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TOWN OF RAYNHAM:
SMART GROWTH ZONING CHANGES

The Town of Raynham is a growing suburban/rural town situated east of Taunton and west of Bridgewater. The town is also at the junction of Route 495 and Route 24. Commuter rail service is nearby in Mansfield and Bridgewater. The town has grown significantly to over 12,000 people. Building permits for single family homes is at historic levels exceeding 100. (Building Department Records) The Town of Raynham has a traditional zoning classification that was enacted in the early 1960's. The zoning classification is rudimentary which is outdated and needs to be updated in order to be consistent with the Master Plan and the needs of the community. Route 138 has not seen much development over the decade. One of the major development constraints was the inability to sanitary; however, the town recently installed municipal sewer that removes this constraint and can support uses that require higher sanitary flows. At the same time this development constraint was removed Southeastern Massachusetts is experiencing record development. The traffic volumes have increased as well with over 26,000 trips a day (Wal-Mart Traffic Report 2005)

The town foreseeing the market demand for uses along this corridor that were and are not consistent with the Master Plan has tried numerous times to change the zoning to no avail. The town even tried an "Interim Planning Overlay District" that was defeated as well. The owners of property along Route 138 prefer the status quo. However, for those residents who live around and use Route 138 quality of life is diminishing from uses that are high traffic, land consumptive and low wage jobs.

Citizens filed zoning petitions this past spring in order to change the zoning along Route 138, unfortunately the zoning had flaws and was not consistent with the Master Plan. The Planning Board voted to establish a committee in order to evaluate the zoning for Route 138 corridor and develop zoning bylaw changes that are consistent with the Master Plan and meet the needs of all parties. The committee is entitled "Route 138 Zoning Study Committee" which is made up of business owners, citizens and town officials. This committee will work with the Business and Economic Development Commission, Planning Board and SRPEDD in order create and adopt new zoning for the Fall Town Meeting in 2006 or the Spring Town Meeting in 2007.

The current zoning by-law does not prepare Raynham for future development and does not conform to smart growth principles (see attached zoning map from buildout study). The town has approximately 6,310 acres left to be developed (Master Plan 1999) which makes it critical to grow in a smart way:

1. **Residentially zoned land** occupies approximately 82% of the town's total land area (according to the buildout study);
2. **Business zoned land**, which is located in 3 separate areas within the town occupies approximately 6% of the developable land available;
3. **Industrial zoned land**, which is located in 2 separate areas within the town occupies approximately 9 % of the developable land available; and
4. **Designated Development zoned land** is one large area within the town which occupies approximately 3 % of the developable land available.

While the Town of Raynham does have a current master plan and town planner, the town has been unsuccessful in adopting a mixed-use zoning district that everyone can agree on that was recommended by the Master Plan. The amount of development and the complexity of the type of projects before the Planning Board has not allowed the Planning Board the opportunity to proactively plan; therefore, working with SRPEDD and the "Route 138 Zoning Study Committee will afford the Planning Board the means to successfully implement the appropriate zoning bylaw changes.

The present zoning does not provide incentives and does not provide for mixed-use. The goal would be to create incentives for smart growth, establish mixed-use nodes and provide incentives for uses that create jobs with a livable wage. We do not want to see the Route 138 corridor become another strip of retail uses. There is a real fear that the Route 138 corridor might become a bunch of strip plazas and big box retailers. In April of this year, the Planning Board approved a 206,000 square foot Wal-Mart Super-Center. Unfortunately like many communities the antiquated Massachusetts Zoning Act prevents communities from having the planning tools to fend-off non-desirous uses because property owners can and do file an ANR plan thereby grandfathering uses. Coupled with failed attempts to rezone the land along Route 138 years ago has allowed for the second Wal-Mart to be permitted and left the town vulnerable to other retail uses. The town is at a critical point because the fear is Wal-Mart will create spin-off big box users along the Route 138 corridor. The town is at a critical point and positive changes needs to happen. The traffic volumes are over 27,000 cars a day and the more traffic grows the more pressure for "dumb" growth. The amount of land available for non-residential uses is limited.

