

A workshop of the Town Board of the Town of Moreau was held on February 2, 2016 in the Town of Moreau Municipal Building, 351 Reynolds Road, Moreau, New York for the purpose of discussing Planning and Zoning guidelines.

The supervisor called the workshop to order at 6:30 p.m.

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Bob Prendergast | Councilman |
| Alan Van Tassel | Councilman |
| Todd Kusnierz | Councilman [arrived at 7:10pm] |
| Gardner Congdon | Supervisor |

TOWN BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Gina LeClair Councilwoman

Also present: Diane M. Foster, Deputy Town Clerk; Ben Marcantonio, Assistant Building Inspector; Planning Board Members: John Arnold, Ronald Zimmerman, Linda Riggi, Reed Antis, Dave Paska; Zoning Board Members: Kevin Elms, John England, Richard Kubis, Scott Fitzsimmons; Town Residents: Bruce Flayer, Virginia Livsey, Charlie Granger, Jim Aiken, Chris Music, Rich Morris, Brian McKenzie; Village Planning Board Member, Dave Linehan and Post Star Reporter Kathleen Moore.

Supervisor Congdon welcomed everyone to the meeting. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to talk about possible revamping of the Zoning Board codes and laws. Input is needed from everyone and communication is the key. There is a meeting with the LA Group later this month that he would like the board to be ready for. We have a unique town and we need to protect what we have with laws that reflect our ideas for the community and the future. Supervisor Congdon asked everyone to introduce themselves and discuss what they would like or think the town needs.

Councilman Van Tassel would like to see more communication between the Planning, Zoning and Town Boards. Improved communication so they all have the same goals. Some of the Zoning Board ordinances seem to be outdated and need to be revised.

Chris Music supports Supervisor Congdon and Councilman Van Tassel and would like to learn more.

Jim Aiken talked about the Chazen group and the LA Group and the Comprehensive Plan and the Farmland Protection Plan. His question was are we going to fix some zoning codes or rewrite the Comprehensive Plan. Supervisor Congdon commented on how there are some things that could be amended after a public discussion.

There was discussion regarding the LA group and fixing the code book to meet new standards and the Comprehensive plan and the Master Plan. The code book should reflect the needs of the people. Right now there is no clarity to the code book.

Bruce Flayer is concerned about businesses in residential areas. There seems to be a discrepancy about what business' are allowed and what are not and how some people are working out of their homes. They also mentioned how some websites need to be updated more frequently with agendas and minutes.

There was discussion pertaining to the National Grid project, the crane mats, logging and roadways.

Councilman Prendergast mentioned about people questioning businesses in residential areas. His feeling is that there is a fine line there where some neighbors will agree and some will not. It could be a challenge as to what is acceptable.

Virginia Livsey is concerned about the logging that might be going on for a couple years and the time that they start. She understands about business in a residential area but what about noise ordinances. Something to consider is how disruptive is it. There was discussion about the difference of logging and industrial logging.

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Linda Riggi mentioned some problems with the manufacturing zone and that they are not where they should be. They are not adequate. There is not clarity as to what is allowed and not allowed along the Route 9 corridor. The parking requirements are excessive. Linda would like it to be easier for business' that wish to come to town without jumping through hoops.

Reed Antis mentioned that there are terms and definitions that are missing in the zoning book. Revising and reworking the terms so that things are clearer. Maybe review each zone and rename the districts. There seem to be some missing pages. Supervisor Congdon mentioned that there is a need to correct the zoning language. When meeting with the LA Group we need to be specific and make our mind up about what we are going to do to fix the problems.

There was discussion as to where the comprehensive plan book is and when it was adopted.

Dave Linehan commented on the need for growth in the town. Without growth you cannot fix the problems. The comprehensive plan should be updated every 5 to 10 years. The plan should be consistent. Citizens of the town should be involved with the plan. Definitions are important. Website needs some updating.

Ben Marcantonio commented on what a good idea this is. Ideas and needs of the public are terrific input towards changes in the zoning and planning laws. From an Assistant Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer standpoint, it needs to be more black and white. More of "the law is the law". Zoning map needs to be improved. Some parcels are in two different zones. There needs to be more parcel consistency.

Councilman Prendergast wanted to thank the Planning and Zoning members for being on those boards. He believes that they have not supplied the right tools to make their jobs easier. This a good idea and should have been done before now. Would like to hear from the public so some changes can be made, some obvious and not so obvious. Input is critical and would like to see something in writing.

Scott Fitzgibbons talked about a couple of instances where the zoning codes need to be changed. There was discussion about this between a few people.

Councilman Kusnierz thanked everyone for coming. The most important thing the Town board can do is to look at the code and the public comments so that we can be more direct and clear with the Town Board's intention so that it makes the other board's actions easier. Tonight's focus should be to have a discussion as to "Where do we want to go as a community", what problems need to be addressed. To move forward we need to make changes to our code.

There was discussion between Supervisor Congdon and Councilman Prendergast about a gas tank situation that we should get the attorney's input.

Supervisor Congdon suggested making a list of all home occupations in the town. That way it would give the planning board the opportunity to weigh out every situation.

There was discussion about the exit 17 corridor. We should enlarge on the types of business that say to people this is a nice community and a place you want to move too and a gateway to gorgeous mountains.

There was a comment about how do you make a land owner friendly even though when they bought the land it was zoned one way and now it is another. That there should be a uniform policy. Councilman Kusnierz replied that they do face that challenge. One example was the chicken law. The expectation of the owners and neighbors and if someone is in violation of the existing code. There needs to be a balance. That is the role of the governing body to make the decisions.

Rich Morris commented on how the town should deal with the "cottage industries". There needs to be some definition about the laws. There are a lot of people now a days that work out of their homes. There was discussion between a few people.

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Ron Zimmerman is in agreement that there needs to be more clarity on the Planning Board side. Need to look at the comprehensive plan. What do we want to do going forward. In thirteen years there has not been a meeting like this. There is a need to take a fresh look at maybe redistricting. There is a need to not just be up to date as in 2016 but be visionary and have a good foundation for the future.

There was a lot of discussion pertaining to agriculture in the commercial district and the need for retail to be included in the code.

Kevin Elms commented that there is a need to clean up the zoning lines. There are areas that need changes. Cottage industry businesses are a big thing right now. If we are going to be a progressive town, then changes need to be made. Communication is the key. We need to get more business on the route 9 corridor. We need to look at other areas and see if they can be commercial. The zones can be changed to increase commercial.

John Arnold suggested the need for a “template”. A template will solve all the problems, but will make it easier on the applicant at times. That way everyone will know what is expected. An applicant should know everything that needs to be done and to turn in the proper things that the board needs. The cost should also not be cumbersome to the applicant.

John England commented that a lot of the things he would like to see changed have already been mentioned. There is a need for definitions of black and white issues in the zoning laws. Having no more gray areas. Enforcement is another area that need to be looked at. Thought that this workshop was a very good idea and should be done at least four times a year.

There was discussion as to the clarity of the comprehensive plan and when it was adopted. It was mentioned that it should be in the Building Inspector’s office, Supervisor’s office and the Town Clerk’s office. It was also mentioned that everyone should be able to see it.

Supervisor Congdon asked for everyone’s thoughts and comments written down and sent to his office before the next board meeting so that the board can act on this before the meeting with the L.A. Group on February 26th. We need input from the town and not outside to come up with a product that will work and not cost too much.

There was discussion about the comprehensive plan, master plan and the farmland committee.

The workshop was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Foster
Deputy Town Clerk

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