

Town of Constantia Zoning Commission

Meeting Minutes – January 23, 2024

Call to Order

Chairman Peck opened the meeting at 6:00pm

Attendees

Voting members in attendance included:

- Chairman James Peck
- Dave Antos
- Sandra Retajczyk
- Sandra Williams
- Joe Markham
- Randall West
- Terri John
- Jeff Rumble
- Brien Connolly

Guests in attendance included: Frank Tomaino (Town Supervisor), Tom Moran (Councilman), Ron Chapman (Councilman), Vern Sundet (Town of West Monroe Supervisor), Steven Rockwell, John Mura, Paul Baxter, Matt Johnson, and Amy Connolly (Secretary)

- Members not in attendance included: Martin Godzwon and Sandra Tuori-Bell

Discussion

Mr. Peck distributed a document that he prepared to begin laying out the purpose of creating zoning law, drawing on official Town of Constantia documents as well as zoning laws from nearby communities.

Commission members agree that understanding why zoning law is being created is imperative. The zoning law must be in agreement with and based on the Town's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Law. Once the Zoning Commission members believe that the Zoning Law is completed, it must be approved by the Town Board as well as Oswego County Planning before being adopted into law.

Mr. Peck reached out to County Legislator Roy Reehil regarding broadband expansion plans published in the newspaper and was glad to receive a quick response. As the project has had little progression thus far, only the published Request for Proposals (RFP) was able to be included as additional information.

Mr. West asked what the goal of zoning is and notes that some people move to Constantia to get away from the strict zoning laws in other communities. Mr. Peck and Mr. Johnson both reiterate that the goals are largely outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Peck notes that copies of the Comprehensive Plan are available in the Town Clerk's office for anyone who is unable to access the document online. Maps included in the plan will be necessary to inform decisions about zoning.

Mr. Peck asked how the Village of Cleveland should be treated in this process. Mr. Johnson confirmed that the Village has their own laws and will not be affected by the Town's Zoning. Areas of the Village that may "spill" into the Town can impact zones surrounding the village, i.e. commercial or residential areas that are in both the village and adjacent Town areas.

Mr. Markham stated that he felt that the Town of West Monroe Zoning Law looks pretty good and that most of the work has already been done. Once the commission decides on zones, members of the commission could go through the laws from other communities to accept or reject what they included. He proposes that members could work in small teams and then bring their work back to the group for discussion. Mr. Peck agrees that much of the work has been done already and that the Land Development Law will be the base from which the commission works. He believes that the first decision to be made is what types of zones will be adopted. Acknowledges the importance of avoiding carveouts and "spot zoning" as much as possible. Hamlets need to be identified. Panther Lake was brought up as a densely populated area that may need to have specific zoning. Mr. Johnson stated that the Town of Amboy, which borders the northern half of Panther Lake is currently making the area its own zoning district. Mr. Markham suggests that the commission asks Amboy for their Panther Lake regulations and Constantia can match their laws as much as is sensible.

Members discuss zones outlined in West Monroe's law including Residential, Commercial, Rural, and Waterfront.

Mr. Mura was recognized by the chair and stated that he would like to hear language regarding vision for the future. How to make things happen rather than prevent them from happening. States it's important to know who we want to become as a town and notes the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Peck thanked Mr. Mura for his input and noted that the Comprehensive Plan was always going to be the basis for the Zoning Law. Mr. Mura encouraged the commission to look at the economic development study being conducted by the North Shore Council of Governments (NorCOG). Discussion continued.

Mr. Peck thanked guests in attendance for their contributions and noted the need to return to the agenda due to time constraints. The Chair asked members if a time limit for public comments should be instituted in order to keep meetings moving forward. Multiple members agree that a time limit does not seem to be needed at this point.

Mr. Connolly recognized that State Route 49 is a main thoroughfare and is a great place for businesses but that once it gets close to the lake it should become residential with some allowances for small businesses and grandfathering in existing industry. He suggested a boundary of Scriba Creek. Mr. Rumble suggested that the road itself could be a boundary. Extended discussion on how to allow businesses in the area and circling back to the LDL.

Members agree that types of zones need to be decided. Mr. Connolly suggest the Recreation Trail as a boundary for the waterfront district. Lower Rd and Martin Rd discussed as boundaries to east and west.

MOTION Joe Markham made a motion to use the same 4 zoning district types outlined in the Town of West Monroe Zoning Law (Waterfront, Residential, Commercial, and Rural) with definitions to be reviewed and changed as needed. Seconded by Sandra Retajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Peck stated that as the Oswego County Planning department may want to have input on the zoning law, the group may want to invite director, Tim Stahl to the next meeting. Mr. Markham suggested that members could prepare for the next meeting by thinking about the potential impacts of Micron on the community.

Secretary Connolly stated that she had contacted the Department of State about the potential use of Google Forms for a community survey. Some advice received from the State employee was to include current High School seniors in the population whose opinions are being solicited as well as individuals who do not live in Constantia but may use our recreation areas, businesses, etc. Community events should also be seen as opportunities to reach the public. Mr. Peck stated that places where people congregate need to be identified. Mr. Markham stated that signs could be posted in local businesses to solicit feedback.

Mr. Peck stated that he would like to have a large scale map printed to use in discussions and potentially draw district boundaries on. Mr. Markham asked if a digital living document that members could access would be possible. A few different solutions for collaboration were discussed.

Adjournment

Joe Markham moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Terri John. Members voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:02pm

Amy Connolly

2/27/2024

Secretary
Town of Constantia Zoning Commission

Date of Approval