An important component for the future of this corridor is the investigation of bus service. The bus service would service the Route 138 corridor in order to bring customers to various businesses and provide transportation option for the existing residents. To create viable mixed-use nodes public transportation is essential. It is important to move people to various destinations along the corridor and beyond.

The remaining area of the town to be developed is predominantly zoned residential; therefore, a smart growth plan is essential to creating a stable and sustainable tax base. These changes will make the Town better prepared for future growth and will provide for smart growth options.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The project will be undertaken in conjunction with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) in Taunton. Raynham has been a member of SRPEDD since the 1960's.

This project will be under the direction of Gregory Guimond, Comprehensive Planning Manager, and Marijoan Bull, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Supervisor.

Locally, the process will be under the direction of the Route 138 Zoning Study Committee to be appointed by the Business and Economic Development Commission. At a minimum, this Committee will include representation from the following:

- Business Owners
- Town Departments
- Economic Development & Industrial Committee
- At large citizen representatives

TASK BY TASK DESCRIPTION

The Town envisions conducting several charettes with visual presentations with the committee to discuss the present land use. Aerial maps and other maps will be used to aid the charettes. The maps will be used to evaluate potential build-out along the corridor. The committee will look at the various zoning options and discuss the areas that are appropriate for the mixed-use nodes. There will also be a GIS based update of the zoning map to reflect the changes. Perhaps a Route 138 Association could be formed among various businesses and residents to guide the future development along the corridor that would serve as a “neighborhood association”. The approach for each task will be similar and in many cases concurrent. For each task, the following steps will be followed:

- The Route 138 Zoning Study Committee and SRPEDD will develop town meeting articles. The process will be iterative with the SRPEDD staff meeting with the Route 138 Zoning Study Committee to discuss approaches to the proposed by-law and refinements to standards. These ideas will be translated into proposed wordings, which will be reviewed and revised by the committee until there is a satisfactory draft product for broader discussion.
- SRPEDD and the committee will sponsor educational meetings, using PowerPoint, cable television, and other techniques to present the proposed changes to as many audiences as possible prior to Town Meeting.
- Proposed zoning changes will be reviewed by Town Counsel prior to town meeting action.
- Changes will be presented by town officials to Town Meeting as suggested in the cover letter to this application.

PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES: Zoning by-law revisions will be made and in preparation for town meeting action. To better prepare the town for future growth and allow for smart growth development.

TASKS

1. Data collection and evaluation of the properties along the Route 138 corridor:

Issue – The vast majority of undeveloped land along Route 138 falls under residential, business and industrial zoned land. These zones allow most residential, business and industrial uses; although some are permissible only by special permit (e.g. multi-family is not allowed at all and recreational facilities).

Recommended Action – Identify the areas that will serve as mixed-use nodes and reclassify other areas that are best suited for industrial and commercial development. The zoning most likely will generate different zoning districts.

- a. Task description: Prepare an analysis and maps of the existing land uses and development suitability of land along the corridor. This work will involve analysis and mapping of:
 - Land use and historical development patterns from the buildout study updated by aerial photos from 2002-03 (Pictometry) and field checks;
 - Soil maps for development suitability;
 - Environmental constraints (wetlands, permanently protected open space);
 - Water service North Raynham Water District;
 - Sewer service along the entire corridor;
 - Evaluation and implementation of bus service and suitable bus stops; and

- Other factors that is relevant to the reclassification of land into different zones.
- Buildout data will be utilized wherever possible.

Once this analysis is completed, the Route 138 Zoning Study Committee and SRPEDD will use the data to make recommendations to assign to the 4 mile corridor.

- b. Measure of Success: By-law revised, zoning map redrawn, education program completed and Town Meeting action on proposed by-law revisions.

2. **Create Mixed-Use District:**

Issue: Raynham does not have any mixed-use districts. The concept of mixing residential and commercial together is quite foreign. One of the ways to address the need for moderate housing and provide options other than retail uses is through the creation of mixed-use districts. Raynham currently does not allow these types of development in its zoning bylaw.

Significant amount of examples and perhaps field trips to successful mixed-use districts may be necessary to educate the committee and then ultimately town meeting. Developing appropriate design standards are extremely important to the success of the mixed-use district. Design will be extremely important because the corridor still has a residential feel.

