had already been mentioned. He asked about the blank page for public comment: will be filled with the comments from this meeting. On p. 22, he feels the task force 1 month schedule is aggressive in government. On Item 3, sub-section 3., p. 23 it says the Town and Village jointly manage the beach- he thinks the Village leases it to the Town but does not help manage it. On p. 34 regarding density, in the last paragraph, don't let it be read as residential density because mixed use was just discussed. Density in commercial is fine with him. On p. 36, about home based business- water and sewer- it should be noted that there is already water on Route 9.

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Mr. Arnold pointed out that higher density commercial growth could mean that buildings get higher. Mr. Martin said it refers to growth that pays taxes, and that accommodating individual septic systems wastes space, because they don't allow closer development. A hotel or something could never come in efficiently. Mr. Arnold pointed out that we do have good soil for septic systems. It can be done, but it takes up space. Green space requirements could be used for that, with leach fields under them. In the section about the Fire Co., it reads as though it is supported only by the Town, but the Village also supports it.

Regarding use on the Tee-bird golf course, Mr. Arnold said it was Recreation and Entertainment. Mr. Gutheil wondered if it had ever been in the AG district, but it had not. It was R-3 and a project was proposed there once. The Galusha property at the end of Feeder Dam extension has a change ongoing so that might need to be relabeled.

On page 60- Mr. Antis pointed out that the Town has lost the State Trooper barracks and the Sheriff's station, Moreau is the 5th highest population town in the County and we lack major coverage by police. There's been a significant drop in traffic tickets since those left town, we lack speed patrol. He asked that be addressed.

Mr. Antis asked the public: what are they wishing were available in Town that is missing? He doesn't feel that's been addressed. We need something that will draw people to the Town. Should we capitalize on Recreation? What's our niche? Mr. Zimmerman pointed out this was addressed in the Economic Development section.

Mr. Arnold agreed that retail is dying and experiential is what's growing, so Moreau is well placed to offer people an experience. Hudson River Access, the State Park, Moreau Rec. Those are the current trends that the Town could take advantage of. This section could be strengthened.

Mr. Sporrer encouraged the Plan to think about how the Town should look in 20 years. He doesn't want to just thicken the residential areas. He doesn't want money spent to encourage people to walk along the river, they should just go walk. Making everything accessible isn't feasible.

Mr. Arnold demonstrated that there are future goals in the plan, and now more has been added at this hearing. There is more to this Plan. This is the first hearing. Even once this passes, the Zoning changes will also have public comment periods.

Mr. Sporrer wants to know how many others in Town stand opposed to growth as he does. Mr. Arnold expressed that he would also like to see many more people at this meeting, so that they can know that. The input that has been received has been incorporated. Mr. Martin felt that opinion is in the majority.

Mr. Bouchard said that he thinks the current state of Zoning allows people to do too much, and the revisions will protect the Town. He is prepared not to like everything in the final Plan.

Mr. Linehan told a story about people moving north after 9-11 and paying view taxes. Watch what happens with taxes.

Mrs. Livsey said regarding Moreau Lake State Park: If you want to develop in that area up to the entrance, protect that country feeling near the entrance to the park, or people won't feel campy there and will go further north. Mr. Arnold pointed out that the potential is limited because Moreau State Park owns all

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that land. It's only about 4 lots there that anything could be done on. The Park owns the other side of the road and they have a long term plan to develop it.

Mr. Gutheil asked if there were a way to capitalize on Grant's Cottage and Mr. Arnold added Mt. McGregor to that wish list. He thought maybe a picture of Grant's Cottage could be on the front of the plan instead of the sanatorium.

Mr. Sporrer on p. 45 Education the Plan says that young adults are increasing and schools are expanding, but you read numbers that they are reduced. Page 19 says the population is decreasing in that age bracket so these don't add up.

Mr. Arnold said that a current capital improvement project is increasing space in the schools, and yet 5 years ago they thought about closing Moreau down. These things are changing all the time. He also pointed out that the meeting that happened earlier was the first time the two groups had discussed the plan together in draft form, and that people are welcome to continue to email, call and otherwise add their input and invite their neighbors to future meetings.

Mr. Antis wondered if the Town needs a commission to oversee preservation of historic buildings so they are not mishandled, for buildings on the historic register.

Mr. Arnold wanted to point out that Route 9 goes south of Exit 17, too. In the last effort, they were careful to maintain a hamlet commercial area at Blanchard Road, Old West Road, and there is potential down there that should not be ignored. It is building up as Residential, but there are some existing Commercial areas and an industrial park. Cranesville might become Industrial or Commercial when they are done mining. Mr. Martin mentioned the grain hub.

The public hearing closed at 8:31pm.

Mr. Jensen said he would like to see a revised draft before it was sent to the Town Board, and Mr. Martin said he would send a 'track changes' version to the Board so they could see what he had done.

A Resolution regarding this will be on the agenda for the November meeting.