

Town of Cohasset
Zoning Bylaw Working Group - Master Plan Implementation Committee
April 26, 2021 – Virtual Meeting via Zoom

A meeting of the Zoning Bylaw Working Group was held at 2:00 pm on April 26, 2021 virtually on Zoom.

In attendance were:

Tom Callahan, Planning Board representative
Woody Chittick, Zoning Board of Appeals representative
Peter Pescatore, Open Space & Recreation representative
Paul Colleary, Planning Board representative
Jack Creighton, Cohasset Select Board representative
John Hallin, Building Commissioner & Zoning Officer
Jen Oram, Assistant Director of Permits & Inspections

Absent:

Katie Dugan, MPIC representative
Cassie Malatesta, MPIC representative

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm.

Minutes

The working group approved the Zoning Bylaw Working Group minutes from April 7, 2021.

Harbor - Height Discussion

Tom Callahan asked to discuss height as it relates to districts on the Harbor. There is a race between developers and the ZBWG to make sure that water views around the Harbor are preserved for the community. The HBVOD was written at 35' on top of the BFE (which is 8-10' feet based on current Flood Zone maps). Woody Chittick agreed that he would like to see it lower and suggested that 25' on top of the BFE might make more sense. Peter Pescatore wanted to make sure that we consider both developer and town needs when revising any of the Harbor Waterfront Business uses and table of regulations. The group discussed the merits of fixed 25' height on Harbor waterfront or 25' plus BFE which would result in varied heights based on flood plain mapping. Based on the discussion, additional deliberation is warranted to generate working group consensus. Tom Callahan will draft language for the working group to review. There was some discussion as whether proposing height changes for STM in the fall was prudent given recent sale of the Atlantica property.

Harbor Zoning

Katie Dugan had circulated to the working a detailed packet of materials which included Peter Pescatore's sub-working group recommendations from March, along with map of current Harbor zoning and proposed Harbor zoning which simplified the number of districts. Also included in the packet was Current Floodplain Map (2016), summary of Harbor Table of Area Regulations, summary of Harbor Uses, and Interactive Map_Surging Seas Risk Zone Map.

The group discussed uses for Waterfront Business District. Jack Creighton made the point that Cohasset is a special town and the scale & number of businesses around the Harbor are less important to the community than retaining access and view corridors. Woody Chittick raised the issue that Table of Uses for Waterfront Business District needs to be scrutinized as range of proposals may come forward including a distillery. Based on the discussion, additional deliberation is warranted to generate working group consensus.

The group discussed multiple zoning districts around the Harbor. The mapping provided to the working group indicates that in the business district areas there are currently seven different districts plus the HBVOD. Woody Chittick asked whether the Harbor sub-working group had considered reducing the business district to a single district. Peter Pescatore explained the groups rationale and noted that the current Harbor zoning proposal reduced the districts from seven to four. The group agreed to business zoning should be addressed as part of Harbor Zoning reforms. Paul Colleary suggested that residential zoning around the Harbor should not be changed. The group briefly discussed the impact that the sale of the Bellamine property could have on the Harbor if that single residential dwelling was split into multiple parcels or even condominiums.

Other Updates

Woody Chittick updated the working group that he and Katie Dugan will be presenting the preliminary ADU recommendations to the Affordable Housing Steering Committee on Tuesday, May 18th. The goal is to get their buy-in and comments on the changes to the existing bylaw to make it more progressive and create additional moderate income affordable housing options in Town.

The Zoning Bylaw Working Group will present preliminary recommendations to the Planning Board on Wednesday, May 26th. In advance of this meeting, Cassie Malatesta will lead a discussion of the sub-working group to final residential zoning recommendations which include all discussions to date by the working group including FAR and lot coverage % revisions to the Table of Area Regulations.

Administrative

The working group agreed that the next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 19th at 12:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 3:14 pm.

Documents

Cohasset Flood Plain Map

Harbor Zoning Bylaw Group Recommendations_03.08.21

Harbor Bylaws Area Requirements

Harbor Bylaws Uses

Maps – Harbor Zoning Current Zoning, Harbor Zoning Proposed 1

Harbor Parcel by Parcel Mapping_04.20.21

Interactive Map_Surging Seas Risk Zone Map

Land Use Goals and Recommendations