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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Fri Feb 27, 2004 10:42 am
Subject: Recap: Southeast Town Board Work Session

Hello All,

Below is a brief recap of the long work session held last night. The new zoning discussion lasted two hours.

CRSE is putting together a committee to review proposed zoning changes. We will then compile questions and any changes we would like to see made. I would like to keep this to one meeting no longer than 2 hours (provided you've read the proposed changes) If anyone is interested please let me know.

Comments follow.

SPECIAL MEETING:

1. A resolution was passed (5-0) transferring the cable franchise.
2. A motion was passed (5-0) setting a Public Hearing (re the new cable contract) for **March 4, 2004** at 7:30 at the Civic Center.

WORK SESSION:

Proposed changes in the zoning code were discussed at length. These changes are extremely edited to what CRSE finds important. Proposed changes will be available on March 11th and a Public Hearing will take place on April 8, 2004.

DRIVE THRUS: will not be allowed in gas stations.

CELL TOWERS: Although there is some small discretion on where cell towers are allowed the town will 'remain silent' on cell towers with in the code.

GAS STATIONS: Will have to be 300 feet away from reservoir or watercourse. The Board discussed this for a while as they seemed not to want more gas stations in Southeast. Pre-existing, non conforming gas stations were discussed (Hess Station on Route 22 and ATI on the corner of Route 6 and Starr Ridge Road). Even to meet the present code these pre-existing, non-conforming stations would have had to build within the same footprint. Neither did. According to one board member there are 18 gas stations in Southeast. See comments.

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ROUTE 22 DISTRICT: One of the stated goals was to make the Route 22 district appear more like a 'town center' according to Town Planner Graham Trelsted and to keep lesser setbacks for a 'village feel'. Some members of the Board felt that setbacks should be greater to discourage over development. Trelsted was asked (3 times) for 'build out figures' before and after the new zoning codes. It was stated that the new zoning codes should be 'idiot proof' to discourage poor development.

LANDSCAPE BUFFERS: (Route 22) Although one Board member wanted berms to help hide commercial development the town planner felt that storm water mitigation was more important. A berm can increase run-off problems.

Large parking lots will be broken up.

Natural products (stone, wood, brick etc) will be recommended by the ARB in all commercial buildings.

SIGNS:

Long and involved. Some highlights:

All signs in Southeast will have to conform with the new codes within a four year period. There are significant size changes. Signs will be wood and will be lit by spotlights at night.

Neon window signs will not be allowed.

Political signs will not be allowed.

Signs on new subdivisions can remain up for 2 years and are not to exceed 16 square ft.

House of worship signs will be 10 square feet.

HISTORIC SITES: New houses or commercial buildings located in an historic district or site would have to be reviewed by the Historic Sites Commission. For example a new house near the 'Castle' on Turk Hill Road would be reviewed by said commission.

JUNKYARDS: Permits will be renewed (after inspections) on a yearly basis.

TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE:

A tree removal permit will be required before removing trees.

Protected trees will measure 8" in diameter at a height of 4 feet.

Any tree or stand with historical significance or any endangered tree will be protected.

Exceptions will be:

Dead or dying tree

Storm damaged trees

Emergency conditions.

COMMENTS:

GAS STATIONS: Southeast has had an opportunity to eliminate 2 gas stations (out of 18) within the last two years. The Hess station on Route 22 sits next door to another gas station and very close to a Mobile station just north on 22. The footprint was altered as the station was moved. The ATI station footprint was also changed and required

numerous (over 5) variances. Although the applicants show charming artist's renderings at Public Hearings they NEVER show the canopy. So what looks 'cute' on paper is misleading at best- Witness the gas pumps and canopy at the corner of Starr Ridge and Route 6. CRSE applauds the Town Board's attempt at stricter zoning but the essential question remains:

Since the majority of the Planning and Zoning Board remains the same and since the administration has only one new member what assurances do we have that these stricter codes will be enforced?

One Board member asked the Town Planner for 'before and after' buildouts on Route 22. Again we applaud the Board's attempt at stricter zoning but: Route 22 looking like a 'town center'? Again, this is the proverbial 'lipstick on a pig'. By the way, we already have a town center- it's the Village of Brewster.

Also trying to give Route 22 'a village feel' is shutting the barn door after the horses have escaped. With vision, Route 22 could have developed in an entirely different fashion.

SIGNS:

Many of the proposed sign changes are excellent. CRSE looks forward to studying them in more detail.

TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE: A great idea but a little cumbersome at this point.

As always please feel free to e-mail with any questions or comments you may have. Also let us know if you'd like to review the zoning changes with us.

With best regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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