

VILLAGE OF MENANDS: STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Meeting 4 Summary Memorandum

Project Title: Village of Menands – Land Use Regulations and Zoning Update

Summary Writer: Krithika Prabhakaran

Issue Date: December 21, 2021

Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Attendees:

Megan Grenier - Village of Menands Mayor

Brian Marsh – Village of Menands Trustee

Lyle Darmetko – Village Code Enforcement Officer

Ethan Warren – Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA)

Audrey Burneson – NYS Department of Transportation Region 1 Planning

Susan Olsen - NYS Department of Transportation Region 1 Planning

Nancy and Jerry Ruppert – Residents

Rima Shamieh - Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)

Jen Ceponis - Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)

Krithika Prabhakaran - Chazen, A LaBella Company

Nicolette Wagoner – LaBella Associates

Meeting Notes

- Chazen provided a recap of the last meeting and reviewed the zoning audit document with the committee. Chazen also encouraged everyone on the committee to read through the report and provide written feedback, if possible, by December 23, 2021.
- The purpose of the audit and technical review is to set up a framework on what the current zoning code has, what must change, and what needs to be added. The audit was also done to see if existing language/terminology conflicts with the existing comprehensive plan and the language on complete streets, as it is important to point out language that conflicts with the community vision. The audit also made room for the restructuring of zoning districts and recommended zoning changes.
- The Village's Zoning Code was last updated in 2013-2014 and incorporated some form-based code. However, the supplemental regulations were written into the back of the Code, which makes it difficult to use. There is a need to make the Code more intuitive and user friendly.
- The following main points of the audit were discussed:
 - o The residential districts are already built out and will largely stay the same. The rewrite will focus mainly on the districts along the Broadway corridor.

- The Committee discussed the possibility of condensing residential districts and simplifying them. Currently there are 16 zoning districts in the Village and some only differ by one use; however dimensional regulations differ between some districts, making it more difficult to condense similar districts. Chazen will take this into account and look to see if there are other ways of condensing the zoning districts, if possible. Other points of discussion include the following:
 - The A, R, and R-1 Districts only allow single-family residential uses. Allowing higher densities in these districts would create a more equitable built environment and help create a more sustainable and equitable transportation system.
 - Zoning changes should be based on the comprehensive plan, which does not support increasing housing density in the single-family residential zones but does allow multi-family housing development in other areas of the Village.
 - The R and R1 zoning districts have smaller lots to begin with and do not lend themselves to subdivision for multiple dwelling units.
- The Committee is interested in finding a way to efficiently consolidate zones that would also account for the dimensional ranges, such as lot sizes and setbacks, that can vary greatly from zone to zone (such as requiring lot sizes and setbacks to be within a set range of the block's average). Chazen indicated that it would search for examples of how other zoning codes with similar issues have successfully consolidated their districts.
- The Committee consensus was to review minimum parking requirements as they are unnecessary and can pose restrictions to developers. A more flexible policy would allow developers to supply only the amount parking needed and could help make Broadway more pedestrian friendly.
- The Broadway corridor contains huge opportunity for rental housing, multifamily housing, and senior housing. Currently, senior housing is not a use on the Village's Schedule of Permitted Uses. Page 31 of the Comprehensive Plan contains housing recommendations.
- Accessory uses will be investigated for possible inclusion in appropriate districts.
- Special Permitting Process: There is a need to add more detailed language on the special permitting process, to describe Broadway Corridor guidelines and goals. This is currently provided in attachments, but it should be incorporated into the code itself.
- Site Plan Review: There is a need for more detailed regulations and there more uses should be required for review. Language will be added to the Code for additional guidance and structure.
- General recommendations will include language on how to interpret the code. The revised code will state what uses are permitted as of right and what is permitted with a special permit.
- The updated code will include a bulk/dimensional table to ensure that setbacks and minimum lot sizes are easy to interpret for each district.

- The updated code will better incorporate the existing design guidelines. The Village inquired about changing the design guidelines to design standards; however, this is not recommended as standards are typically used in strong markets where more demand for land exists.
- The update will include recommended changes to the site plan review process and include language on how to establish a planning board.
- The updated code will include additional regulations, specifically those regarding tree protection and landscaping, green infrastructure, stormwater runoff and complete streets.
- Language on Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations will be added.
 - CDTC encourages municipalities to incentivize electric vehicle deployment through supportive zoning and parking guideline language. The SAC discussed providing EV stations as an accessory use in commercial and residential districts as recommended by NYSEDA in its Best Practice Guides.
 - Language requiring a percentage of new parking to be EV-ready (with infrastructure laid in place, but EV stations not necessarily built) should be considered
- Revisions on terminologies and definitions will be made to ensure more clarity.
- Information from NYS for establishing a planning board will be added.
- General committee comments and questions included:
 - There will need to be a discussion on what applications can and will be sent for site plan review.
- Chazen stated that they will do some research and provide appropriate examples/precedents for the Committee to address outstanding issues.

Next Steps:

- Chazen will draft and distribute the SAC Meeting 4 Summary.
- SAC will review the Zoning Audit document and send comments back to Chazen by December 23.
- Chazen will review Zoning Audit document comments from the SAC and finalize the Zoning Audit document by the end of December/early January.