

**Residential Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
24 May 2010**

**Board members present:**

Michael Hingston, Judith Esmay, Kate Connolly, Bill Dietrich, Joan Garipay

**Staff present:**

Vicki Smith, Jonathan Edwards, Judith Brotman

**Public:**

Bob Strauss and Bruce Altobelli (Hanover Affordable Housing Commission), Lyn Swett Miller (Sustainable Hanover)

**Regular Meeting Schedule**

The Committee agreed to meet every Monday at 1 PM.

**Form Based Code**

Bill attended a conference where Dover's form based code was the topic of one of the sessions. Bill will send out the link to the presentation materials for that session.

While form based zoning may seem more appropriate for more urban downtowns, there will be some applicability to our residential work, if only making us consider using maximum size or pictures rather than narrative in our regulations.

**Good References**

Judith Esmay recommended Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Christopher Alexander's *Pattern Language*, and Peter Owen's thesis/book. Judith is willing to loan a copy of chapter 6 of Peter's work to anyone who would like to read it.

**Consideration of Zoning Changes in the West End neighborhood**

The observation was made that the West End neighborhood, like all neighborhoods, is evolving. The West End is becoming more single family and less multi-family. The group acknowledged that the housing market is skewed by demand from students such that undergraduates will displace workers. The College is admitting 187 more students than ever before which will place additional burdens on the market. While we need work force housing, it should not be built only to become the residences of undergraduates. Bob's interest was in having multiple affordable units in the West End neighborhood, instead of a unit here and a unit there.

Judith noted that in Elliott's *A Better Way to Zone*, workforce housing is called "attainable" housing. She mentioned Elliott's four barriers to attainable housing: 1) excessive subdivision standards, 2) restrictions on multi-family and manufactured housing, 3) prohibitions on accessory dwelling units, and 4) dimensional requirements such as minimum house size, lot size or yard size.

Lyn hoped the Committee would consider how lots will need to support residents when we are not so oil dependent. Lots may become more important for energy and food production and there will be even more pressure to live in-town to have access to commercial, educational and cultural venues. She wondered if there were rules to limit the energy consumption of homes.

A chart compiled by Judith comparing residential area and dimensional requirements by zone and one by Bob showing the number of units by type and zoning district were reviewed.

Kate warned against allowing front yards to get too small. That area is needed for snow removal.

The Committee agreed that in general the character of the neighborhood was appreciated by the residents who would like to preserve it. Growth and change were accepted as “givens” for the future of the neighborhood. Other topics discussed were:

- Keeping the car out of the front yard.

- On street parking not being an option.

- Keeping garages behind the front building line.

- Investigating whether a ratio of garage façade to house façade would be useful.

- Developing a typology of streets so that a typical profile could be assumed; basically those with, those without and those that should have sidewalks.

- Considering a maximum building footprint.

- Considering the impact on solar access and shading that a new house or addition would have on a neighbor.

- Understanding better what side and rear setbacks are needed to provide adequate light and air.

- Exploring the front setback with regard to front porches and sidewalks.

Both aesthetic and functional evaluations will be undertaken of proposals for new dimensional standards. There was interest in knowing which house is the tallest house and which house has the biggest footprint. Vicki hoped on-site stormwater management would be factored in.

### **Next Steps**

Michael Hingston will provide a draft for discussion at the next meeting. The focus of the next meeting will be dimensional standards.

Next meeting at 1 PM on Monday, June 7.

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vicki Smith