Recommended Action: The town will evaluate mixed-use zoning options for the corridor. Evaluate appropriate uses, lot size and other options leading to the adoption of a zoning bylaw amendment that mixed-use district. The committee will need to decide where and how many mixed-used districts shall be planned along the corridor.

- a. Task description: Prepare GIS based parcel level maps of the mixed-use districts for further analysis by the Committee. Determine land uses for each parcel utilizing field surveys and committee input. Review model mixed-use bylaws and customize to meet Raynham's specific needs.

- b. Measure of Success: By-law prepared, education program completed, and Town meeting action on proposed by-law.

3. **Revise the Site Plan Regulations standards for mixed-used developments:**

Issue: The Planning Board site plan regulations have very good standards for all types of non-residential uses; however, the standards are inadequate for mixed-use projects. Design, architecture, landscaping, transportation and other standards are essential for quality mixed-use projects.

Recommended Action: The committee will evaluate mixed-use district standards that can be incorporated into the Planning Board site plan regulations.

- a. Task description: Review model and neighboring community standards for mixed-use districts and customize to meet Raynham's specific needs.

- b. Measure of Success: By-law prepared, education program completed, and Town meeting action on proposed by-law.

4. **Update the Table of Use Regulation and Dimensional Standards:**

Issue: Raynham's current Table of Use Regulations will need to be updated to add new mixed-use district and create clearer definitions. Other zoning districts will need to be created for the Route 138 corridor as well. For example, there will need to be distinctions between various types of uses and manufacturing uses are in need of updating to reflect new industrial types of businesses. Other uses are not described or defined, thus leaving interpretation up to the Zoning Enforcement Officer and the Zoning Board of Appeals. New districts and clearer definitions are essential for the future of Route 138 development. A detailed Table of Use Regulation takes the guess work out of deciding if a particular use is permitted or not. Further, a clearer definition of allowable uses will protect the town from uses that may not have been anticipated when the bylaw was originally created. Dimensional standards will need to be created for the new district and/or districts. Certain dimensional standards do not exist like percent coverage. The existing dimensional standards will need to be evaluated to determine what changes are necessary.

Recommended Action: Update the current Table of Use Regulation with new uses that reflect current development practices. These uses should be defined and added to the Table of Use as either Permitted as of Right, Special Permit Required, or Prohibited. Update the current dimensional standards and add new ones as necessary. Create new districts for the Route 138 corridor.

a. Task description: The Committee will identify mixed-use uses and categorize them into in the current Table of Use Regulation and revise and update the dimensional standards, and work with SRPEDD to develop and refine a proposed mixed-use by-law, as well as, develop and refine different zoning districts for Route 138. Dimensional standards will be revised and new ones created for town meeting action.

b. Measure of Success: The Table of Use Regulation contained in the by-law will be revised, new zoning district created, dimensional standards updated and new ones created, education program completed and Town Meeting action on proposed by-law.

5. **Zoning Map Changes**

a. Task description: Revise the Town of Raynham zoning map to incorporate changes that are made by Town meeting. Prepare draft map of proposed changes on advance of public meetings and town meeting.

b. Measure of Success: Revised zoning map.

6. **Town Meeting Vote**

a. Task description: Submit articles to Town Meeting for vote and

b. Measure of Success: Town Meeting Adoption

WORK PROGRAM SUMMARY: RAYNHAM

TASK 1: Evaluate and Revise the Route 138 Corridor

DELIVERABLES: Land use analysis prepared, charettes conducted with the committee new, district revisions prepared, education program completed and Town meeting action on proposed by-laws.

TASK 2: Create Mixed-Use Zoning District

DELIVERABLES: By-law prepared, education program completed, and Town Meeting action on proposed by-law.

TASK 3: Update Site Plan Regulations

DELIVERABLES: By-law prepared, education program completed, and Town Meeting action on proposed by-law.

TASK 4: Update the Table of Use Regulation, Dimensional & New Districts

DELIVERABLES: By-law and table of use revised, education program completed and Town meeting action on proposed by-law.

TASK 5: Zoning Map Changes

DELIVERABLES: Revised zoning map

TASK 6: Town Meeting Articles