

SUFFOLK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

c/o Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning
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Joanne Minieri, Deputy County Executive and Commissioner, Department of Economic Development
and Planning

Sarah Lansdale, Director of Planning

Notice of Meeting

March 4, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.

Maxine S. Postal Auditorium
Evans K. Griffing Building, Riverhead County Center
300 Center Drive Riverhead, New York 11901

Tentative Agenda Includes:

1. Swearing in of New Member
2. Meeting Summary for January and February 2015
3. Public Portion
4. Chairman's Report
5. Director's Report
6. Guest Speaker
 - Mitchell Zwaik and Leah Sullivan from Zwaik, Gilberto & Associates, "Agriculture and Immigration"
 - Jonathan Keyes, Director, Office of Downtown Revitalization, Town of Babylon
Eric Zamft, Project Manager, Office of Downtown Revitalization, Town of Babylon
7. Section A 14-14 thru A 14-23 & A 14-25 of the Suffolk County Administrative Code
 - Proposed Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District
8. Section A-14-24 of the Suffolk County Administrative Code
None
9. Other Business:
 - Southampton IMA
 - Resolution on LIRR Electrification

NOTE: The **next meeting** of the SUFFOLK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION will be held on April 1, 2015
2 p.m. Town of East Hampton Board Room



Steven Bellone
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE
Department of
Economic Development and Planning

Joanne Minieri
Deputy County Executive and Commissioner

Division of Planning
and Environment

STAFF REPORT
SECTIONS A14-14 THRU A14-24 OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Applicant: Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District
Municipality: Town of Babylon
Location: Copiague

Received: 2/13/15
File Number: BA-15-01

Jurisdiction: Zoning Code Amendment

PROPOSAL DETAILS

OVERVIEW – The Town of Babylon has referred to the offices of the Suffolk County Planning Commission the proposed adoption of amendments to the Zoning Law of the Town of Babylon and the Building Zone Map of the Town of Babylon, to create a Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District. The Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Proposed Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District, as well as, the entire proposed zoning code amendment is found at the following link: <http://www.townofbabylon.com/DocumentCenter/View/1308>.

The DC Zoning District is being advanced by the Town Board of the Town of Babylon in order to implement the vision for Copiague provided in the Copiague Vision Plan. The Vision Plan was adopted by the Babylon Town Board in 2009 and was prepared to provide a long-term planning framework for downtown redevelopment. The DC Zoning District is intended to facilitate a vibrant transit-oriented downtown containing a mix of housing types and retail, office, personal service and other compatible uses that contribute to a sense of Community. The Babylon DC Zoning District regulations are designed to build upon the strengths of Copiague and especially the downtown area, including the presence of the Copiague Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Station, Veterans Memorial and Copiague Parks, and a diverse residential community that is within walking distance to many of the downtown’s commercial establishments.

The area subject to the proposed DC Zoning District would encompass the area within convenient walking distance of the Copiague Train Station (0.25 miles) and is approximately 35 acres in size. The Study area is located in the north-central portion of Copiague and generally is comprised of

those properties fronting along Great Neck Road from Campagnoli Avenue to Hollywood Avenue/East Gate, along the south side of Marconi Boulevard from Molly Street to Verrazano Avenue, and along Railroad Avenue from Pine Street to approximately adjacent to Verrazano Avenue.

Implementation of the proposed DC Zoning District is anticipated to result in new development that is not currently permitted under existing zoning in the Study Area. A full build out scenario under the proposed zoning district, as is reported in the DGEIS, projects the following:

- 420 residential units overall, consisting of:
 - 369 apartments
 - 20 townhomes
 - 12 single-family homes
 - 16 two-family homes
 - 3 three family homes
- 245,064 square feet of retail
- 43,500 sf of restaurant
- 88,095 sf of office
- 28,196 sf of park and open space
- 55,186 sf of institutional and civic space
- 1,567 parking spaces

The DC district would permit a variety of principle uses on the ground and upper stories in mixed – use or single use buildings intended to provide for new and needed housing opportunities, job creation, encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties, provide architectural, streetscape and open space improvements and foster the revitalization of downtown Copiague. As proposed, offices would be permitted only on the upper stories as part of a mixed-use building.

The DC Zoning District would also permit, by special permit, on-premises food and beverage consumption establishments (on the ground story only) and outdoor dining (accessory to an on-premises food and beverage consumption establishment). For uses within the District, a base set of lot and bulk controls are included which could be altered through the proposed incentives provided in the law. The base set of controls include a limit of building height to three stories maximum building area of the lot at 80%, maximum residential density of 35 units/acre and a maximum FAR of 2.0.

In order to encourage development within downtown Copiague, the proposed zoning amendments include a system of zoning incentive or bonuses. Such zoning incentives would be available to applicants in exchange for specific physical, social, or cultural benefits or amenities. Such community benefits or amenities could include among others, the following on a particular location or generally within the community:

Public parking
Open or park space
Downtown infrastructure improvements
Affordable housing
Sustainable building techniques

The incentives or bonuses would include the following:

Increased residential density of up to 48 units per acre
Increased FAR of up to 2.2

Increased height of up to 4 stories
Reduced parking requirements
Modifications to other land development standards

The DC Zoning District contains specific minimum off-street parking requirements for a number of uses that differ from the general standards provided by other sections of the Babylon Code. These standards reflect the DC Districts immediate access to transit options. The proposed District also contains a number of design considerations in order to improve the existing aesthetic appearance of downtown Copiague and to promote a high quality streetscape and pedestrian environment. In addition, specific regulation related to signage, lighting, buffering, outdoor storage and green building and site planning techniques are included.

