

Memo

To: Williston Planning Commission
From: Matt Boulanger, Director of Planning
Cc: Williston Selectboard, Volunteers, Citizens, Other Interested Parties
Date: February 15, 2022
Re: **Taft Corners Form-Based Code: Hearing Draft Progress**



OVERVIEW

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Planning Commission, Selectboard, and interested parties with an update on the Planning Commission's progress with the Taft Corners Form-Based Code Project and bylaw amendment public hearing. This project entered the Planning Commission Public hearing stage of review on February 1, 2022 and the hearing continued to February 15, 2022. **For the 2/15 public hearing, staff recommends the Planning Commission focus on the items in #3, "Possible Changes following the 2/1 public hearing, to be discussed on 2/15."**

Update

Since the 2/1 hearing, staff has held the following meetings and received the following correspondence:

- Chris Snyder, Andy Rowe, Jeff Nick, Jeff Davis, Al Senecal, Brian Bertsch with Matt Boulanger, Emily Heymann, Melinda Scott, Taylor Newton (CCRPC), Geoff Ferrell, Keith Covington, and Meghan Cope (2:30-3:00) on Feb 8th from 2:30-4:15 pm
- Elizabeth Logan (Hamlet resident) with Matt Boulanger & Emily Heymann to primarily discuss green space and affordable housing on Feb 9th
- Al Senecal and Brian Bertsch with Matt Boulanger, Emily Heymann, Geoff Ferrell, Taylor Newton on Feb 9th
- Jeff Davis and Jeff Nick with Matt Boulanger, Melinda Scott, Geoff Ferrell, Taylor Newton on Feb 11th
- [Email correspondence with Carroll Lawes \(Dunmore Lane resident\) regarding traffic, residential density, and connectivity near Dunmore Lane](#)
- Email correspondence with

THE WARNED HEARING DRAFT

As a reminder, the Planning Commission Public Hearing Draft for the Form-Based Code bylaw amendment project includes the following components:

- The [Form-Based Code](#) Language, Sections 1-8
- The [Regulating Plan Map](#)
- A new proposed [Official Map](#)
- An amended [Official Zoning Map](#) (to add form-based code overlay district boundaries)
- Amendments to existing Williston Unified Development Bylaw chapters necessary to accommodate the Form-Based Code area as an overlay district and to include public parks and streets required by the Regulating Plan on the Transportation and Recreation Impact Fee project lists.

CHANGES TO THE WARNED HEARING DRAFT

The following are significant changes to the warned hearing draft that have been or will be discussed by the Planning Commission prior to transmittal to the Selectboard for their review and public hearing.

1. Changes discussed prior to 2/1 public hearing

- District Names: The Commission's intent is to focus on "Taft Corners" as a place and avoid the word "urban" which has a negative connotation of skyscrapers and concrete, whereas the Williston Form-Based Code strives for a livable town neighborhood with wide tree lawns, Vermont vernacular, and no skyscrapers (or landscrapers)!
 - Taft Corners Core or Taft Corners Town Center/Core (formerly Urban General)

- Storefront Core (formerly Storefront)
- Taft Corners Transitional Neighborhood (formerly Urban General 2)
- Taft Corners Strollable Neighborhood (formerly Urban Neighborhood)
- Parking:
 - Cap minimum required parking for reserved and shared combined at 2.0 spaces per unit to align with existing parking thresholds. The Form-Based Code parking calculation is based on bedroom count.
 - Raise shared parking minimums were raised, up to the current minimums required by the bylaw.
 - The code does not have a maximum and dormitories associated with schools and colleges have partial exemption from zoning, so units that anticipate a 1:1 ratio of parking to bedrooms or greater will have flexibility to meet their parking demand.

2. Changes introduced at the 2/1 public hearing

- Provisions for curved Required Building Lines (RBL) (such as Blair Park Road or Harvest Lane)
 - Allow a maximum straight 60-foot façade on a curved building line even when it cannot meet the 24" range along the RBL.
- Provisions for corner lots and lots with multiple frontages:
 - Reduce required frontage on corner lots from 80% to 70%
 - Remove alley space when calculating required frontage

3. Possible Changes following the 2/1 public hearing, to be discussed on 2/15 (direction for 3/1)

- Entire Area:
 - Allow more flexibility for administrative changes to the Regulating Plan.
 - Possible text change to increase administrative flexibility on street placement from 50 to 75 feet
- Southeast Quadrant (Cottonwood and the surrounding LaPierre Property)
 - [Regulating Plan: Adjust street locations](#) on outer street to allow more street frontage with development on both sides of the street
 - Regulating Plan: Adjust street frontage around Bur Oak Knoll to allow more street frontage with development on both sides of the street
- Northeast Quadrant (Essex Alliance Church/Snyder Property)
 - [Regulating Plan: Adjust street locations](#) on outer street to allow more street frontage with development on both sides of the street
- Southeast Quadrant (Jeff Nick and Jeff Davis, Taft Corners Park)
 - Allowance of 1-story buildings in Taft Corners Park.
 - [Allowance of 1-story buildings 150 or more feet](#) south of Marshall Avenue OR
 - Shift- Form-Based Code Overlay District Boundary to the "150-foot" line OR to the centerline of Marshall Avenue
 - Shift the "Trader Lane Green" to the west.