

Proposed Zoning: Public Questions & Concerns

September 24th – Bass Hall

Acronyms – what do they mean? Definitions need to be provided for planning terms like: frontage, setbacks

Want to see reduction of car use by mixed-use planning

Do the standards address parking requirements?

Workforce/Affordable Housing

- When the old Catholic Church was redone for housing, there were no provisions in place to make it affordable
- Zoning should address more housing opportunity
- Most houses in Peterborough sell for around \$210,000
- Could some provisions for affordable development be added to the proposal?
- The proposal grants density by-right, instead of IF the development is made affordable
- What the market will bear will not produce affordability
- Re-examine density by-right

The Ordinance needs to provide incentives to build workforce housing. The Planning Board should take the time to explore this option. There is no way to ensure this with the current proposal.

Some Rural lots have moved into “T4 Residential” – there are big differences in density between the two

Issue with T4 Residential having a minimum of 50 ft of frontage

- On the larger, once Rural, parcels could there be a chance of having 5 buildings (each with at least 10 ft frontage) that have 4 units each (*4 units look like they are allowed by-right in T4R*)? That would equate to 20 units/families.
- Where are adequate parking standards to address this much infill? Not enough parking for each unit. Would this lead to too much parking on the street?

T4 Residential – overpopulation (*coming from perspective of someone on South Elm St*)

Having maximum sizes for buildings seems problematic

Conditional Use Permits are there to allow neighbors to have a voice. Don't remove.

- The Planning Board has always invited land owners to be a part of the approval process. Repealing rights makes it seem like the Planning Board doesn't care about land owners/abutters, even though the impact on abutters can be enormous.
- The Board needs to talk to the neighborhoods about what they want in the Ordinance

The proposed zoning is generous in the types of allowed uses

(From Vale St resident) Some lots can handle mixed-use, but not everything that is close to Downtown. The neighborhoods close to Downtown will be impacted.

Ask residents to understand the reality of what all the neighborhoods are like

The Planning Board doesn't know what neighborhoods want

The Planning Board does not seem concerned about the opinions of the people who would be most affected by the proposed changes

The final proposal should be notified, by mail, to all affected residents/districts before Town Meeting/Ballot elections

AGAINST On-Street Parking

- If people only have one parking space, they will have to park on the street
- There are more safety concerns with fire/police/EMT as well as snow removal concerns
- The most expensive parking is on the street
- Even single people in studio apartments have guests
- It is hard to say that one unit will only need one car
- You need a car in order to commute to a job - there is no public transit!
- *Audience had mixed reviews on allowing tandem parking*

More CUPs, less by-right development

- Planning Board doesn't take into account the needs and desires of abutters
- CUP process provide necessary checks and balances to the approval process

On Concord Street, the proposed zoning would encourage more traffic-inducing enterprises

- Has anyone talked to the State (*NH DOT*) about traffic impacts?
- There is no room to add in turning lanes

Concern about 0 ft setback. Even 5 ft setbacks would be inappropriate, especially along high-traffic roadways

Rural zoning has not "stayed the same." It is unclear that it has not remained the same unless the map is thoroughly analyzed. The Solera property, for example, was taken out of the Rural district and put into T4 Village. There needs to be more transparency about the zoning changes.

Where in New Hampshire is form-based zoning applied to the entire community?

- How is it working elsewhere?
- Dover, NH has some form-based zoning, but only applied to more developed areas. It isn't comprehensive of the entire city.

There needs to be a better explanation of why form-based code/zoning is better. Is this the best way to get what we want?

We need to protect the rights of the community already here

Poorly thought-out areas for where high density would be allowed

- Setbacks are too low at 0 or 5 ft

- Some setbacks that were 25' have been reduced to 10' – why such a drop?

Concern with forms/building types

- A Small Apartment Building type can have a 60'x75' footprint – that is too big of a building for some of the districts it is applied in
- Added CUP criteria gives the Planning Board too much power

Resident from Cheney noted that he looked into the process of how form-based code was done elsewhere:

- The neighborhoods are supposed to agree on preferable setbacks/lot coverage/etc. BEFORE the code is changed so that things that are buildable by-right are a direct result of abutter/neighborhood approval.
- A low percentage of the town has shared input into Peterborough's process – needs to have more community input

The definition of where the calculation of a setback begins needs to be explained

How easy is it to see what your zoning is versus what it is supposed to be?

