

GLEN ROCK PLANNING BOARD
Minutes of the June 9, 2015 Special Meeting
7:30 PM

In attendance: Robert VanLangen, Chairman, Hal Knapp, Mayor John van Keuren, Councilwoman Joan Orseck, Bob Tirserio, Ken Hrasdzira and R. Scott King. Also in attendance were Stuart Liebman, Esq., Board Attorney, Christine Cofone, Borough Planner and Albert Roughgarden, Borough Engineer

Roll Call
Sunshine Law

New Business:

Discussion and possible recommendation to the Mayor and Council for an ordinance to amend 230 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Glen Rock, 1971 entitled "Zoning" being an ordinance establishing a uniform set of zoning requirements; to add an S-2 Age Restricted Housing District

Ms. Cofone stated that the Planning Board is considering a recommendation to include an ordinance creating an S-2 Senior Citizen Zone. She said that the 2014 Reexamination of the Master Plan stated the need for more Senior Housing within the Borough. To that end, this proposed ordinance is being considered for recommendation to the Mayor and Council. There are differences between this proposed zone and the S-1 Senior Citizen Zone currently in place. Specifically, this will result in denser development.

Ms. Cofone stated that this zone will be for individuals 55 and over. There will be no children permitted to be in permanent residence.

She stated that the draft in front of the Board this evening has some key changes from a previous draft. She outlined the changes:

The density is reduced from 35 to 30/units per acre.

The front yard setback is increased from 25' to 40'

The side yard setback is increased from 10' to 15' and the total side yard setbacks are increased from 20' to 30'

The parking requirement was reduced from 2 spaces/ unit to 1.5 spaces/unit.

When questioned, Ms. Cofone stated that she believes 1.5 spaces/unit is adequate for a senior development.

Ms. Cofone stated that creation of a senior zone to encourage additional senior housing is the next logical step after the recommendation in the reexamination plan.

Ms. Cofone assured the Board members that this will not open up the flood gates and transform every property in town to the S-2 zone. She stated that properties would be looked upon at a case by case basis and that they would be judged also in what the need for this type of housing would be at the time. Obviously, if one development is constructed, that would lessen the need.

Ms. Cofone is pleased that the ordinance includes an architectural requirement. That will give the Board more “teeth” when hearing an application.

Mr. Liebman reminded the Board that the Planning Board makes a recommendation to the Mayor and Council. They are the only ones that can adopt this new Zone. If the Mayor and Council so desires and has a first reading, it will then come back to the Planning Board and then back to the Mayor and Council for a second reading and adoption. They may also choose to ignore the recommendation or make suggested revisions.

Mr. Liebman stated, as did Ms. Cofone, that recommending the ordinance is the next logically step after the reexamination plan. With this, the Borough takes control and puts reasonable terms and conditions on development.

Mr. Knapp noted several grammatical errors and asked that they be corrected.

Mr. Liebman stated that, even if it is not explicitly stated, school age children would not be permitted to live in this zone. This is based on the accepted definition of “Senior housing.”

Mr. Knapp was concerned that this is not stated in the ordinance. Mr. Liebman stated it could be considered in a deed restriction.

Mr. Liebman stated that senior housing is not exempt from affordable housing requirements.

Ms. Cofone stated it is her professional opinion that the numbers are reasonable for height, density and setbacks for this type of development. She stated that it is a balancing act between needs of the Borough and its citizens, and the developer.

Mr. Roughgarden stated the definition of how building height is measured is defined in the ordinance under “definitions.” He stated that one-family housing is not under that definition- they are defined separately.

Mayor van Keuren asked if anyone from the audience had any comments or questions.

Mr. Ron D’Argenio (Keith Place) stated he had no problem with the concept in theory as there is a need for additional senior housing in the Borough. He stated, however, that the Board should make the discussion more “transparent.” Both Mr. Liebman and Ms.

Cofone stated that all legal requirements for notice have been done and the proper procedures have been followed to the letter. Mr. Liebman stated that this is a general ordinance and does not refer to any one piece of property. Mr. VanLangen echoed that the S-2 ordinance is for the community and not for one particular developer. Mr. D'Argenio repeated that there should be a public forum at this point and not when it gets to the Mayor and Council. Mr. Liebman again stated that there will be many opportunities for the public to question and comment on this proposed ordinance before its possible adoption both at the Planning Board level and at the Council level.

Mr. Mark McCullough (Stonefield Road) agreed with Mr. D'Argenio that there should be more transparency in the process at the beginning level. Mr. Liebman repeated his comments that all proper procedures have been followed and will continue to be followed. Ms. Cofone stated that the Municipal Land Use Law specifies what procedures must be taken for adoption of an ordinance.

Mr. Skip Husking (Andover Terrace) asked about permitted ages of residents. Since several of the Board members also wanted the ages to be clarified, it was suggested that a definition of permitted residents be added, specifically that the lessee or owner of the unit must be 55 years old or over, that any other residents of the unit can be under 55, but in no case would children under the age of 18 be permitted to be permanent residents.

Mr. Hrasdzira asked why the parking ratio was dropped from 2 spaces/unit to 1.5. Ms. Cofone responded that this is closer to the industry standard for senior housing developments.

Mr. Liebman read a suggested motion to make the recommendation to the Mayor and Council. The motion will include corrections of the typographical errors in the ordinance draft and clarification of what ages are permitted.

The motion was made by Mayor van Keuren and seconded by Councilwoman Orseck. The voice vote was as follows:

AYES: VanLangen, van Keuren, Orseck, Hrasdzira, Tirserio, King
NAYS: Knapp

As there was nothing further before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Nancy Spiller
Board Secretary