

Workshop Summary
March 9, 2002

(148)

Our group consisted of Chris Belcher, Joe Capowski, Pat Evans, Catherine Frank, Judy Johnson, Alan Rimer and Kay Tapp. We were assigned to look at the ways that the new development ordinance might affect re-development in downtown.

We looked at the map and found that 23 of the 41 lots in the hypothetical but realistic example would be non-conforming under the new ordinance. We concluded that requirements for minimum lot sizes and floor area ratios in the new ordinance would mean a great uniformity in redevelopment. While we wanted to remain objective, we felt that the character of our community would be compromised by greater uniformity.

We also looked at the new maximum parking requirements and concluded that whether in single or multi-family houses that new requirements would have an impact on the way that cars are "handled" in our in-town neighborhoods. The group further generated the "philosophical statement" that any new ordinance should help us to "handle the cars we attract."

We found some confusion caused by the lack of setbacks in the new ordinance. There was some speculation that the new ordinances might lead to the creation of "McMansions" because they seem to allow building from lot line to lot line. There was some confusion about the ways that setbacks and buffer requirements would work in different zonings. There was confusion about the ways that building to the lot lines would blur the distinction between single-family and multi-family houses or between condominium units and detached housing.

Finally, we found that there might be some confusion about the ways that overlay zones like historic districts and neighborhood conservation districts would work with the proposed zoning regulations. The group generated the philosophical statement that overlay districts and zones should not be used as ways to control or modify zoning, especially in close-to-town neighborhoods.