

MINUTES OF THE LAND USE COMMITTEE MEETING 1-28-2016

The meeting was held at 7 pm in the Town Hall. Members present were Dedun Ingram and Craig Brooks, co-chairs; Kathy Flaxman, Eric Murtagh, Mona Sarfaty, Stuart Sessions, Deborah Vollmer; and Kathy Strom, Council liaison.

Stormwater ordinance and executive regulations

These will be submitted to the State for review. If approved, they will be submitted to the Town Council for its consideration. A presentation will be prepared that reviews the process the committee has followed, the reasons for key decisions, and components of the ordinance and executive regulations.

Floating Zones

The committee discussed floating Zones (which are contained in Chapter 59-5 of the 2014 County Zoning Code) and their potential impacts on the Town. Currently lots on the north side of Elm St., Oakridge Lane, and some on Lynn Drive are eligible for residential Townhouse-Floating, Apartment-Floating, and the three types of Commercial/Residential Floating zones. Lots on the east side of 46th St and West. Ave. will become eligible for floating zones if the lots on the west sides of these streets are rezoned commercial as part of the Bethesda Sector Plan revision. Lots on "nonresidential" streets also are eligible so we need to determine if any streets within or bordering the Town are considered "nonresidential".

Likely applications of floating zones include: 1) construction of town houses or apartment buildings on 1 or several merged lots and 2) use of an existing house by a law firm, realty company, title company, etc. (some of those being displaced from Arlington Rd due to the rezoning that is part of the Bethesda Sector Plan).

Kathy Strom will confirm that in cases where a floating zone might be applied to a property in the Town, the existing Town regulations regarding FAR, setbacks, signage, etc. would apply.

Even if the Town regulations curtail much redevelopment, the uses allowed in the more intensive residential and in the commercial/residential floating zones are more intensive than the uses allowed in the R-60 zone. Members were asked to look at section 59-3 of the zoning code to consider which uses are allowed by right and conditionally in the various zones. The LUC previously studied uses allowed in the R-60 zone and many of the allowed uses are not done in the Town because of the cost of residential property.

A document explaining what floating zones are and how they might be used in the Town will be prepared for the committee to review at its next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Next meeting will be on Thursday, February 25 at 7 pm.