

DRAFT Minutes of Planning Commission Meeting May 18, 2015

Roll Call: 7:00 pm

Planning Commissioners present were Supplee, Jeffrey, Beal, and Donahue. Michele Braun was present as Clerk. Members of the public present included Martha Mahan and Laura Hill-Eubanks.

Approval of Minutes

Supplee moved to approve the minutes of Meeting 1504, April 23, 2015; Beal seconded the motion. **The motion passed 4-0-0.**

The only agenda item was to work on revisions to the zoning regulations. Chairman Jeffrey asked the members of the public present to offer their comments at the beginning of the meeting, if they wished.

Ms. Mahan spoke in regard to her property at 114 and 118 South Main Street, which remains in limbo; they went to Environmental Court and lost their appeal there on the question of whether their use of the shop had been abandoned. She asserted that the standards for the Residential A district are not consistent with what is there. It is causing her and her husband hardship; they are having to evict their tenants, and shut down the property, which has never been an owner-occupied residential property.

Jeffrey stated that the Commission has made preliminary changes to the zoning that would benefit that property. They are now trying to finalize the districts, meeting twice a month, doing homework, working very hard as a group of community volunteers to complete this process.

Ms. Hill-Eubanks asked what would be the best approach for the Conservation Commission to engage with the Planning Commission in achieving some of the natural resource protection zoning changes discussed in the Town plan. The Commission advised that, at this point in the process, the only possibility of incorporating such changes would be for the Conservation Commission to provide ready draft language. Otherwise, those changes will be considered in a future revision.

The Commission discussed the issue of lot size in the Low Density Residential district. They referred to the guidance document on Open Space and Resource Protection Regulations from the Vermont Land Use Education and Training Collaborative. They appreciated some of the creative approaches other Vermont towns, such as Warren and Norwich, are using, to allow different lot sizes in different circumstances, but ultimately decided that these systems would be complicated to understand, explain, and administer. They debated between a larger lot size such as 25-30 acres with allowances for small subdivisions, and a medium lot size such as 10 acres, as now is the rule in the Conservation and Forestry district. The final decision was to propose a 10-acre minimum lot size in the Low Density Residential district.

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Beal moved to adjourn; Donahue seconded the motion. **The motion passed 4-0-0.**

Adjournment: 8:30 pm