Need meetings similar to this that are specifically for information, not just for community input (*ie. some community members don't know enough about the proposed changes to deliver all of the input they may want to relay on to the Board*)

- The Board needs to explain what the current zoning is as well – not just the proposed zoning
- More information on what exists and what is proposed at a higher level, so the public understands it enough to ask more questions

Big visuals need to be provided - *so people can see models of different building types, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking – can see comprehensively how a neighborhood could change*

Is there a synopsis somewhere with the purpose of the changes, for all districts individually?

- Does the “Form-Based Code and You” need to get into more specifics?

What is the purpose of form-based zoning?

Is there an assessment of how zoning will affect taxes?

The Planning Board is telling us what we need instead of giving us what we want

- Have a meeting before the proposal to discuss whether we even want to do this

People think of individual benefits to themselves and not the community/neighborhood

- A neighbor who subdivides doesn't think about the abutters

How much of the proposed zoning is driven by a Master Plan *that has been agreed to and voted on*

Notes from the meetings/materials for the meetings should be posted on the website

- Can't find Conditional Use Permit criteria

** = Comments that got *twinkles* from audience.

Is “no parking in front” a necessary provision?

We need more parking guidelines

Why is the Director of the Office of Community Development just in an advisory role to the Planning Board? Does the Board ask staff what they think? It is a wasted asset by not utilizing staff (*a subsequent comment by a different person was made in agreement*).

- (*In addition, by another present*) I agree that the Planning Board does not always have expertise. They do receive staff reports from the office, but they could be getting more information and input from staff.

The details matter. Each little form needs to be dictated.

Does the degree of infill development reach the intended goal?

The Planning Board and ZBA should work together on this, or at least the ZBA should weigh-in to the process since they are familiar with the fine details of the current Ordinance.

- Why isn't the Economic Development Authority providing input to this, if a main goal of the ordinance is to provide better opportunity for infill development and density?

The comparison charts could have more detail added to them

October 6th – Masonic Lodge

Question about the purpose/reasoning behind allowing a no minimum lot size

**On Cheney Avenue, water and sewer lines can be extended easily, which makes us vulnerable for infill development. A zoning change from the Family District to the T4R district is a large change. There is also concern about the loss of the CUP process and the move to more things being allowed by-right.

There needs to be more examples of where infill could happen outside of developing a large parking lot (Vine Street). What about what infill development looks like on a parcel close to downtown that currently has a single-family residence? How are the changes to the Ordinance (which will supposedly allow for more infill opportunity) going to affect what those lots look like?

- I don't want the look of Peterborough to change.

Be careful of misinformation – not everyone comes back to multiple sessions to see if you will make a correction. If you don't know, just say “I don't know.”

Concern about strange positioning of houses on parcels based on the way the building type and frontage language is written.

West Peterborough does NOT need a maximum setback for infill buildings

Infill is important in West Peterborough, especially with such a great rental shortage

Do the building types account for sizing that would allow you to build tiny houses? A “cottage” type seems too big for a tiny house. *This resident noted that one of the secondary building types may address*

the sizing issue – but wouldn't that mean it would have to be an accessory unit and not a primary residence?

******Tiny houses could be very useful as ADUs on properties that have water and sewer connection.

In T4 Village, it doesn't seem right to not have minimum lot standards AND nothing that addresses the more parking that would be needed for larger developments on bigger lots.

(From a resident on Old Dublin Road) likes being in a rural neighborhood, but they have water and sewer. Worried about the neighbors infilling land.

Transparency issue: Before the final posting for Town Ballot, a resident's property's district had changed to something else without any discussion or consultation with them. Since it was a last-minute change, there was no time to provide comments/concerns about the change. No one talked to them about what they wanted to do with their land. The Planning Board was blind-siding them by making a decision about the future of their property.

Just because you aren't doing something with your land right now, doesn't mean your future options should diminish.

Overall, lot sizes were reduced (change in some areas from 10,000 sf to 5,000 sf), frontage was reduced, and all were imposed "ad-hoc" on neighborhoods without their input or substantial reasoning.

******Meetings with impacted neighborhoods are necessary before the Board continues with a proposal.

It seems like the Ordinance changes are overall to help increase Town revenue, instead of helping individual property owners.

What is the definition of walkability? How is it measured? How close to the Downtown do you really need to be for most people to consider it a "walkable" area?

There should be photographed examples of towns that have already adopted a form-based code, so people can see what types of changes occurred.

******Less by-right changes. You need to add more abutter input to the process.

******For Planning Board meetings/procedures in general:

- More eye contact should be made with the abutters during public hearings. There needs to be a more open exchange of ideas (and less by-right development).
- In Londonderry, NH – PDFs of plans and applications in their entirety are posted to the website prior to a Public Hearing so anyone can view the proposal before the meeting. This increases transparency.

