

Burlington Planning Commission

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Joint Planning Commission and City Council Form-Based Code Committee

REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, April 29, 2015 - 5:30 P.M.
Room 12, City Hall, 149 Church Street

Meeting Notes

I. Agenda

No changes

II. Overview of tonight's meeting

Code for Form District 6

III. Public Forum – (15 min)

5:38 pm, no participants.

IV. Future Meeting Dates

Every Wednesday in May and two meetings in June are scheduled. Next week's meeting will be at 7:00 pm.

V. Downtown Form-Based Code Review

A. Montroll: The discussion will work through allowable building types including questions about height and windows.

D. White: There is a guide in the packet about these items which addresses the Downtown district which is included in Form District 6.

A. Montroll: Is the height measured in feet rather than stories, is there a base amount and criteria to change?

D. White: There is a minimum height, a maximum height, and discretionary height. This section refers to generically 11 stories, 105 feet, with a lower height limit along Church Street. It also anticipates the area around the mall and urban renewal area where buildings could be taller.

B. McGrew: The Church Street face is four stories. Is the Church Street area four stories not more than 45 feet? Area C, with urban renewal area in the rear, is this a vehicle for taller height allowance?

E. Lee: Will the Burlington mall project fit into FBC?

D. White: Right now it is hard to tell, but FBC needs to anticipate this kind of development.

A. Montroll: The area along Pearl Street seems as if the maximum height is too high.

J. Shannon: Cherry Street feels narrow.

D. White: There are no exact details about a proposed mall height yet.

A. Montroll: Proposes that the two upper c areas retain the height limit while the lower c level could be open to more height.

M. Tracy: The increase should be more gradual from Pearl Street to the mall.

A. Montroll: The mall section c should have the potential for greater height, greater than the 105 feet maximum?

E. Lee: Yes.

J. Shannon: Is willing to increase to 125 feet with caveats.

D. White: In general, in the lower c area, you are comfortable with greater height this area.

A. Montroll: The lower c area could be considered as a place holder and the upper c areas between Cherry Street and Pearl Street could be conventional form 6.

D. White: Massing is in the urban design area but it will be changed to occur it earlier in the document.

A. Montroll: The height in general, in this form district would be 65 (administrative) to 105 (discretionary). Are all comfortable with this? Yes.

D. White: Massing in FBC is more detailed and affects building type section of the zoning ordinance. Vertical and horizontal articulation are the elements to evaluate. There needs to be a clear path through the process but it should also be a discretionary path.

A. Montroll: Is the concept ok?

J. Shannon: Conditionally.

E. Lee: Suggests an architectural consult about the vertical plane. It feels fake as a series of smaller buildings but it does need to read as a series of smaller buildings.

J. Shannon: Additional articulation has improved recent building projects.

M. Tracy: Agrees with JS that prescriptive requirements spell out anticipated results initially.

D. White: The preface is intentionally is not about architectural styles, but about urban design.

Architect suggests that language in i and ii are adequate; iii is not necessary.

A. Montroll: The language is not clear.

E. Lee: To give the impression of a series of smaller buildings, etc, a more substantial break is necessary.

J. Shannon: Perhaps some other language?

M. Tracy: Feels that also, that architectural interpretation would help.

J. Shannon: Review by architects is a great idea, feedback will help.

D. White: Has anticipated the question of limiting creativity.

D. White: A progression of step backs as buildings increase in height, suggests flexibility in schedule.

A. Montroll: Feedback?

D. White: The setback schedule is related disproportionately to the width of the right of way. Setbacks are measured by story not height.

A. Montroll: The concept of setback predicts what range and is measured in feet, stories or what?

D. White: Setback range generally, (three to five stories).

To think about for next meeting:

D. White: What is the role of the discretionary review? Shadow impacts iiiii (or iii?) requires sun/shadow study. There should be at least five hours of sunlight at the equinox. Taller buildings add to the skyline.

VI. Public Forum – (15 min)

B. McGrew: The c zone shown on maps indicates that the Baptist church will be closed in. Right now there are clear views, and if there is new building up to over 100 feet, it will look like the Matterhorn in downtown Burlington. The quality of life for downtown residents, establishments such as A Single Pebble, etc, might end up looking into a civic center. She suggests that the Committee think about view corridors, a clear view to College Street. Westlake would not now meet FBC. This height will overwhelm the neighborhood.

B. Goblik: Is there a memo which addresses removing arts from the code? He would suggest reducing heights to existing present limits.

D. White: This information is on the website, and there will be printed handouts for the next meeting. Studies seem to show that 50 feet enough setback for a 100 foot building. It seems we want big buildings to retain a small town scale, using architectural techniques. There is dispute about what actually works, but a visual reference might be helpful. More architects to help develop the language is good. Successful examples are helpful.

E. Morrow: These are excellent topics, and might include articulation at the top of a building, time element. The FBC is good, there may be some conflict with glazing and the current energy code. The proscriptive nature of FBC, the AIA should be studying in larger swaths of the city. A City Architect, as administrator, it would be appropriate to have that level of review.

D. Gayer: There is irony in proscriptive nature, requiring larger buildings to look like smaller, it might be better not to be too proscriptive.

J. Shannon: Do we have Q & A addressing what is the role of the DAB in FBC.

D. White: It is scheduled to be discussed.

E. Lee: The glazing conflicts with FBC and DPW should be resolved.

VII. Adjourn

7:40 pm.