

Blight Ordinance Status Report

- **February 23, 2021** – Planning Commission meeting – no public comments were permitted.

Minutes of meeting related to the Blight Ordinance

T. Welles briefly addressed an email that he had received from Roger Van Ausdal on behalf of the group Enhancing Redding's Future (ERF), although he noted that his comments must be brief as the correspondence was not sent to the Land Use Office and was, therefore, not on the agenda. He noted the decision that had been made at the last Planning Commission meeting to defer discussion of a Blight Ordinance until it could be done in person due to concerns about disenfranchising individuals without access to Zoom meetings. He also reviewed the duties of a Planning Commission and noted Planning's role as advisory to the Board of Selectmen.

A. Pardee stated that she had reviewed statutes regarding a Zoning Citation Ordinance; she said that such an ordinance would not be part of the Zoning Regulations but would need to be adopted by the Selectmen in the same manner as a Blight Ordinance. She also clarified that the enforcement options in Section 8-12 of the Connecticut General Statutes are imposed only by the courts via litigation and at considerable expense to the town. Hearing no further discussion or comments, D. Barrett moved to adjourn the meeting.

- **February 22, 2021** – Letter sent to the Planning Commission with a copy to the BOS requesting that our letter of February 5, 2021, be entered into the record for the record for the February 23rd meeting along with the petition signed by 30 Redding residents.
- **February 5, 2021** – Letter sent to Planning Commission with a copy to the BOS with a copy of the petition. We requested to be on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting in February.
- **Feb 2, 2021** – ERF note sent to Planning Commission and First Selectwoman confirming submission of Blight Ordinance to Land Use and a supporting petition with 30 signatures.
- **Jan 29, 2021** – ERF submitted a revised Blight Ordinance to the Land Use office.
- **Jan 26, 2021** – The Blight Ordinance was discussed at the Planning Commission meeting with the First Selectwoman and Town Land Use

Director present. It was indicated that the ordinance should have been submitted to Land Use (**Note** – change to advice given Dec 8th meeting). It was mentioned that the town attorney had reviewed the ordinance and felt that the enforcement procedures could be simplified. The appeals process was discussed; the BOS would be the appeals board. (**Note** - this differs from the Ridgefield ordinance, which has a separate appeals board). The planning commission focused on the specificity of Redding's Zoning Ordinance and contrasted it with the intentional flexibility built into the proposed Blight Ordinance. There was discussion on the compassionate enforcement used in zoning. The use of a citation mechanism along with modifications to the zoning ordinance was discussed in lieu of a separate Blight Ordinance. It was also suggested that any adoption of a new ordinance should happen when a public hearing, with voters present, could take place. (**Note** - Dec 8th meeting it was confirmed a video vote was acceptable by the First Selectwoman)

- **January 19th, 2021** – ERF sent a revised Blight Ordinance to the Planning Commission, with a copy to the First Selectwoman, with guidance on how the Planning Commission might address concerns raised at the previous meeting. ERF indicated they were happy to provide an advisory role as necessary.
- **Jan 12th, 2021** - The Blight Ordinance was discussed at the Planning Commission meeting with the First Selectwoman present. Initial concerns on the part of commission members related to hardship situations, and concern for dealing with aesthetics. Composition of the Blight Prevention Board was discussed, and it was suggested that religious leaders might be involved. It was stated that the ordinance had been reviewed by town council and suggested that the commission and ERF work on modifying the current document.
- **Dec 21, 2020** - The Blight Ordinance proposal was discussed at the BOS meeting. A vote was taken to refer the ordinance to the Planning Commission not the Zoning Commission.
- **Dec 8, 2020** – The Blight Ordinance proposal was introduced at the Planning Commission with the First Selectwoman present. The commission was informed that in discussion with the Land Use Director the ordinance should be reviewed by the Planning Commission not the Zoning Commission. The First Selectwoman also informed the meeting that a public vote could be completed via Zoom video.
- **Dec 7, 2020** – ERF sent a copy of the draft ordinance plus a position paper to all members of the Planning Commission plus a copy to the First Selectwoman.

- **Nov 16th, 2020** – Blight Ordinance proposal was discussed. It was determined that it had to go to the Zoning Commission for review.
- **Oct 19th, 2020** – Blight Ordinance proposal was discussed at the BOS meeting. There was no specific action coming out of the meeting.
- **Sept 10th, 2020** - ERF submitted by email the Blight Ordinance proposal to the Board of Selectmen requesting a hearing at the Sept 24th BOS meeting for consideration and discussion.