

WOODCLIFF LAKE FAIR SHARE HOUSING WORKSHOP - SUMMARY

February 11, 2017

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the 3 best things and 3 worst things about the Broadway Corridor presently?
2. Based upon today's presentation, what aspects of the proposed rezoning do you support?
3. What are your biggest concerns about the proposed rezoning?
4. What improvements or alterations to the proposed rezoning would you suggest be undertaken to strengthen the plan?
5. Since Woodcliff Lake is obligated to provide new affordable housing in the Borough, would you prefer that it be located within the Broadway Corridor or elsewhere, and if elsewhere, where should such housing projects be located?
6. In addition to the feedback provided through the 5 discussion topics above, are there any further concerns or issues regarding the Broadway Corridor that you would like to bring to the Council's attention?

INDIVIDUAL GROUP FEEDBACK FROM EXERCISE

GROUP 1

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Three best: 1) Attractive, cohesive aesthetic identity; 2) High-end retail; 3) Replacement of office with mixed-use residential
 - Three worst: 2) Height – 42 feet too high; 2) Density – 12 maximum; 3) Parking; 4) Quality of life; 5) Traffic; 6) Eyesores; 7) Pedestrian safety
- Q2: No open exchange of information
- Q3:
 - Traffic
 - Quality of life
 - Property values
 - Aesthetics
 - COAH dumping ground
 - Students in the schools
- Q4:
 - Height not to exceed 36 feet
 - Setback important consideration
 - Density – not to exceed 12 units/acre
 - Parking – No on-street parking (on Broadway); expand train station parking; parking should be sufficient – 2 per residential unit; poor parking/insufficient parking will lead to traffic, quality of life, and safety issues
 - East side should not bear a disproportionate COAH housing
 - All undeveloped town property should be considered
 - Streetscape
- Q5:
 - Egg farm
 - Borough tennis courts site
 - VFW site
 - No alternatives
 - North of Highview
- Q6:
 - Slow down – hold off
 - Observe current MATSU development
 - Alternative methods of satisfying COAH – i.e. buy into fund
 - Total town solution – COAH
 - Why are we rushing?
 - The problem and COAH requirements is unknown
 - Any solution without knowing what we are solving for and where objectives are not clear, will likely be wrong. For example, too big or too small.
 - Impervious coverage
 - Truck delivery
 - Garbage
 - Potential litigation expense as noted in Emerson over their redevelopment

GROUP 2

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Worst: 1) Eyesore – gas station/Campbell; 2) traffic is already bad; 3) walking is tricky (to train station) – pedestrian safety
 - Best: view of lake
- Q2: Informative
- Q3:
 - Height regarding foundation – drainage/reservoir
 - 42 feet is too high, especially for width of road
 - Number of new students
 - Student transportation – no bus? – must walk/drive
 - Where to put the mechanical, if not on roof
 - Truck parking?
 - Park Ridge does not support low income
- Q4:
 - Lowering building height (42 feet to 36 feet)
 - Reducing density of residential apartments
 - Make streetscape more attractive
- Q5:
 - Should be “spread out” – don’t put it all by the train station
 - Anything on Chestnut Ridge Road?
 - North of Broadway?
- Q6:
 - Is there a market for 80% of apartments not affordable housing?
 - Roof and building water runoff – impervious coverage
 - 42 feet building on east side will look taller due to hill
 - Parking nightmare
 - Truck delivery?
 - Where do they put garbage?
 - Potential litigation/ costs if any businesses are taken by eminent domain?

GROUP 3 (Green)

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Height of buildings is a negative on adjacent properties
 - Parking issues and number of parking spaces
 - Traffic on Broadway/Light/railroad/intersection
 - Density – 18 units/acre vs. 12 units/acre
- Q2:
 - Retail with 1 floor
 - Lowering rates of COAH to total building
 - Federal appeal Re: constitutionality
 - Group home for children
- Q3:
 - Traffic
 - Schools
 - Parking
 - Property values
 - How do you acquire the property?
- Q4:
 - Low-income senior housing/group housing
 - Only retail
 - Pay other towns
 - Height buffers between high building and neighbors
- Q5:
 - Chestnut Ridge Road
 - Galaxy Gardens
 - By tennis court – Dr. Hackaneys
- Q6:
 - Precedent this is setting
 - Flooding school
 - Home values (since school will decline and we'll be considered "transient town")
 - Traffic
 - What is definition of affordable housing and qualifications to be eligible for residency in such units
 - Number of units?
 - Student break point for new school
 - Total credits and abatements to induce selling

