

**MALABAR TOWN COUNCIL
JOINT TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
November 20th, 2023, 6:30 PM**

This meeting of the Malabar Town Council was held at Town Hall at 2725 Malabar Road.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Council Chair Mayor Patrick T. Reilly called meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Mayor Reilly led P&P.

2. ROLL CALL:

CHAIR:

MAYOR PATRICK T. REILLY

VICE CHAIR:

DAVID SCARDINO

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MARISA ACQUAVIVA

BRIAN VAIL

JIM CLEVINGER - EXCUSED

MARY HOFMEISTER

PLANNING AND ZONING MEMBERS:

DOUG DIAL

LIZ RITTER

MEGHAN WOLFGRAM

DAVID TAYLOR

TOWN MANAGER:

LISA MORRELL

TOWN CLERK:

RICHARD KOHLER

3. WORKSHOP ACTION:

a. Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Changes along Malabar Road

Mayor Reilly began by stating that he and Staff have received many requests for information about the properties near Palm Bay Hospital. Generally, the first question asked is what the property can be rezoned for, as there is a surplus of office space in the area. He recommends that the area be rezoned to RM-6, and the FLUM be changed to HDR. There has been limited growth at Palm Bay Hospital. He feels that affordable housing is important and reiterates that it does not mean low-income housing. This area is also the only area of Town with access to city water and sewer. He plans to provide his presentation (included in the agenda), request a few developers explain their expertise, and request a straw vote for support of this proposed zoning and land use change.

PZ Member Wolfgram asked why R/LC would be less efficient. Mayor Reilly states the density is lower.

PZ Member asks what the height is in Example #1. Mayor Reilly states a maximum of three stories. PZ Ritter reiterates that the suggested changes are for residential, not commercial.

PZ Member Taylor asks once the zoning is changed, could anything be allowed? Mayor states that only the permitted or conditional uses of SFR, MFR, or Townhouses.

CM Vail states he remembers doing these types of meetings in the past and remembers having OI intended as a commercial center. It is the only property like it in Town, and he states he would prefer to keep it west of Weber Road. Mayor states there has been no development with the current zoning.

PZ Wolfgram asks if the Hospital has room to expand? TM Morrell states Health First has a lot of land around the County and set plans that do not include Malabar.

PZ Dial asks what the maximum density is? Mayor Reilly states the most restrictive we have is RM-6, or 6 units per acre.

CM Vail states in the past we have received pressure from developers. We have stood our ground and gained some nice developments. Mayor Reilly states that it has been OI for a long time.

Bruce Moia, MBV Engineering – Holmes Reginal has 6 parcels for sale, and nothing has happened. Generally, developers watch zoning trends. He feels there should be a transition

area of 6 units per acre between the 20 units per acre in Palm Bay, and the 1.5 acre per home of Malabar. He also states that Apartments will likely not be profitable with the 6 units per acre. He feels that he has seen a lot of requests for duplexes and townhomes. The only office building he worked on in the past 5 years was a failed project in Downtown Melbourne. He feels it was a mistake to Zone the area OI and hopes it will be changed soon. He reiterates his opinion that this is a reasonable proposal.

Brent Howels, Legacy Group – He is from a Land Development company. Generally, his company only does master planned communities. He built housing and offices for hospitals like Mount Siani and Cleveland Clinic. He feels that COVID-19 brought a big change to the market. With more people working from home, OI zoning has become less valuable. Palm Bay hospital is looking to grow, and already have their land. They are hoping to hire 650 specialists in the next few years. He feels they will be looking for nice homes. Northrop Grumman is also bringing more employees to the area that will require housing. He feels the best way to have the hospital to expand would be to build nice Town Homes near the hospital.

Craig Hessey, Rockledge – He has been a developer in Brevard County for a long time. He suggests that expanding the zoning along Malabar Road would help preserve the Rural Residential nature of the core of Town. He suggests mimicking Martin County in the zoning development, as they are rural in nature, but have developed many commercial areas. He owns one of the parcels in the area being discussed. He would propose building a 55+ community of Town Homes. A large number of people are retiring, and they generally do not want a large property to maintain. He believes this will be a positive change.

PZ Member Ritter states she believes this will be a good change. We tried the OI, and it didn't work. This area has water and sewer. PZ Member Wolfram asks about Berri Patch. Would they be affected? Mayor states that and some others will still stay OI. PZ Member Dial asks if there are any proposals on the table that would benefit from this? Mayor Reilly states no, this is all new. PZ Wolfram states this is just a proposed change. Any development would still need approval, right? TM Morrell states a site plan approval would be required. CM Vail states he has mixed emotions, as he believes OI may be developed in the future. He is hesitant to change from OI to RM-6, as that is a high density. Mayor Reilly states he it could be an effective buffer zone from the 20 units per acre. CM Vail states there are other areas for this kind of development, and our Charter states we are a Rural Residential town. CM Acquaviva states she has had a lot of calls about development, and if she is representing the people who call her, she would not support this. She feels the change from development on Corey Road. She feels the tone of the Town is to keep it rural. Mayor asks if she knows what the zoning was in Country Cove before it was developed? RR-65. CM Hofmeister states her concerns are with traffic and drainage. We just had a large rain event that required roads to be shut down. The traffic has been outrageous recently. She states FDOT may be widening Malabar Road. PZ Ritter states she feels we could get a light there if required. Mayor states he does not understand her issue with stormwater. CM Hofmeister states that the Walden Road closure has increased traffic. CM Vail states the area behind his shop floods. CM Scardino states the surface run off and traffic is much greater in OI than in RM-6. With the existing infrastructure, he feels this is a good use. CM Acquaviva states the area west of Walmart on Malabar Road will greatly increase the traffic of the Town. She feels any development in that area would increase the traffic. TM Morrell states there is a monthly TPO meeting, and it appears Malabar Road are dropping in priority. We asked for a flashing light at the Fire Station, and were told no by the state. CM Scardino states there would be more traffic under the current zoning. Mayor Reilly states FDOT estimates 15k cars on Malabar Road, and we were not in the top hundred of

crashes. PZ Wolfgram asks if there are zoning designations for multifamily outside of RM-6? Mayor states we also have RM-4.

Mayor Reilly asks for a straw vote:

- 1: I support - 3
- 2: Maybe - 1
- 3: No - 4

Mayor Reilly asked the dissenting votes to explain their reasoning.

CM Vail states he believes the density would be too high. CM Acquaviva states she is representing her residents. CM Hofmeister states the high density. PZ Member Taylor states the high density.

3. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 P.M.

BY: Patrick T. Reilly
Mayor Patrick T. Reilly, Council Chair

ATTEST:
Richard V. Kohler
Richard Kohler, Town Clerk

Date Approved: 12/04/2023.