

**Village of Lansing
Planning Board Meeting
January 11, 2010**

1 The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Chairman
2 Ned Hickey. Present at the meeting were Planning Board Members Maria Stycos, Phil Dankert,
3 Richard Durst and Mario Tomei; Alternate Planning Board Member Lisa Schleelein; Village Attorney
4 David Dubow; Code Enforcement Officer Ben Curtis; Code Enforcement Officer in Training Marty
5 Moseley; Trustee Liaison Lynn Leopold; Jim Bold from Triax Management Group; and Marjorie
6 Pryse observing for the Community Party.
7

8 **Public Comment:**

9 Hickey opened the Public Comment Period. Marjorie Pryse introduced herself as the Observer for the
10 Community Party. There being no one else who wished to speak, Stycos moved to close the Public
11 Comment Period. Seconded by Tomei. Ayes by Hickey, Dankert, Stycos, Tomei and Durst. Motion
12 carried.
13

14 **Generic PDA**

15 Hickey directed the Board's attention to Proposed Local Law A 2010, prepared by Dubow and
16 included in the Planning Board packets, which would amend the Village Zoning Law to include the
17 provisions previously discussed and approved by the Planning Board to enable it and the Board of
18 Trustees to consider proposed Planned Development Areas. He asked Stycos to start the discussion by
19 sharing with the Board concerns she had shared with him prior to the meeting. Stycos asked why 5
20 acres had been chosen as the minimum area for a PDA and whether a larger area might better serve the
21 interests of the Village. Dubow responded that he simply carried forward the number used in the PDA
22 provisions previously in, and since deleted from, the Zoning Law. He noted that the number was
23 somewhat arbitrary, but that it seemed to be a workable number. Discussion ensued about the actual
24 size of various undeveloped parcels in the Village and the relative merits of setting a larger minimum
25 area requirement, Stycos noting that placing mixed commercial and residential uses on a 5 acre lot
26 might result in an undesirable density. Dubow responded that as the proposed law is written the Boards
27 are not compelled to accept or even consider a proposed PDA which seems too dense or out of
28 character with the Village or adjoining properties. On the other hand he noted that it is conceivable that
29 a development such as an assisted living facility might fit on a 5 acre parcel and be compatible with the
30 neighborhood in which it is proposed. The consensus of the Board was to leave the 5 acre limit
31 unchanged.
32

33 Stycos then asked for an explanation of the provision in Section 3C of the proposed law which permits
34 up to a 25% residential density increase in a PDA over that which would be permitted by the
35 underlying zoning. Dubow indicated that this concept is again a carry over from the earlier PDA
36 provisions and is intended to provide some flexibility to the Boards to approve developments that
37 might not otherwise be permitted under current zoning, but to limit that flexibility such that an
38 approved development would not be disproportionate to other developments in the Village. The
39 density increase can also be used as an incentive to include features in a proposed development that the
40 Village wants, but which would not be otherwise feasible for the developer to provide. Curtis
41 explained that to determine the maximum density under current zoning, the developer must propose a
42 plan with as many units as can be built after subtracting infrastructure, stormwater management
43 practices, recreation land and any areas where development might be limited due to environmental

1 concerns. In the case of subdivision clustering, density can be increased in one part of lot, but the
2 density for the lot as a whole can not be increased over the maximum density calculated as described
3 above. The Board was comfortable leaving the 25% density increase provision unchanged.
4

5 Stycos then asked for clarification of several terms and procedural issues. Leopold stated that she was
6 not entirely comfortable with the idea of permitting mixed or commercial development in areas
7 currently limited to residential development, though she is comfortable with permitting residential
8 development in areas designated for commercial development. Hickey responded that he is not aware
9 of any residential parcels where commercial development is likely to be proposed, but there are some
10 nonresidential uses which may be compatible with residential development. Leopold added that, as a
11 Trustee, public input in the process would be very important and she would not be likely to approve a
12 PDA which proposed commercial uses in a residential area if the residents of that area did not support
13 such a change. Dubow added that each individual PDA will be reviewed on its own merits and the fact
14 that mixed or commercial uses may be proposed in a residential area in no way obligates the Boards to
15 approve or even consider such a proposal. There being no further comment, Dankert moved to
16 recommend Proposed Local Law A (2010) to the Board of Trustees, seconded by Durst, all in favor.
17

18 **Bolton Estate Subdivision Recreation Plan - Update**

19 Hickey directed the Board's attention to a letter in their packets from Bryan Warren who owns Lot 7 in
20 the Bolton Estate Subdivision. In it Warren requests that the Village develop as a park for the
21 enjoyment of all residents Lot 22, the water front parcel known as Poison Ivy Point, which will be
22 conveyed to the Village. Hickey noted that to access Lot 22 by land requires authorization from
23 Norfolk Southern Railroad to cross their property, the 66' wide strip over which their tracks run
24 roughly parallel to the lake and which separates Poison Ivy Point from the remainder of the
25 Subdivision. Experience to date suggests that such authorization is not likely to be forthcoming. He
26 asked Dubow if he thought the Village could or would develop Poison Ivy Point as a park under such
27 circumstances. Dubow responded that it did not seem advisable to do so for a park accessed from land,
28 but that the parcel might be developed as a park accessed from the lake. It is also not out of the
29 question that the Village may approach the railroad sometime in the future to try to secure access
30 across the railroad property. Improving the parcel as a park, however, may increase the railroad's
31 reluctance to grant access as its exposure could increase with the level of use the park improvements
32 would encourage. Hickey will respond to Warren explaining the practical difficulties that must be
33 overcome for the Village to improve Poison Ivy Point as a park.
34