GROUP 4 (Yellow)

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Best: 1) minimal traffic; 2) like getting a bagel, nails done, and going to post office; 3) like Victorian style homes; 4) quiet corridor; 5) place for locals to go
 - Worst: 1) unsightly abandoned gas station; 2) insufficient parking – unpaved parking lots
- Q2:
 - Retail
 - Restaurants
 - Limited residential/limited to one floor over retail
 - All but 1 person agreed to height limitation
- Q3:
 - Concerned about maintaining “J” rated school system
 - 3 stories too high
 - Parking at evening time – may need parking for both restaurants and apartment residents
 - All COAH only on this side of town
- Q4:
 - Parking only on west side, no buildings
 - Need more parking for train station
 - Look at other part of Woodcliff Lake for COAH (TEVA)
- Q5:
 - Chestnut Ridge Road – TEVA
 - See what Mayor Ghassali in Montvale is doing at 100 Summit Avenue
 - Look at Cluster lots – next to Jehovah witness on Woodcliff Avenue or deep properties on Werimus
- Q6:
 - Memory care facility on Werimus – can we get credit?
 - Boarding house on corner of Highview and Broadway – can we get credit?
 - Safety
 - Traffic
 - Infrastructure – Police, DPW, Schools
 - Complete Matsu first to see what it looks like before we pass this ordinance
 - We have a “J” rate school that we need to maintain
 - Saddle River/Upper Saddle River – what are they doing?

GROUP 5 (Blue)

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Best: 1) quiet; 2) Casa del Sole; 3) little traffic; 4) convenience
 - Worst: 1) eyesores; 2) not enough parking; 3) blighted; 4) no green spaces; 5) no restaurants with outside dining; 6) light is red in all directions/for train; 5) sidewalks run down; 6) potholes
- Q2:
 - Retail, restaurants
 - Minimize fair housing challenges
 - Younger people in the apartments
 - 88% of people in town want more restaurants
 - Increased tax revenue from retail
 - 42 height will give a downtown character
 - Change character of the town
- Q3:
 - Smell from restaurants
 - Traffic concerns (like Emerson)
 - Decreased property values
 - Lack of green space
 - Doesn't feel like it adds up – the slide about number of kids/house was not credible
 - Taxes go up with more students
 - We don't see to be going towards maximizing senior, disabled, or over 55 housing
 - What about businesses there now?
 - No weekend service on trains and not enough trains
 - Change character of town
 - 42 feet
 - Surface water runoff – reservoir water quality study done?
- Q4:
 - Make street lights and other features uniform across the Broadway district
 - Put power lines below ground in Broadway district
 - Fix railroad light to be green for train
 - Adding and lengthening turning lanes north and southbound
 - Age restrictions as alternative to standard low- and moderate-income housing
- Q5:
 - Is it financially feasible to do 2-story instead of 3-story?
 - Lydecker House
 - Galaxy Gardens
 - Along GSP between tennis courts and water well pump station
- Q6:
 - Has there been a traffic study done?
 - Fear town will use eminent domain
 - Fear that if we don't do this we will end up with multifamily arrangements in single family dwellings
 - What are the consequences of not being in compliance with Fair Housing requirements?
 - By when will we have a firm number that we will have to live up to?
 - What about a lawsuit as an alternative? This treats every town equally when they are not equal on a number of variables, such as geographic location, access to public transportation, etc.

GROUP 6 (Red)

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Best: 1) sets new height precedence; 2) helps meet legal obligations; 3) makes us look like city; 4) concentration in one area of town; 5) convenient for quick errands
 - Worst: 1) Poor appearance; 2) poor maintenance; 3) traffic
- Q2:
 - Proactive approach
 - Poor appearance now
- Q3:
 - Owners concerned about being forced to comply with new retail uses
 - Concerned about height of 42 feet
 - Ruin view of existing owners
 - Concern about appearance of rear of commercial units – dumpster, etc.
 - Parking
 - Traffic density
- Q4:
 - Lower the height proposed
 - Disperse affordable housing throughout borough
 - Develop housing on Werimus south of Old Mill
 - Maximum two stories
- Q5:
 - Make clear what other options were considered
 - Is there other vacant land available?
 - Werimus south of Broadway
 - Use Galaxy Gardens
- Q6:
 - Excess light pollution – concentration
 - Broadway is very narrow

