

Minutes of the Zoning Commission of the Town of Caroline Meeting on Tuesday, August 16, 2022 (corrected)

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Bill Podulka, acting chair.

Attendees:

Zoning Commission Members: Michele Brown, Barbara Knuth, Bruce Murray, Bill Podulka, Ernie Bayles, Jean McPheeters (joined in-progress at 7:21pm); Clm, Tim Murray, liaison to the Zoning

Commission

Others: Town Supervisor Mark Witmer, Nan Stolzenburg

Privilege of the Floor:

Pete Hoyt acknowledged that many, if not all, of the Zoning Commission members believe that zoning, if properly done, would be a good thing for the town. He, however, disagrees and feels that zoning is inherently a bad thing. Zoning is fundamentally “subtractive” in that any regulation or requirement necessarily removes a right or restricts freedom. He urged the town to abandon its pursuit of zoning.

1. Approval of Minutes of the August 1st meeting was postponed until a corrected version was available.
2. Town Council Report: Councilperson Murray reported on an impromptu meeting of a subset of the Agriculture Committee and the Zoning Commission (Jean McPheeters, Barbara Knuth and Michele Brown attended for the Zoning Commission; Ms. Stolzenburg also attended). The Ag Committee members expressed concerns that agricultural land was not being protected adequately in the proposed zoning law; there was a specific question about the lack of an agriculture overlay district. Ms. Stolzenburg made a presentation that described the various ways in which the draft zoning law seeks to protect farmland. She will share that presentation with the full Zoning Commission. Zoning Commission members communicated that the Zoning Commission took initial feedback from the Ag Committee as indicating that they did not want there to be an ag overlay. Ag Committee members suggested possible having a blank “template” overlay and regulations placed in the draft now, to be filled in down the line (perhaps as long as 2 or 3 years from now) once the Ag Committee had time to develop some proposals. The Zoning Commission members left the Ag Committee members with some questions to ponder about agricultural protection and get back to the Zoning Commission with the thoughts of the full Ag Committee. Ag Committee members noted that the Ag Committee is a diverse group and it was not clear they would reach a consensus on answers. Bruce Murray expressed disappointment that he was not invited to the meeting as he has actively been pushing agricultural issues; Michele Brown pointed out that the meeting was organized by Councilperson Katherine Goldberg (liaison to the Ag Committee) and any questions about who was invited should be directed to her. Her understanding was that Barb Knuth and Michele Brown were tapped because of their history on the Planning Board and Task Force. (Note: Jean McPheeters made the decision to invite Bard and Michele. We were asked not to have a majority of members at this informal meeting.)
3. Caroline Hamlet. The Zoning Commission discussed and sketched out a rough border for

an additional hamlet in the historic Tobeytown/Caroline area. Uses and dimension would be the same as those designated for Caroline Center. We agreed in principle to move forward with designating this area as a hamlet with a final decision on borders and used to be made at a future meeting. Nan and Rick will prepare maps of the proposed hamlet area. During this discussion Jean McPheeters (recovered from power outage) took over as meeting

We began by verifying the changes we had made in Article V in previous meetings and then continuing on through Article V and Vi. Nan recorded all the changes while we made changes in the Google document. We noted the following:

- a. Major subdivisions are those with 5 or more residences built within a five-year period.
- b. We support the construction of multi-family housing, which does need a special use permit, and are going to include up to 8 units with the ability to double that number if the development has some basic usages included and would allow for up to 3x that if the development includes affordability as part of its plan for a period of time. We are suggesting 30% of income for a period of time. Nan will bring us suggested wording.
 - i. Jean is asking INHS about their wording from the federal government.
- c. Health Department sign-off on multi-use ousing, water supply: how to we ensure adequate water supply for the development and the neighborhood.
- d. Looking at LL2 of 1996 regarding Low Travel roads
- e. We want to include the concept of Dark Sky Caroline in our suggestions to the Town Board, though we don't plan to include this in our draft to the Board.
- f. In Article V, more hydrogeological testing to the general section out of the hamlet section.
- g. In our discussion of Decibel Levels, we are trying to say that the noise level should be generally quiet with transient noise at a higher level, but only occasionally.
- h. We also discussed whether we should identify more commercial space on Route 79. We will discuss this at our next meeting. We will talk about this.

2. The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McPheeters with the aid of Bill Podulka