35 **Goals for 2010**

36 Hickey reported that he had talked with Tomei about potential goals for the Planning Board for 2010.
37 One possibility is a visioning exercise where the Board would describe on paper what it wanted the
38 Village to look like in 10 years. Some studies suggest that shopping malls may be losing viability and
39 alternate models such as those mixing residential and commercial uses might be gaining in popularity.
40 Being prepared for such changes is a function of good planning. Another possibility is to do an
41 inventory of the Village, identifying resources and tabulating, for example, the number of undeveloped
42 parcels 5 acres or more in size. This would give the Board a clearer idea of what it is working with
43 when it discusses an issue like the generic PDA. Leopold noted that the Village has never really done a
44 Lighting Plan. The Lighting Commission has borrowed criteria from various sources, but most of what
45 it does is reactive, critiquing proposed projects rather than articulating a vision of what lighting in the
46 Village should look like. A lot of communities are actively pursuing lighting policies based on dark

1 sky principles. Village beautification - gardening and tree pruning - was suggested as an area where the
2 Village might expend additional resources. Hickey noted that a tree pruning workshop is being offered
3 by Cooperative Extension with instruction by the City of Ithaca Forester. Dubow noted that the Village
4 of Dryden has a very successful volunteer gardeners program that has enhanced the appearance of the
5 Village. Curtis will contact Abby Homer at the Village of Dryden to see if someone from the program
6 will come and speak to the Planning Board. Curtis reported that some forms he had filled out recently
7 referenced land use regulations, policies and building codes that encouraged sustainability and green
8 building practices. He suggested that one goal for 2010 might be to explore the potential for adding
9 provisions that encourage sustainability and green building to the Village's regulations. Leopold
10 suggested that the Village should have a disaster preparedness plan. Hickey said he thought he had
11 seen one or had a copy at home. Curtis added that he thought there was a countywide plan in place that
12 is coordinated by the Emergency Response Team at the 911 Center. He will check with the County.
13 Hickey noted that he has not completed the Village trail and walkway update and that should be added
14 to the list. Hickey will check his files at home and formalize the ideas put forward tonight into a list of
15 Goals for 2010 to review and adopt at the next meeting.

16

17 **Other Business as Time Permits**

18 Hickey reported that he, Tomei, Moseley and Curtis had met with John Spence and Andrew Piliero
19 from Better Housing of Tompkins County and Chris Dirr of the NRP Group from Cleveland, a leading
20 developer of affordable housing. Better Housing and NRP are partnering to procure funding for an
21 approximately 80 unit project which they hope to build on the old Dart parcel on Dart and Graham
22 Road. They have secured control of about 10 acres from Nancy Ross and another 23 acres from Ross'
23 sister Joanne Williamson. Originally, they were considering an apartment building with 80 units, but
24 when informed that such a development is not permitted under current zoning, they suggested a model
25 consisting of townhouses which would stand on their own parcels much like Ivar Jonson's project.
26 They would rent them to tenants earning 60% or less of the Tompkins County median income for 15
27 years after which the units would be sold to income qualified residents at a discount. The longer a
28 tenant has lived in a unit the more favorable the terms. Better Housing would manage the property and
29 qualify tenants and eventually buyers, and may retain title to the underlying land to ensure continued
30 affordability. The development would be a cluster subdivision and would comply with the current
31 zoning. The Mayor sent a letter indicating that the Village supports the development of affordable
32 housing which conforms to the Village's Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations.

33

34 They have submitted an application to the Tompkins County consortium for affordable housing for the
35 preliminary development work – feasibility study, environmental assessment, etc. If they are
36 successful in securing those funds, they will prepare a grant application for State funds and tax
37 incentives due early in February. They will be preparing a site plan over the next few weeks and will
38 continue to meet with Hickey, Tomei and Curtis to be sure what they are developing will meet the
39 Village's standards. A lot of details need to be worked out regarding stormwater management,
40 entrances and traffic, trails and recreation, etc. Eventually they will need to do a traffic analysis. NRP
41 has already lined up investors. They will know by summer if funding and tax incentives are approved
42 and they can submit application to the Village, possibly for a Fall start, but more likely early Spring of
43 2011.

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1 Curtis passed around pictures they had left showing the style of townhouse they were considering –
2 two story, craftsman style with mixture of clapboard and stone or brick, earth tones, etc., one, two,
3 three and four bedroom units.
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5 **Approval of Minutes**

6 Durst moved the minutes of December 14 as corrected, seconded by Stycos; Durst, Hickey, Dankert,
7 Stycos and Tomei in favor. Motion carried.
8

9 **Reports**

10 *Trustees* – Hickey reported that the Trustees approved changes to the Village Procurement Policy at
11 their last meeting in December. Tomei reported that at their first meeting in January, the Trustees
12 approved the proposed tax exemptions for income qualified seniors and disabled and reviewed the
13 PDA provisions recommended by the Planning Board and authorized the Attorney to prepare the
14 proposed local law that the Planning Board reviewed and voted to recommend at tonight’s meeting.
15

16 **Adjournment:**

17 Durst moved to adjourn at 9:00 P.M. Seconded by Dankert. Ayes by Hickey, Dankert, Stycos, Tomei
18 and Durst. Motion carried.