

Village of Lansing
Planning Board Meeting
Minutes of Tuesday,
February 22, 2022

The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board meeting via Zoom was called to order at 7:02 PM

Present at the meeting:

Planning Board Members: Mike Baker, Anthony Ingraffea, Jim McCauley, Monica Moll, and Lisa Schleelein

Alternate Member: Pat Gillespie

Village Legal Counsel: Natalie French

Village Engineer: Brent Cross

Village Trustee Liaison: Pat O'Rourke

Village CEO: Michael Scott

Public included: Jeremy Thomas and Jared Pittman from Cornell University Real Estate; Susan Ainslie, Roy Hogben, Simon Moll, and Mayor Hardaway.

Approval of the Minutes

February 14, 2022 minutes will be reviewed at the next Planning Board meeting.

Public Comment Period:

With no one wishing to speak, Baker moved to close the public comment period. Seconded by Moll.

Ayes: Baker, Ingraffea, McCauley, Moll, and Schleelein.

Nays: None

Schleelein read the following agenda item:

Discussion and Recommendation to the Board of Trustees of Proposed Local Zoning Change

The purpose and intent of this Local Code change is to amend the Village of Lansing Zoning Law and Zoning Map so as to re-zone a Medium-Density Residential District (MDR), containing tax parcel #46.1-6-6.3 (Village of Lansing), tax parcel 46.1-6-6.22 (Cornell University), and tax parcel #46.1-6-6.11 (Ithaca Swimming Club Inc.) into the High-Density Residential District (HDR). The MDR District in question borders Uptown Road and tax parcel 46.1-6-6.23 to the south, Uptown Road to the west, Route 13 to the north, and Warren Road, tax parcel #46.1-6-6.21, and tax parcel #46.1-6-6.23 to the east. The re-zoning of this MDR District is intended to allow for a favorable transition to a contiguous HDR District west of Uptown Road. The proposed re-zoning action is intended to be consistent with the Village Comprehensive Plan.

Thomas was re-introduced and gave a presentation. You may hear the full presentation on YouTube under the February 22, 2022 Planning Board meeting for the Village of Lansing (minutes 4:00 through 11:00).

48 Schleelein reviewed the previous zoning changes for that property. Schleelein also suggested that
49 the Planning Board consider what type of housing the Village needs and, by changing the zoning,
50 does it satisfy those needs. Schleelein asked Thomas if he has done any Housing Assessment for that
51 area. Scott showed the Planning Board the additional uses that HDR would allow if a zoning change
52 were approved.

53

54 Schleelein stated that, according to the latest Census Bureau findings, the Village of Lansing has a
55 vacancy rate of 12%. Thomas feels that number is high and that there is a severe under supply of
56 housing. Maplewood, a local student housing development, has 872 beds available and are leased
57 out by February with a 100-person waiting list. Thomas continued by saying whenever there is an
58 issue with a building where students need to find temporary housing, there is generally nothing
59 available. The County has a housing assessment report which shows a shortage of supply that is
60 impacting the cost of living. Thomas believes that there is a market for additional housing.

61

62 Schleelein would like a little more information on the vacancy for this area.

63

64 Scott added that the Planning Board needs to consider sewer units, traffic, and any other aspect that
65 added uses could bring if zoned to HDR.

66

67 Cross gave a brief history of how past units were determined and used. Cross added that a meeting
68 with local municipality leaders is needed to determine future needs for sewer units. Changing the
69 zoning to HDR could impact the sewer demand depending on a future project but, that the impact
70 amount is hard to determine.

71

72 Moll asked if the Planning Board has to make a recommendation without knowing a specific project.
73 Schleelein said that the determination of a zoning change should not be based on a specific project.
74 Moll feels that some of the new uses would be inappropriate.

75

76 Thomas stated that no developer would consider a project without first doing their homework. So if
77 a multiunit project were to be developed, Thomas is sure that the developer sees a demand for it.
78 Thomas will provide some marketing data on rentals.

79

80 Ingraffea said that he would have a hard time voting to change the zoning unless he had a better
81 understanding of zoning history changes of that area as well as what a potential project would look
82 like.

83

84 French said that this zoning decision should be made regardless of having a project in mind. If the
85 Village felt that the new uses provided with the up zoning would be beneficial to the Village, then
86 that would be a reason for approval.

87

88 Ingraffea asked why the Board of Trustees had seen the plan. Schleelein said that the BOT has not
89 seen the plan, however, the developer has met with Village officials to introduce a possible project.
90 Ingraffea would still like to know why the zoning was changed years ago.

91 Thomas stated that he did not know the reason for the zone change in 1988 but, the Village
92 Comprehensive Plan was developed in 2015 and the request for this zoning change is aligned with
93 that.

94

95 Schleelein suggested that all members review the Comprehensive Plan.

96

97 Ingraffea asked if a cluster subdivision is possible in either MDR or HDR. Scott said yes.

98

99 When asked about his timeline, Thomas stated that if the up zoning is approved, his potential client
100 would proceed rather quickly with the development process.

101

102 Schleelein ask if a traffic study had been done. No one knew.

103 The potential zoning change would involve the Cornell property, the Village Park, and The Swim
104 Club.

105

106 There was discussion whether the Park needed to be involved.

107

108 Schleelein summed up the requested material for the next meeting.

109

110 **Other Business**

111 The Planning Board reviewed and discussed a proposed Tree Conservation Law. Simon Moll
112 reviewed how other municipalities handled cutting of trees. There was discussion about clear cutting.
113 Ingraffea expressed concern over the earlier parcel that Cornell wants to develop and the possibility
114 of an existing forest being eliminated. Moll would like the Planning Board to think about what
115 remaining tree density would be sufficient when clearing for a development as opposed to protecting
116 trees prior to the development by surveying and marking trees. There was discussion about the cost
117 of replacing a tree and to possibly use the term “market price”.

118

119 **Trustee Report**

120 No Report. There was no BOT meeting on 2/21/22

121

122 **Added Conversation**

123 Referring to the earlier agenda item, Ingraffea stated that the Planning Board is supposed to make a
124 decision on up zoning without being influenced by a proposed project yet, while there was an
125 informal meeting of a developer with some members of the Village including a Planning Board
126 member, it is not possible. Ingraffea feels that this is a violation.

127

128 French stated “I think there's a distinction to be made in what presentation was made... as to what
129 is a buyer's due diligence prior to pursuing a purchase and what is Cornell's presentation as to
130 rezoning. So, a buyer in any circumstance, will want some level of assurances that their plan would
131 even be feasible before they go even further down the line. I think that is separate and distinct from
132 asking for the rezoning to be made.”

133

134 Ingraffea did not agree.

135

136 Hardaway agreed with French's interpretation.

137

138 Scott added that the meeting with the developer was mostly a procedural meeting which focused on
139 the process.

140

141 There was further discussion on the subject.

142

143 Cross mentioned the PDA possibility as an alternative option to up zoning.

144

145 French stated that Thomas gave a good reflection of a proposed project without presenting the actual
146 project itself. It is not Thomas' project to present as Cornell Real Estate is not the developer.

147

148 Ingraffea feels that the developer and Cornell Real Estate lobbied Village officials for approval.

149

150 Baker stated that knowing what the potential project could be should not influence the up zoning
151 decision. The current potential project could not happen and one of the other uses in HDR could be
152 developed.

153

154 **Adjournment**

155 Ingraffea moved to adjourn at 9:21. Seconded by Baker.

156 Ayes: Baker, Ingraffea, McCauley, Moll, and Schleelein.

157 Nays: None

158

159 Minutes taken by: Michael Scott, CEO