

Zoning Discussion Notes
May 26, 2016

Present:

Jim Lanning
Howard Brodsky
Mark J. Tucker
Scott Molnar
Denise Rhoads
Karen Barkdull

Howard Brodsky and Joel Russell have been communicating regarding the proposed revisions to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the existing Zoning Code. They have developed a three part strategy:

- 1) Joel Russell will work on the comprehensive plan text and write up his detailed thoughts on any suggested modifications;
- 2) Concurrently, Howard Brodsky will be preparing the analysis review of the zoning text, map and related case actions. He would create a list of issues that are revealed through the analysis. Areas of concern with the existing zoning code will be gleaned and a final list provided to Howard from the Planning Board and ZBA.
- 3) Potential joint presentation of the new issues and big issues that have not yet been defined. A new issue, as an example, is solar arrays.

Both Boards will put together their list of issues with the existing zoning code. The goal is to resolve the lawsuit related to the comprehensive plan, starting the process of comprehensive zoning revision and complete the work on selected zoning issues this year. Recommended is to take the high points of the comprehensive plan as the priority for zoning revisions, if the plan is recommending specific zoning changes then those changes to the code are implemented first. The litigants had expressed their concern that the comprehensive plan was vague and they wanted to see the coming code changes finalized so there is better clarity on the comprehensive plan direction. Then the town can continue with any other codes changes that need to be addressed. It is unclear how Joel will be presenting his findings and if he would be directing focus to specific areas of zoning code to be addressed.

Howard stated that his portion of the work is more of a systematic approach to the existing zoning code. An additional recommendation was for the Town to have a long term approach of constantly updating the zoning and have a systematic approach to it

Joel will be submitting a proposal next week and Howard has prepared a draft proposal for his portion of the project. Joel and Howard would be doing their initial work in solitude and then submit a draft to the Town that would then be subject to public review. Public input would be as part of the Town review, public hearing, and adoption portion of the process.

Most of the work will be driven by the timing of the court and can be adjusted by an agreement of the parties so long as the plaintiffs realize that the town is working in good faith to roll out

zoning with changes to the comprehensive plan. The court will keep our feet to the fire, and that in itself will compel us to look at the critical comments only instead of the full systematic review.

The urgency is to undertake the comprehensive plan and zoning modifications and that will determine the most important pieces. Joel would suggest zoning text changes that would be required as a result from the draft modification to the comprehensive plan. We could include any legislation of other areas of the code that needs revision at the same time, if possible, and continue with other corrections to the code as they become known through Howard's analysis and Board input.

Howard and Joel will determine what the critical areas of the code that need to be modified as a result of the comprehensive plan, and submit for Town Board approval. Those areas would be addressed first to resolve the litigation. It is not uncommon for more than one consultant to work on a project together with one of the consultants being a local consultant, and Joel had worked with another individual with the development of the 1996 comprehensive plan and zoning code. Howard will be our local contact for information submittal.

Any drafted changes to the zoning code and comprehensive plan will be subject to boards and the public input for modification. Recommended is a joint Village and Town Planning Board session, open to the public, to discuss proposed changes.

Joel and Howard will be submitting their proposed scope of work to the Town Board for next week's Town Board meeting. Howard offered his willingness to have a round table meeting with the Town Board for discussion regarding the zoning review process.

Solar Farms/Solar Energy Production Facilities:

There has been recent inquiries regarding solar farms in the Town of Skaneateles. A moratorium for solar farms is recommended until zoning code can be drafted and adopted. There are different types of large scale systems to be addressed, the cooperative system for a neighborhood community of 10-20 dwellings, a cooperative where the participants are more like stock holders and are otherwise unrelated to each other and could be from different communities, and the large scale systems for commercial sale of production. Scott will reach out to Brody regarding the moratorium language.