GROUP 7

Participants

Discussion

- Q1:
 - Best: 1) aesthetic overhaul
 - Worst: 1) inadequate parking; 2) traffic; 3) height – should be no greater than 36 feet; 4) property values; 5) capacity in other school districts; 6) infrastructure issues; 6) limited access to police/fire; 7) safety issues at intersection
- Q2:
 - Retail/restaurant okay
 - Some residential – limited to one story
 - Density of no more than 10 units per acre, which will satisfy FSHC
- Q3:
 - Need a realistic school study
 - Rutgers school study is from 2006, before economic crash – very outdated and no feedback from Board of Education/Superintendent of Schools.
 - Height
 - Density
 - Traffic
 - Infrastructure
 - Property values
 - Reduce to a 2 story residential
 - Parking – 2 spaces/residential unit
 - Fire/police access across reservoir
 - What is the plan for North of Highview lot?
- Q4:
 - One story residential/height no greater than 36 feet
 - 10 units/acre density
 - Increase parking
- Q5:
 - Maybe Broadway for some rentals
 - Maybe TEVA or Chestnut Ridge Road for disabled or veterans housing
 - North of Highview lot?
- Q6:
 - This meeting generated more questions than answers – residents do not feel this is adequate
 - Has the Borough considered alternative housing to help satisfy COAH requirements?
 - All veterans and all special needs in addition to some rentals because then you could get credit for one unit per bed – per presentation done in 2015 about veterans housing
 - Like to know more about COAH plan
 - Traffic at intersection
 - Fire and police ability to get across reservoir – limited access
 - Conduct a traffic study – side streets
 - Borough should acknowledge to public that Kinsey FSHC is a worst case scenario – in all likelihood a reasonable settlement will be reached
 - Ho-Ho-Kus just settled with 30 units
 - Woodcliff Lake doesn't necessarily want a downtown like Ridgewood

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS FROM WORKSHOP

Question 1: *Three best things and worst things about the Broadway Corridor.*

- Best
 1. Attractive aesthetics
 2. Mix of uses, businesses, and availability of services
 3. Quiet
- Worst
 1. Traffic/parking
 2. Unsightly properties (gas station)
 3. Disrepair of sidewalks/pedestrian safety

Question 2: *What aspects of the proposed rezoning do you support?*

- Retail/restaurants
- Limit residential – one floor of residential above retail
- Mixed opinions about height — some think 42' is too high, some said 42' would contribute to downtown character

Question 3: *What are your biggest concerns about the proposed rezoning?*

- Traffic it would generate
- Number of new students generated/need to conduct independent school children study
- Height – 42' too tall
- Density too high
- Impact on property values
- Parking
- Impacts on existing businesses
- Surface water runoff/discharge/water quality issues created
- Overall aesthetics

Question 4: *What improvements or alterations to the proposed rezoning would you suggest?*

- Height – 36' maximum
- Lower density – 12 units/acre
- Provide sufficient parking for residential and retail/restaurant uses, especially in evening
- Expand train station parking
- Streetscaping
- Low-income senior/group housing
- Consider alternative locations for affordable housing/disperse housing throughout town

Question 5: *Preferred location in of affordable housing development: Broadway Corridor or elsewhere?*

- Galaxy Gardens
- Chestnut Ridge Road
- Werimus Road
- Tennis courts by GSP
- Egg Farm
- VFW site
- Lydecker House
- North of Highview lot

Question 6: *Other concerns or issues regarding the Broadway Corridor.*

- Need to conduct traffic study/identify traffic issues
- Maintain quality of school system (“J” rating)
- Identify infrastructure issues – DPW/Police/Fire/Schools
- When will the Borough know the exact number of units? What will the number be?
- Finish MATSU development before making decisions
- What are the issues/costs associated with using powers of eminent domain?
- Woodcliff Lake doesn't necessarily want a downtown like Ridgewood's.
- Has the Borough considered alternative methods to satisfying COAH obligation—buying into fund, lawsuit?
- Can the Borough get credit from existing memory care and boarding house facilities? Has the Borough considered fulfilling requirements with all veterans/special needs housing in order to get credit per bed, rather than per unit?
- What are other nearby municipalities doing?
- How will logistical issues created by new retail and apartment uses be mitigated – loading/unloading, truck parking, garbage, light pollution, etc.