

**Approved**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 31, 2018 Planning Board Meeting**  
**7:00 P.M. | City Council Chamber, Woburn City Hall**

Chair pro tem Donovan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Ms. Claudia Bolgen, Mr. Bob Doherty, Mr. Kevin Donovan, Mr. Michael Ventresca, Mr. Jim Callahan and Ms. Carolyn Turner were present; Chair Dave Edmonds was absent. Also present was Planning Director Tina Cassidy.

**PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO IMPLEMENT A MAXIMUM DENSITY REQUIREMENT FOR RESIDENTIAL USES IN THE COMMERCE WAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT (Aldermen Michael Anderson and Edward Tedesco)**

Alderman Edward Tedesco approached the Board to provide background for the proposed zoning text amendment. The current proposal is a follow-on to a prior zoning amendment placing a maximum threshold on residential density in the city. As an overlay district, the Commerce Way Corridor Overlay District (CWCOD) must be handled separately given the narrow wording of the previous Order and attendant legal notice.

Tedesco further stated that the proposal would facilitate a greater mix of uses within the overlay district, which is what was originally envisioned when it was adopted. It is ideal for the city to take a more cautious approach to permitting additional residential units within this district until the projects already in the pipeline of projects are built out and the impacts assessed.

Cassidy proceeded to provide an overview of the modifications that she has recommended to the proposed zoning amendment, all of which are suggested for the purposes of clarity and consistency within the zoning code.

Cassidy further stated that her more critical modification to the proposed zoning amendment is to tie allowed residential density to net floor area (as opposed to the currently proposed gross floor area), which would still result in preventing residential uses from predominating proposed developments.

Cassidy further stated that she has proposed including the term “non-residential” in the proposed ordinance, instead of “by right.” This change in wording allows an applicant to include all non-residential uses that are allowed by Special Permit to count toward the net floor area calculation. In addition, a provision has been included in the proposal that would preclude Council authority to waive the maximum residential density “ceiling” for any applicant.

Ventresca stated that he is supportive of this measure, since he believes that the original intent of the creation of the CWCOD was to encourage truly mixed-use development.

Turner asked for clarification of the net floor area methodology to measure building uses. Cassidy responded that the net floor area definition for residential use would include any building space

within of the proposed development that is designed for human habitation (e.g., parking garages, basement spaces, and utility rooms would be excluded from the calculation).

Callahan inquired about the inclusion of specific types of common areas in the calculation of net floor area, such as hallways. Cassidy stated that the term “hallways” does not appear in either the net or gross floor area definitions; she would have to confirm its inclusion with the building inspector.

Callahan further stated that consideration needs to be given to having consistent common spaces throughout the CWCOD area in terms of the various projects proposed. Areas for things like bike storage and green spaces for playing and gathering are examples that come to mind and which should be considered in the calculation of residential net floor area.

Cassidy stated that, as drafted, the current definition of net floor area would count the “common areas” toward the calculation of residential space.

Turner stated that it may be helpful for clarification purposes to specifically reference hallways as a type of space included in the residential net floor area calculation due to their primary function for ingress and egress.

Donovan opened this matter for a public hearing and asked any members of the audience who would like to step forward to address the Board to please do so.

#### PUBLIC HEARING

No members of the audience stepped forward.

Bolgen moved to close the public hearing;  
Seconded by Doherty;  
Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Donovan asked the Planning Director for a recommendation on this matter. Cassidy responded that her recommendation is to adopt the proposed zoning text amendment, with the modifications outlined before the Board this evening. The modified zoning text proposal was read aloud for the record.

Bolgen moved to recommend Council adoption of the zoning text amendment with the revisions suggested by the Planning Director;  
Seconded by Ventresca, for discussion;

Ventresca stated that it should be noted that the Board is only here to discuss a modification to the CWCOD relative to residential density and not the general zoning code (as related to modifying the definition of “net floor area”). Turner responded that the clarification in the currently proposed zoning text amendment may not be necessary, but some wording could be added.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES (July 10, 2018 Planning Board meeting)**

Donovan stated that the next matter of business is approval of minutes of the last Board meeting.

Bolgen moved to approve the meeting minutes, as submitted, for discussion; Bolgen stated that Planner Karen Smith did an excellent job on preparing the draft minutes.

Seconded by Doherty;

Motion carried, 5-0-1, with Ventresca abstaining due to his absence at that meeting.

#### **PLANNING DIRECTOR UPDATE**

Cassidy requested that the Board take a vote to authorize Chair Edmonds to endorse, or decline to endorse, Approval Not Required (ANR) plans between now and September 13<sup>th</sup> since the Board's next scheduled meeting will be on September 11, 2018 and this vote would cover the statutory requirement to consider an ANR application within 21 days of submission.

Doherty moved to authorize Chair Edmonds to endorse ANR plans on the Board's behalf until September 13, 2018;

Seconded by Bolgen;

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing no further business, Bolgen moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 pm;

Seconded by Doherty;

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.

#### *Table of Documents Used and/or Referenced at Meeting*

Planning Board Staff Report
Staff Report Attachment: CWCOD Residential Density Proposed Text Amendment Order
Staff Report Attachment: Prior Planning Board recommendation to the Council on a city-wide text amendment restriction on residential density
Staff Report Attachment: Example calculations for residential net floor area
Draft Meeting Minutes: July 10, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Cassidy,  
Planning Director