



An artistic future

Christopher Albert, federal projects director with Sen. Jack Reed's office, met with JAC board members Dianne Grippi, President Kate Petrie, Elizabeth Congdon and Lisa Randall at the proposed home of the new Jamestown Arts Center to discuss possible grants and funding opportunities. The JAC board, now in the midst of a capital campaign, expects a mid-December closing on the Valley Street property. Once the building is officially acquired, the board will kick off a community fundraising campaign to help fund renovations and programming. Visit www.jamestownartcenter.org for more information.

Planning Commission tackles wording of zoning amendments

By Iain Wilson

The sometimes controversial zoning ordinance amendments may have been approved by the Town Council, but the work isn't finished for the Jamestown Planning Commission. In its first meeting since the approval, the commission looked to address a loophole related to duplex dwellings.

The commission began the meeting by clarifying and revising technical terms and definitions within the complex ordinance, churning over proper usage of the terms "duplex," "apartment" and "multi-family home."

State law uses the terms "dwelling two household" and "dwelling one household" in place of duplex and single-family home, and the commission found it appropriate to add the official terms to the amendments. The term "dwelling two household" will replace the word "duplex" in the ordinance.

Commission Chair Michael Swistak explained the basic translation of a dwelling two household: "A dwelling two household is a building used exclusively for occupancy by two households living independently," he said.

Once the terminology was agreed upon, the commission moved on to discussion of a proposed amendment to the section relating to duplexes and multi-family homes – a topic to which it devoted the remainder of the meeting.

Town Planner Lisa Bryer proposed the change after noticing that by removing varying lot sizes for each individual use, it was technically possible to build duplexes on a lot that is the same size used for single-family homes.

The commission agreed to keep current lot sizes for duplexes in the CD and CL districts on the island.

Table 3-2 of the ordinance states that in order to construct a duplex in the CL district, the lot size should be 8,000 sq. ft. In the CD district, 5,000 sq. ft. of land is needed.

The meeting got a bit heated when the zones in question were R20 and R8. Increasing lot sizes in that area would essentially limit the implementation of duplexes.

"We want to discourage the possible evolution of the R20 neighborhood into becoming streets and streets of duplexes,"

Swistak said.

Room for discussion exists in the location and dimensions of the housing. The ordinance divides the island into zones, and the commission seemed reluctant to fully support a high influx of duplex housing in the R8 and R20 residential zones. The zones in question have a distinct single-family home characteristic, and the commission agreed the intention is to, as Commissioner Duncan Pendleton said, "Preserve the single-family nature of the neighborhood."

Only one member of the public attended the meeting, and he questioned the ordinance's effects on the transformation of an existing home into an apartment or a downtown business with an apartment above.

The commission agreed that his concerns were justified, and also served as proof that although the ordinance amendments are in place, perfecting the details will be the next challenge.

The zoning ordinance amendments became effective immediately after its approval on Oct. 22, according to Bryer.



Congratulations to the Town Council and School Committee candidates on being elected / re-elected to office. We are all lucky to have you step forward to serve.

Thanks to the Jamestown Shores Association the Jamestown Press, the Jamestown Taxpayers Association, and the Jamestown Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring the events that gave the people an opportunity to meet the 2009 candidates and discuss the issues important to our community.

Thanks to the other Independent candidates who came forward on short notice. "An election is a terrible thing to waste" and this year it almost didn't happen.

A Special Thanks to those who have supported my efforts to serve by honoring me with your vote all these years.

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