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Minutes of a Town of Riverhead Community Development Agency Meeting, held at the Riverhead Town Hall, 200 Howell Avenue, Riverhead, New York on Tuesday, July 15, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Philip Cardinale,	Chairman
James Wooten,	Member
Timothy Buckley,	Member
Barbara Blass,	Member
John Dunleavy,	Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Christina Kempner,	Director
Diane Wilhelm,	Deputy Town Clerk
Dawn Thomas,	Town Attorney

ABSENT:

Barbara Grattan,	Town Clerk
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Meeting opened

Chairman Cardinale: "CDA hearing so I guess we will be sitting now for a few moments and sit as the CDA and listen to the CDA hearing regarding the 2008 update of the 1993 East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan.

The CDA director is here. Come on up, please. Just say a few words if you would in introduction. This is a document that has I think been on the web for some time and I think there's some comments from the historic district people and some others. This is their opportunity. But please introduce the hearing."

Christina Kempner: "This is an update to the 1993 East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan. As a result of some zoning changes that were implemented after the comprehensive master plan was adopted, we have a master developer for downtown in place and this has been a long process.

We went through the hearing for the draft environmental impact statement that accompanies this document and it's all available on line and we hope to hear some interesting comments tonight."

Chairman Cardinale: "Thank you. Is- I know Mr. Wines, I think you had a comment. Anyone who would like to comment, Mr. Wines or anyone else, please come forward unless you didn't have a comment. Yeah, I know you- I had seen an e-mail that indicated you had some thoughts.

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Okay, this is Richard Wines who is our landmark preservation committee chair, am I right?"

Richard Wines: "You are correct, Phil."

Chairman Cardinale: "Okay, Richard Wines. And if there is anyone else that would like to comment, please follow. Richard, go ahead."

Richard Wines: "Thank you, Phil. First of all, I just wanted to say that these are long documents and I haven't had a chance to read everything in them in detail.

I do want to share a few thoughts from members of the landmark preservation commission.

But first I want to thank the consultants for their fine work on the plan and the accompanying GEIS documents. Certainly we on the landmarks commission look forward to working with them and with members of the town board to implement these recommendations. And, hopefully, along the way to create the landmarks of the future and strike the right balances between preservation and new construction in our historic downtown.

In addition to specific comments, I think it's important to say that we are concerned about preserving the heritage and certain architecturally significant structures.

It is also important to say that we want to advance the downtown revitalization to both re-use the historic buildings that are there and to build some exciting new buildings and public places, so we can really create a vibrant downtown we all wish to see.

Specifically we appreciate that the plan includes part of a chapter on the area's historic resources although we noted is one of the shorter ones in the report.

The consultants had done a good job describing the downtown historic district and its rules, listing the historic resources that are nationally and locally designated as well as those listed on our Riverhead survey of historic resources.

We also appreciate the recommendation in 10 page 7 that the town protect and enhance its historic resources by restricting development close to historic sites and continuing the landmark preservation commission's advisory role in these matters.

But we have a few specific recommendations. First of all, there are two good maps in the GEIS document showing the historic

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district. Figure 10-1 shows locally and nationally designated sites and Figure 10-2 shows 32 historic resources in the district.

Oddly this map does not include the Vail Leavitt Music Hall, the Suffolk Theater, the Davis Corwin House which are all on the first map. It would be useful to have all of these resources on one map so that it is visually apparent just how dense the historic resources are downtown. And we believe this map should appear not only in the GEIS document but also in the urban renewal plan itself.

Secondly, virtually all the properties that abut the north and west boundaries of the urban renewal district contain historic structures. Not showing these is a major issue since what is built in the area-- within the boundaries of the area, for instance the multi- the potential multi-story parking garage behind the Woolworth building, could shade and otherwise negatively impact the smaller scale historic districts-- historic structures nearby.

Third, although significant reference is made to Chapter 73 of the town code and its content, no reference is made to the landmark preservation commission's preliminary draft guidelines available on the town's web site by the way for the restoration and construction in the historic district or to the permanent guidelines that Chris' department has out to bid right now for guidelines for work in that district. And reference should also be made to similar guidelines from the Secretary of Interior for construction in historic districts.

Fourth, needless to say we note with alarm that some proposals being considered to solve the Roanoke Avenue-Peconic Avenue intersection could involve demolition of a significant swath of historic structures just outside the EMSURA (phonetic) boundaries. We hope some of the less destructive alternatives mentioned in the reports are considered.

This is also by the way one of the reasons why it's important that those historic buildings just outside the boundary be included on the map.

And, finally, we would like to see a clear and unequivocal statement that the historic resources in and near the EMSURA are critical to the success of a revised downtown and should be preserved and restored as a key element for the success of the downtown revitalization efforts.

But other than those comments, we think this is you know a very successful and important step to move downtown forward.

Thank you very much for your time."

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Chairman Cardinale: "Thank you."

Member Dunleavy: "Thank you."

Chairman Cardinale: "Thank, Richard. Is there any other comment? Please come up if there is."

Glynnis Berry: "Hi. My name is Glynnis Berry. First I wanted to congratulate both the town and community development for all the hard work they're doing and this is a great next step.

I do have a few comments on some of the details. For instance, on the bulk, I thought the suggestions were too general and should be based on clear objectives. For instance, pedestrian experience from the street, lights, and which views and who's looking and sort of a quality between the buildings. And also how it goes back down to the lower infra-structure around it.

So and that can be done with bulk studies and you can get a visual sense of what you're really getting.

Pyramid laws where you would have setbacks would be a way to sort of give balance to this. So I think more work needs to be done there.