October 11th – Hilltop

Frame of Reference – Resident currently in Family District within TNOZ1 boundary, changing to T4R

- ******Thinks that the density increase from 4 un/acre to potentially 8 un/acre is too high
- Concern for the proposed change from a maximum of 25% lot coverage *excluding* impervious surfaces to 40% *including* impervious surface
- ******Do not like that the Planning Board is encouraging impervious surfaces

****** = Comments that got *twinkles* from audience.

- Why no incentives to minimize areas of impervious surface?

Nothing put forth addresses the purposes of zoning

- The proposed Ordinance from 2018 deleted the section that contained the purposes (in the initial zoning chapter) and re-wrote it. No longer adequate.

**Is the Planning Board proposing the exact same changes?

Issues with TND2 not having a set boundary. Is that legal?

Where is the language in the Ordinance that addresses junk vehicles? Does not want to see that language going away.

- There was some discussion around this – check to see if this language live in a Town Ordinance, not the Zoning Ordinance.

Are there some areas that don't have built-in setbacks? Why would you have no setbacks?

**If you have an established neighborhood, and rules are changing for that neighborhood, that is of major concern. You should be able to buy your house knowing what type of neighborhood you will be getting. What is the need to densify an established neighborhood?

**If people at Town Meeting 2018 voted AGAINST densification and the loss of Conditional Use Permits, then why are these still in the language?

In favor of infill development in theory BUT if it is too broadly applied (***), it doesn't make sense. Example: Winter t is a great candidate for some infill development, but Cheney Ave is not – so why are both neighborhoods in "T4R"?

**Maybe there is a need to consider creating another intermediate residential zone. There shouldn't be sections of town that go straight from T2 Rural to T4 Residential.

Why not use tax abatements to encourage infill development in the plazas or the IDG building (etc)?

Concentrate infill in areas prime for development.

There are no provisions in the Ordinance for affordable, workforce, or moderate-to-low-income housing. The areas targeted for "T4R" tend to have lower assessed values. The new zoning will increase those values (and get rid of existing affordable housing).

**The need for affordable housing is mentioned within the 2003 Master Plan, but yet we still don't see it in the Zoning Ordinance (in Ordinance goals, or through Ordinance incentives).

Vine Street is still very expensive, even though it is being used as the prime example for infill development.

Idea – provide bonus densities (as incentive for affordable housing).

**In T3 Village Edge, the setbacks changed dramatically (both from Rural to T3 and Family to T3).

- This also allows duplexes. This is a gateway to low-income housing. This changes the character of an established neighborhood.

Frame of Reference – Resident currently lives on Grove Street in SFR

**Don't like that retail is now a use by-right on Grove Street. There are parts of Grove Street that are not Commercial!

We don't want to become the center of Milford. Concern about drastically changing some sections of town.

Do not like 0 ft setbacks, and do not like the lack of the CUP process.

People should be allowed to have some say on what the houses next to them look like/function as.

**Side setbacks effect neighbors.

- **Concern about setbacks getting shorter and shorter
- Want setbacks on Summer Street changed BACK to 25 feet, that can only be shortened by CUP.

** Don't change the historic fabric of the Town.

Unless you are polling neighborhoods individually, you do not know what they want.

We need more notification to any proposed changes.

**Where are all of these changes coming from?

**Small houses on small lots are not always affordable. You can only control affordability by rental prices.

TNDOZs had a lot of balance by evaluating height, scale, massing, and character of surrounding buildings. Now, we have gotten out of balance. Let's go back to balance of TND1.

- The setbacks are too small.
- The differences between current general residence and family district regulations are important. They cannot be combined into one.

Neighborhood character is being destroyed.

**The DEMOCRATIC process has been removed from the (permitting) process.

**Commercial Agriculture use is allowed in every proposed district except T5. This use should stay only in T2 Rural by-right, and through CUP everywhere else.

** = Comments that got *twinkles* from audience.

Need help determining where the property line begins.

The (proposed) zoning promotes cookie-cutter housing.

****WHO WANTS this zoning?** If it is only the Planning Board, then they are setting rigid rules on the community.

Prohibit and/or discourage tear-downs of historic building or building that are part of the fabric/character of the community.

Issues with TNOZ 2. Please consider whether this is a lawful ordinance.

Consider the protection of natural assets within the code.

****What is the impact of density on water resources?**

****Conditional Use Permit****

- Including criteria that is compatible with existing conditions.

