

April 13, 2022

Village Council Building Ordinance Amendment Workshop

Attendance:

Mayor Nelson
Mrs. Bryan
Mrs. Bruener
Mr. Miron
Mr. Hodgson
Mr. Tomlinson
Mr. Fulmer

Also:

D. J. Doody
Sean Swartz
Starr Paton

The roll was called, and a quorum was determined.

Mr. Doody gave an overview of the process of the workshop to the council and resident attendees. No action or vote will be taken by the village council. This is an open discussion to gather concepts and ideas and reach a consensus as to going forward with changes or taking no action. Any discussion of changes will be followed up at the next village council meeting.

Mayor Nelson stated the purpose of the workshop is consideration of amendments to any elements of the village building ordinances. Mayor Nelson stated public comments will be limited to 3 minutes.

Public comments opened.

Dr. David Geduld, owner of 7 Seneca Rd. and 32 Seneca Rd. discussed addressing flooding and local flood hazard areas. He suggested the village review and adopt regulations regulating base flood elevations on construction of new homes and substantial renovations and modernize the code to reflect the issues of flood hazards.

Mr. Alex Soto, owner of 28 Cayuga Rd. and Beach Club president spoke about the Architectural Review Committee's role in enforcing the code to new construction projects. Mr. Soto stated our code is consistent with City of Ft. Lauderdale and we are governed by FEMA guidelines for base flood elevations. Mr. Soto spoke regarding total height of the buildings on the lot to 35 foot maximum and the setbacks of building of that height. He would like a better definition of "grade" as a starting point of reference in determining height of structures. Mr. Soto would like to change this to the ARC's definition of "flood plain BFE + 12 inches". Structures in X zone would be the average of the 4 corners of lot. Mr. Soto also asked for additional language

regarding lot coverage. Currently, there is not specific lot coverage percentages in the code, but the ARC would recommend 35%. Other items that need more definition were overhangs, parking in the swale area and exterior lighting. He would encourage architects to review the village code and restrictive covenants prior to submission of plans.

Mr. Greg Sollitto, owner of 3 Oneida Lane, asked for more design flexibility on use of lot and possibly approving front facing garages rather than having a need for variances. He stated perhaps we could allow the homes to move forward on the lots to allow for more water retention and greenspace.

Mr. Kiko Franco, owner of 38 Cayuga Rd. is a member of the ARC committee for the Beach Club. Mr. Franco stated front facing garages are prohibited in the Beach Club restrictive covenants. Any changes on items in the restrictive covenants would need to start at the Beach Club to change the covenants. Mr. Franco stated the Florida Building Code is updated every 3 years and address FEMA and floodplain concerns. He agrees with Mr. Soto regarding floodplain base flood elevation issues.

Mr. Rick Ramirez, owner of 24 Winnebago Rd. spoke regarding code enforcement issues. Mayor Nelson stated code enforcement is not being discussed at the workshop.

Mrs. Beth Geduld, owner of 7 Seneca Rd. and 32 Seneca Rd. discussed the determination of grade on lots with homes being demolished. Mrs. Geduld also discussed water retention on properties and street flooding and raising seawall limits on properties along the intracoastal and interior lakes as high as possible. Mrs. Geduld also discussed the need for lot coverage review and issue of septic tanks, drain fields and underground propane tanks using a good portion of lots. We need to update or ordinances regarding water or we could be looking at a loss for all.

Mr. Sergio Villarreal of 20 Cayuga Rd. discussed adding greener solutions to parking in the village. He has installed a commercial type of system with plastic mesh blocks that support the car and grass can grow through as an alternative to tile or pavers.

Dr. David Geduld stated the issue of older 1 story homes next to newer 2 story homes will always be an issue but prohibiting growth and 21st century changes will keep the property values low. We need to start with FEMA and flood elevations and move forward.

Mr. Alex Soto asked the council to read the code and become familiar with it. Parking on the grass is against the code and parking in the right of way is not allowed. The right of way is owned by all shareholders, and it appears there are driveways in the right of way that were allowed before the ARC was formed. There are many things in the code that are good. The council needs to identify the issues of height, grade, seawall heights and consider specific areas rather than focusing on the entire code.

Mayor Nelson closed the public hearing.

Mayor Nelson stated the next step is discussion by council members.

Mr. Miron discussed the definition of the term “grade” as it is not clearly defined in the code. Mr. Miron also stated lot coverage and overall height are determined by virtue of grade. We need to determine how the height is determined. Mr. Doody responded we can research other cities for their definitions of “grade” and how that used for determining overall building height.

Mrs. Bruener stated both grade and lot coverage need to be defined. We need to better manage drainage in the village. Pavers are not very “green” although there are newer permeable options. Allowing front facing garages versus side garages could allow for more green space and have easier access for today’s larger vehicles. Mr. Tomlinson replied that the Beach Club Restrictive Covenants would need to be changed. Mrs. Bruener stated many people have come to the council for variances for the front facing garages. Mr. Hodgson also stated the Beach Club covenants would need to be addressed first before the village code could be amended in this case.

Mrs. Bryan discussed parking on the grass and in the Beach Club right of way as this is not private property and is owned by all shareholders. The ordinance prohibits parking in the right of way. Mayor Nelson stated there are two issues to address – parking in grass and parking in the right of way.

Mr. Tomlinson discussed other areas such as Sunrise Intracoastal where huge homes have been built. He really doesn’t want to see that in Sea Ranch and feels a percentage of floor ratio should be maintained. Mr. Hodgson stated that this is current trend and is more profitable at this time.

Mr. Miron commented on the floodplain elevations and Mrs. Geduld’s comments. He stated environmental concerns are a reality and mitigation of sea level rise on lakefront and intracoastal waterway properties is necessary. Residents need to maintain water on their properties. Seawalls on both lakes and intracoastal are all at different elevations.

Mr. Doody advised the mayor to consider these issues at the next council meeting and decide whether to seek a proposal from a planning firm. The council can decide on the scope of changes to ordinances and amendments.

Mrs. Bryan discussed the points raised by the Beach Club ARC committee and thanked them for putting that together for the council.

Mr. Hodgson and Mrs. Bruener stated heavy rain events will show how well the swales and retaining walls on the newer properties are working and this area needs to be monitored.

Mr. Soto stated that Mr. Villarreal’s grass parking area at 20 Cayuga Rd. is illegal and that a vehicle needs to be pulled up out of the right of way. Mr. Soto stated that last year an automatic valve was installed in the lake to reduce lake levels when there are heavy rains.

Dr. & Mrs. Geduld reiterated the need to adapt rules and ordinances to address flooding concerns.

Mr. Rick Ramirez commented on the variances for front facing garages and stated it becomes an equity problem when developing plans for renovation or new home. He would also like the ARC and council to consult with builders and architects to see that their problems have been in dealing with our code.

Mayor Nelson closed the workshop.

Adjourn.