

Town of Chelmsford
Center Village Master Plan Implementation Committee
50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, MA 01824
In-Person and Zoom Meeting
MINUTES
February 17, 2022

Attending: Janet Askenburg (Vice-Chair), Nancy Araway, Brian Milisci

Not Present: Mike Rigney (Chair), Jack Handley

Others Present: Lisa Marrone (Director of Business Development)

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. This meeting was hand recorded by the vice-chair.

This meeting was called to order at 6:03PM by the Vice-Chair.

1. Discussion of proposed Planning Board modification of VCOD

N. Araway presented a draft document for discussion. The document reflects two proposed changes. N. Araway said the first change applies only to frontage zones and eliminates the ability to what is being proposed at 9 Acton Road. N. Araway said the second change is to remove the clause that allows the Planning Board to accept anything they feel like accepting, as well as strips from the Planning Board the opportunity to say no to a development. She said this clause has caused the Planning Board a lot of consternation. She is not certain if the other Planning Board members agree to these proposed changes.

B. Milisci said he wasn't sure if there was a compromise to the 40-foot clause or if clarification is needed to ensure a developer can't exclude the frontage zone and only put in residential. N. Araway said there may be a way to tweak the language. J. Askenburg expressed concern that there has been no public input on this matter and there has been no input from the Planning Board.

J. Askenburg said she will ask the Chair to put this topic on the next agenda for public input and further discussion. N. Araway expressed concern that continuing the discussion to the next meeting will cause this matter to miss the deadline for inclusion in the articles for Spring Town Meeting.

Motion: by N. Araway that this discussion is continued at the next planned CVMPIC meeting, B. Milisci seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2022 at 6:00PM.

Adjournment

Motion: by N. Araway to adjourn the meeting at 6:25PM. Seconded by Mr. Milisci. Motion passed 3-0.

This page intentionally left blank, to be replaced by a short letter of request from the Center Village Master Plan Committee to the Planning Board, requesting that they sponsor the attached zoning modification article at Spring Town Meeting.

To include the vote of the committee, and signed by the Chair

Attachment A

Article xx -Modification of Zoning Bylaw Article XXII Village Center Overlay District (VCOD)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 195 of the Town Code, regarding Village Center Overlay District, as follows:

- Remove exception for ground floor residential units in SS 195-124 Uses and performance standards for locations with ground floor limitations (properties located directly on state numbered roads), and
- Eliminate Alternate Compliance from SS 195-130,

As shown in the strike out text below.

This request is being made because these two clauses have proved to be ineffective to promote the type of development that meets the goals of the VCOD to develop and sustain a robust walkable commercial area in Center Village. They have, instead, provided an open door to developers to replace existing commercial areas with wholly residential developments.

SS 195-124 Uses and performance standards.

E.

Frontage zones and ground floor limitations. The VCOD map includes frontage zones which are the contiguous land area along the primary public streets within the underlying CV district. Buildings fronting and oriented toward these streets are targeted for commercial and mixed commercial/residential use. These properties shall have a ground floor limitation (See diagram below.) allowing only commercial uses permitted by right or special permit to occupy the ground floor area. Residential uses shall not occupy the ground floor of a building ~~in the portion of said building within the first 40 feet of lot depth measured from the public street right of way.~~ Residential and other uses allowed in the underlying zoning district may be located in the upper floors within the frontage zone ~~and at ground level at more than 40 feet in lot depth and outside the frontage zone.~~ Street entrances may be allowed to residential uses above the ground floor within the frontage zone or at the side or rear of the building beyond the frontage zone.

SS 195-130 Application and development review procedures

A.

General requirements. The application and development review requirements of Article ~~XXI~~, Community Enhancement and Investment Overlay District (CEIOD), § ~~195-119~~, shall apply to the VCOD.

B.

~~Alternative compliance. In order to encourage creativity, diversity, and best practices for public and private design and development in the VCOD, the Planning Board may waive, modify or vary standards for building and lot types, parking, landscaping, and open and civic space types as set forth in this bylaw. The granting of any alternative compliance waiver shall be based upon a finding by the Planning Board that the proposed alternative will be generally consistent with the purpose and intent statements in~~

~~§ 195-121~~ of this bylaw, as well as the general and supplemental special permit criteria in ~~§ 195-131~~ below.