Stormwater runoff. The suggestions were almost similar to what's expected for the whole town and we are talking about an area that already basically has 100% coverage and you're talking about an urban situation. So I think you need to look at alternatives and incentives for retainage on site and/or being innovative and taking some of that runoff and using it in landscaping on public land and there are some innovative approaches that should be looked at instead of requiring the same thing.

Parking. Requiring on site parking for residential units, again, will break up the sense of place in the downtown and I think you are really trying to create a center and not make it feel more suburban. So if you start requiring parking garages on every site, you are going to have curb cuts, you're going to have cars crossing the sidewalks and you're going to lose the ambience of an active street. So that's something you should look and I do have a bunch of suggestions on how you might be able to handle the parking issue and I can submit that in more detail in writing."

Chairman Cardinale: "I'd appreciate that. I'm very interested in how you would suggest handling the residential parking so if you could particularly focus on that. If we don't handle it on site, how else do you handle it?"

Glynnis Berry: "Do you want me to go down some of the ideas?"

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Chairman Cardinale: "If you could submit it in writing, that would be better. Thank you."

Glynnis Berry: "Okay. And the others-- the traffic. I was probably most disappointed with those suggestions because we're trying to create a pedestrian environment and the suggestions were more to aid through traffic and weren't really understanding the traffic patterns that are going to be created by the site.

For instance, there's no discussion about accessing East Main Street from Roanoke which you can't do now. So where does that traffic go? Also, some of the suggestions, a left turn lane means you're going to be taking parking and sidewalks so it is not a pedestrian friendly suggestion at all, not for the downtown area.

Also the taking of buildings to straighten that jog, I am also opposed to it because that's what gives Riverhead its character. It's historic. It also works spacially to halt traffic and re-direct it along Main Street so it's traffic calming and it's very positive traffic calming and, yes, there's a level of service issue with an off set intersection but maybe more of a circular form of traffic where you can always make a right turn. All the left turns are what causes the traffic to sort of have lower levels of service.

So I really feel the traffic portion needs a lot more work in order to understand the dynamic of a pedestrian environment."

Chairman Cardinale: "Thank you. One of the things that people may not know about this process is every comment that is made at these hearings is addressed in regard to the generic environmental impact statement underlining this, the draft. If you make a comment, they address it before the final gets issued.

So if you have any comment, please make it verbally. If you don't and you want to make it in writing, these comments will be addressed before we conclude the process.

Anyone have any other comment? Yes."

Ed Purcell: "I know you're going to not believe it, but I am ignorant of specifically what it says because I didn't read it.

But, when it comes to the parking garage and the fact that it may put shadows over the top of those old houses that are historic, something that I had suggested in the past because Main Street is at least one level below the parking area on what used to be First Street, it might be advantageous even though it might be more expensive to dig that out and have one level below ground there and in that sense you'll still get the parking without shadowing the

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other buildings that are around there. That would be a much better suggestion.

As I said, it may be more expensive, but it would fit.

Also, straightening out Roanoke Avenue, no matter how you straighten it out, you still have the circle. And it doesn't make a bit of difference if you can get across East Main Street— across Main Street if then you go down Peconic Avenue and there's a circle. And for the most part from what I had understood by listening to the local radio, the supervisor in Southampton said there is absolutely no idea from them to do away with the circle.

So no matter what you do with trying to straighten out Roanoke Avenue which I'm against, it won't assist in the movement of traffic as long as there is a circle over there.

So, I think it's just a waste of effort, time and money and doing away with a beautiful building that is there on the corner and some of the other smaller buildings that may be historic because a number of other historic buildings have become parking lots which most people don't know of what used to be on Roanoke Avenue that were taken down years ago. And it would be a shame to lose any more than we presently have lost.

Thank you."

Chairman Cardinale: "Thank you."

Diane Wilhelm: "What is your name, please?"

Ed Purcell: "Ed Purcell."

Diane Wilhelm: "Thank you."

Chairman Cardinale: "Come forward."

Larry Oxman: "Good evening. Larry Oxman. I'm glad the study is completed. It's a very important study obviously updating a plan that began in 1993. I would ask that the town board considers leaving this public hearing open through the next meeting so that at the next town board meeting other people would have a chance to comment. For instance the Business Improvement District Management Association meets next week. We have not had a chance really to discuss this.

I am thrilled that it's on line and that we will be able to view it that way rather than having to either purchase or peruse an extremely large document. But it's a very important document and it's a guideline for— well, if it hasn't been updated since 1993, just project the number of years before it will be re-addressed.

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Glynnis' comments I thought were very appropriate and certainly need to be studied. So I would ask that something of this magnitude and importance, that the town board please leave it open and actually consider having another opportunity for people to speak and address this at the next coming up meeting.

Thank you."

Chairman Cardinale: "Thank you. Any other comment? Okay. I'm going to as I always do leave this open for written comment. The— typically we'd leave it open for 10 days so that we would not have two meetings where we would have a hearing.

Anybody have— I don't have my counsel here as to whether there's any possibility of taking up the suggestion but I will ask if we can leave it open any longer, but I'd like to leave it open at least 10 days for written comment to Friday. If we can leave it open through the meeting, I will indicate or if the board elects to, but they need to discuss that.

Okay, so it's open for written comment and it continues open until the 25th at 4:30 pm and would you speak with Steve Latham, please, and find out if there's any difficulty in leaving it open any longer or re-noticing it for specific additional comment? All right.

That is the 7:00 hearing."

Public hearing closed
Left open for written comment to
July 25, 2008 at 4:30 p.m.