

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES
January 23, 2014**

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7:20 p.m. Meeting called to order.

Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Sami Baghdady; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Jeffrey Wheeler and Glenn Clancy, Office of Community Development

Zoning Forum on Potential Solutions to the General Residence Zoning District Demolition Moratorium

Mr. Battista stated that the purpose of tonight's forum was to gather input from residents that will help to define some of the issues of concern regarding demolitions in the General Residence Zoning Districts.

Glenn Clancy, Director of Community Development, presented a PowerPoint presentation and outlined the following concerns:

- Accelerated development; 20 homes were torn down last year, 17 of them were in Precincts 3 and 4, which are predominantly General Residence Districts.
- Impact of development on the character of neighborhoods i.e., homes with no front doors or placement of mechanical equipment.
- Impact of development on the town's infrastructure.
- Limits on density and mass.
- Treatment of non-conforming properties.
- Lot coverage and grading.

Mr. Battista thanked Ms. Allison for compiling the information and opened the floor for comments.

Comments from the Audience:

Vincent Stanton, 32 Royal Road, commented on the paradox that affordable housing is being diminished by new developments, as sometimes the new units are more expensive than the 2 family homes it replaced.

Fred Paulsen, 90 School Street, inquired whether or not non-conforming properties would be grandfathered under the old By-Laws. Mr. Battista suggested he speak to Mr. Clancy about this issue. Mr. Baghdady commented that this issue was also being addressed during the Site Plan Review process.

Judith Ananian Sarno, 30 Waverley Terrace, commented that the front doors of new developments should all face the street, and that they should be real and not fake. She also requested that lot coverage be allowed to increase by a certain amount.

Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverly Street, commented that the original topography of a property needs to be taken into consideration when a new development goes up. He suggested that a formula ought to be implemented to limit the height and size of a new structure. Mr. Battista said it would be considered by the Board.

Roger Colton, 34 Warwick Road, questioned whether or not this was a town wide problem. He also stated that limits on mass and density should be neighborhood specific since each neighborhood is different. Mr. Battista responded that the same question was asked by Selectman Rojas and stated that there wasn't enough time right now to look town wide, but the Planning Board will be looking at this in the future.

Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverly Street, expressed concern over a property that he heard was infested with rats, and what mechanisms were in place to address this. Mr. DeStefano responded that this issue was already addressed by the Board of Health regulations.

Vincent Stanton, 32 Royal Road, raised several issues: it is difficult to come up with a absolute set of limits because neighborhoods vary so much; neighbors' rights should carry the same weight as the rights of property owners; it is desirable to have a mix of one and two family homes, and how have other communities dealt with this problem. Ms. Alison responded that the Board will come up with a list of issues and will consult with other towns as to how they addressed them.

Martha Moore, 331 Waverley Street, asked for clarification between on definitions of duplex and two family homes, and requested that the Board be guided by the town's collective vision.

Jan Kruse, 13 Grant Avenue, commented about how the loss of trees on a property or a street impacted the character of a neighborhood, and also negatively affected drainage. She urged the Board to take little touches into consideration, such as lighting and drain spouts.

Lisa Oteri, 31 Waverley Terrace, expressed concern about nonconforming lots and asked the Board to take into consideration safety issues, such as fire truck access.

Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverly Street, expressed concern regarding stormwater drainage and its effects on abutting property. Mr. Clancy said this issue was addressed in the recently adopted Stormwater General By-Law. Mr. D'Andres inquired about the quality of materials used in new developments be looked at, citing mechanicals used and decibel levels.

Fred Paulsen, 90 School Street, suggested that plans be submitted to the Board for its review prior to demolition. He requested that the Board look at trees and vegetation and inquired about re-zoning certain areas as single-family.

Bob Sarno, 30 Waverly Terrace, felt that consideration ought to be given to the owners of the property facing the new development. He suggested that the Board look at the degree of change and certain amounts of increase require review by the Planning Board

Discussion amongst the Board ensued about how a story of a property was determined. Mr. Clancy stated that 60 percent of the lowest level must be below grade for it to be considered a cellar and not a story.

Lucia Sullivan, 9 B Street, suggested that the Board walk B and Grant Streets to get a sense of the area and the recent changes that have occurred. She also requested that the Board look at lot coverage and snow storage.

Jan Kruse, 13 Grant Avenue, asked that the Board require a post building survey to insure that what was approved was built.

Lisa Oteri, 31 Waverley Terrace, also wanted the Board to look at grading.

Adjourned – 8:40 p.m.