October 13th – Shieling Forest

****Please specify differences between the 2018 and 2019 proposals.**

How much of these areas that allow more infill already fall within TIF Districts? How much more tax revenue based on the increase of assessed values (from infill development) would be going into the general tax fund?

Conditional Use Permit regulations changed from what was proposed in 2018.

Confused by the comparison between the goals of the Vision Statement and the proposed ordinance, especially in the context of providing affordable housing. Vine Street, although a high-density area, is not affordable housing. There needs to be more incentives to build affordable housing.

The current projects being proposed under the overlay districts that are supposed to allow for infill are still mostly single family homes. Not multifamily/mixed-use AND not affordable.

We can't afford to spider-out development. It's not walkable, and is a strain on infrastructure. Not affordable.

**** If the Vision Statement includes language on affordable housing, then procedures need to be in place within the Ordinance for that type of development.**

Find complexity of zones and labels on map to be confusing, especially the areas marked as "Open Space" and "Conserved."

Form a resident who would be zoned in T3 Village Edge:

- The proposed setback changes would allow me to build a garage without changing my landscaping. The changes seem to allow more flexibility.

Concern for development along the river corridor. There are issues with the Town's ability to access and utilize our wells already. 100% of impervious coverage in T5 Town Center is unreasonable for the ensurement of groundwater protection.

****Development around wells is an issue.**

Differences between the demarcations of "CUP" and "NP" (Not Permitted) need to be defined. Variances by the ZBA can still be applied for in instances where a use is "not permitted."

CUP criteria has been greatly relaxed.

TND2 Vs. T4 Residential worksheet – needs to be clear that the "family" or "general residence" (etc) districts underneath still apply to those areas, and that the regulations that can be utilized for TND2 are only in specific development situations It needs to be clear that the overlay zones are only applicable with development approval.

Can developers build in less dense areas by extending W & S without abutter or neighbor input?

Difficult to balance the need for housing with where to put the housing to make everyone happy.

Speak to the other services that Town would have to provide for a higher population. By stating that downtown infill development would put less strain on services, but only referring to services in terms of public works, is deceiving. There could be an increase in health services, schooling, policing, EMT/Fire, etc, by allowing this density.

We should acknowledge the existing ordinances (*TNOZ 1 and TNOZ 2*) that already allow infill development.

Slide information is deceiving when saying that TND1 regulations/codes were turned into the T4R regulations. They are NOT the same.

Sometimes it is advantageous to have overlay rules (or more generally) different sets or rules for different types of development.

****The proposed ordinance should keep the values and regulations promised in TNOZ 1, complete with an adequate CUP process**

Zoning that incorporates building types is problematic – not all areas in the same zone have the same applicable building types.

**** = Comments that got *twinkles* from audience.**

Areas that are now in the Family District have regulation changes that are similar to what is now the General Residence District. (*Essentially – why is it no longer important to note the differences in densities between those two areas?*)

**Building codes/types cannot include scales that do not fit the neighborhoods that they are allowed in.

Pay attention to details. Ex. Big buildings should not be allowed too close to property lines.

“Barn” building type shows for a rear setback of only 3 feet. This is problematic/too small.

Issues with mass, scale, scope, and extent.

This zoning change is too large (*too much being done at once - or at all*). People are not feeling like they are being heard, (*or that their opinions are really being taken into consideration*).

**We would like multi-family units if they were appropriately sized. NOT large apartment buildings that are tightly fit into an existing neighborhood.

Keep in mind – a housing workshop between employers and developers is in the works. There is a hope that this will be happening by early 2019.

The process is being rushed. Take time to work with the community!

Suggestion: Start with a small area of town first instead of making the whole town form-based.

The Planning Board needs to clarify the difference between Overlay Zones and districts. Traditional Neighborhood Overlay Zones 1 and 2 are often shortened to TND1 and 2 (*which is generally confusing to people*), or referred to as Traditional Neighborhood Districts. They are not districts.

**TNOZ 2 should be repealed.

Consider if we want infill development to be mainly owned or rented. Properties that are owned tend to have higher assessed values, and therefore may offset the cost burdens more because the new homeowners will be paying more in taxes.

The Planning Board should be looking into federal (*or state or general government*) programs to help provide more affordable housing as well.

The Planning Board needs to be clearer on the goals of this Ordinance.

**Slow down, take your time, and allow for more public involvement,

Housing and Population Chapter of the Master Plan is out of date. It has not been updated since 2003.

**We have to get it right the first time. No changes can be made without Town Meeting Ballot vote.

No commercial agriculture use should be allowed by-right, except for in the Rural District.

** = Comments that got *twinkles* from audience.