The entire area proposed for the Town of Babylon Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District is located within the Southwest Sewer District (Suffolk County SD #3).

As detailed in the GEIS anticipated environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the DC district are “principally the beneficial effects of adopting zoning that provides for the more orderly growth, development and redevelopment of the downtown area. In addition, new development would provide new tax ratables and jobs, stabilize neighborhood conditions, upgrade infrastructure systems, and enhance the image of the community. Projected development or redevelopment encouraged by the implementation of the proposed Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District may have adverse environmental impacts. Anticipated among them include “temporary or short-term impacts associated with construction, while others would be long-term impacts, including increased traffic and increased demand on infrastructure, utilities and community services.”

Mitigations proposed to offset the potential impacts of development in the DC district include approximately eleven (11) congestion mitigation solutions to intersections and roadways within the district. In addition, a number of general parameters and criteria for site specific review of future development and improvements have been established and are included within chapter six (6) of the DGEIS.

STAFF ANALYSIS

It is the belief of staff that the proposed Downtown Copiague Zoning District has been compressive and thoughtful. The proposed zoning district is preceded by a community visioning process that precipitated a vision plan adopted by the Town Board.

While the study area is compact, it includes the area traditionally considered to be downtown Copiague by the Suffolk County planning staff. However, the area also includes some area extending further east and west along both Oak Street and Marconi Boulevard. According to the EIS for the proposed zoning district, build out of the newly designated area would double to triple the development square footage contained within the proposed DC zone. For the sake of comparison purposes, full build out of downtown Copiague would be more similar to the size of downtown Lindenhurst or downtown Amityville, but still smaller than downtown Babylon.

It is the belief of the Suffolk County Planning Commission staff that the proposed height of three (3) stories appears appropriate within the study area boundary. The proposed maximum housing density of 35 units per acres, while high by Suffolk County standards overall, is actually in line with some of the older developments in downtowns across the County. This type of height and density should be strictly confined to the boundary of this downtown Copiague district in order to maintain the uniqueness of the district and to fully take advantage of the amenities within a viable TOD.

The addition of more than 500 parking spaces at build out is desirable. With more than 300 new housing units and 200,000 square feet of retail and restaurants, there are a number of parking demand reduction techniques that can be incorporated into the design of a project that may reduce the actual number of single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) generated by the proposal and thus, reduce the number of parking stalls that would be required for each project thereby freeing available land area or parking stalls for commerce and economic development. Some of these techniques are programmatic and others are by parking lot, site and building design modifications. It is the belief of the staff that additional analysis as to parking demand reduction techniques should be included within the text of the Downtown Copiague Zoning District.

Significant traffic mitigation measures are included in the EIS for the DC district to accommodate the additional development that could have a significant impact on the ability of motorists to drive to or through this area. These mitigations, in the opinion of staff, should all be implemented.

Potential conflicts between motor-vehicle movements and pedestrian movements need to be identified and mitigated utilizing specific and appropriate traffic calming, complete street, universal design and congestion mitigation techniques. It is the belief of the staff that additional pedestrian circulation analysis for the DC district relating proposed future off street parking areas and proposed pedestrian movement patterns is warranted.

Density bonuses are proposed if the builder provides certain community benefits. The present form of the proposed code provides the Town with maximum flexibility under changing market conditions to implement the vision of the district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the Town of Babylon proposed Downtown Copiague Zoning District and Revision to the Building Zone Map of the Town of Babylon with the following comments:

1. Height and density should be strictly confined to the boundary of this downtown Copiague district in order to maintain the uniqueness of the district and to fully take advantage of the amenities within a viable TOD.
2. There are a number of parking demand reduction techniques that can be incorporated into the design of a project that can reduce the actual number of single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) generated by the proposal and thus, reduce the number of parking stalls that would be required for each project thereby freeing available land area or parking stalls for commerce and economic development. Some of these techniques are programmatic and others are by parking lot, site and building design modifications. It is the belief of the Suffolk County Planning Commission that additional parking demand reduction techniques should be included within the text of the Downtown Copiague Zoning District.
3. Significant motor-vehicle congestion mitigation measures are included in the EIS for the DC district and all should be implemented as recommended as the district progressively builds out.
4. Additional pedestrian circulation analysis for the DC district relating proposed future off street parking areas and proposed pedestrian movement patterns is warranted. Conflicts between motor-vehicle movements and pedestrian movements need to be identified and mitigated utilizing specific and appropriate traffic calming, complete street, universal design and congestion mitigation techniques.



The information on this map was derived from digital databases on the Town of Babylon's GIS. The data represented on this map has been compiled by the best methods available. The Town of Babylon assumes no legal responsibilities for the information or accuracy contained on this map. This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for, or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Users of this information should review or consult the primary data and information sources to ascertain the usability of the information.

<p>Town of Babylon</p>  <p>Richard Schaffer Supervisor</p>	<p>Downtown Copiague (DC) Zoning District Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) Figure 2-2: Study Area Conditions</p> <p> Study Area  Points of Interest</p>	<p>Created by Department of Planning & Development Ann Marie Jones, Commissioner</p> <p>January 27, 2015</p>
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Z-1: Downtown Copiague Zoning District
 SCPD: BA-15-01

