

Approved
Town of Wallingford, VT
Planning Commission (P.C.) Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2019 Town Offices, 75 School St.

Members Present: Erika Berner (Chair), Tony Masuck, Kevin Mullin, William Brooks III

Members Absent: Jill Burkett

Others Present: J. Biasuzzi (Zoning Administrator, Recorder); Jack Ryan, Ken Welch, Doug Blodgett, Kathy Allen

The Meeting was called to order by E. Berner at 7:05 p.m. and audio was electronically recorded.

Review of Agenda

E. Berner requested any changes to the draft Meeting Agenda. K. Mullin made a Motion to accept the Agenda. T. Masuck seconded; all approved, and Motion passed.

Review of Minutes

E. Berner then asked for a review of the November 12, 2019 Minutes. W. Brooks Moved to approve the Minutes; T. Masuck seconded; all approved and Motion passed.

Discussion/ Updates of Zoning Regulations to comply with Town Plan (combined with Public Input)

T. Masuck opened discussion by objecting to the proposed setbacks for the Agricultural-Rural Residential (AgRR) zoning district.

D. Blodgett asked about the draft Definitions. K. Welch asked if the proposed Definitions are standard throughout VT. E. Berner explained that the PC wanted the proposed Definitions to clarify specific terms used in the text of the regulations. She noted that the Definitions would be included in an Appendix, versus as Article II; which met the consensus of Members. J. Biasuzzi noted that many towns use similar language in their Definitions, and that some are taken from VT statute or regulations.

J. Biasuzzi provided E. Berner with his review notes on the draft definitions she had emailed to PC members on 12/8/2019.

K. Allen asked if the proposed regulations were going to be available in a format to allow the public to be able to compare the current versus the proposed versions. After some discussion, the consensus was that each document would be printed separately; but should be relatively easy to compare.

There was a question asked why another version of the Zoning Regulations needed an update of the 2015 rules. D. Blodgett asked how the proposed setback changes were developed for the AgRR district.

J. Biasuzzi explained that the proposed setbacks were from the 2008 regulations, which were the same as those used for decades and had worked well. The 2015 setback for non-residential use in the AgRR zone required a 250 foot front setback and 65 foot side setbacks, yet also allowed a minimum lot size to be two acres. The result was to essentially eliminate possible non-residential uses in the AgRR zoning district; which comprises a large land area (2nd to Forest-Recreation) of land for new economic opportunity in the Township. The 2015 format was also includes unclear language and format; making it difficult to interpret setbacks from lengths of required frontage, depth, and width.

Second, the sale (vs. lease) of residential housing that once belonged to White Pigment Corp. & eventually Troy Minerals and OMYA, resulted in a request by the homeowners to have their property removed from the Industrial zoning district. To accomplish this requires a formal change to the Zoning Map; which is part of the statutory adoption process.

A third reason to revise the 2015 regulations is to include updates that are a result of current uses and social demands. One example mentioned is how to address a “Tiny House” application. Another is to adjust setbacks for small detached storage sheds on small or non-conforming parcels.

D. Blodgett stated his opinion that existing setbacks in other zoning districts made sense, but he was opposed to reducing the setbacks in the AgRR district.

K. Allen stated that the 2015 PC was deliberate in setting the current setbacks for the AgRR district.

J. Biasuzzi suggested establishing non-residential setbacks on a case by case basis; to be evaluated by the Development Review Board.

K. Welch suggested a professional review of the draft regulations prior to initiating the adoption process. J. Biasuzzi expressed his support of this suggestion. VLCT had recently recommended such a legal review to Town attendees at a Training Seminar; to “proofread” for conflicting, illegal, or mandated but omitted language. E. Berner was to ask the Regional Planning Commission for a review cost estimate; and J. Biasuzzi was to ask VLCT for the same. The funding should be in the proposed 2020-21 Planning budget, and presented to the Select Board.

Other Business:

The general schedule for drafting the Zoning Regulations was discussed. It is apparent that the final Draft of Regulations will not be ready for a general election vote by Town Meeting in March. The new goal is to have this ready to be a ballot item by the November general election.

J. Biasuzzi discussed having a meeting with the PC and DRB chairpersons in late December to develop a budget proposal for the new fiscal year. The Zoning adoption process alone is estimated to cost \$1500, not including any legal review. The Select Board is scheduled to review budgets in their first January meeting. The Annual Reports are due by 12/16/19. The ZA will submit one article for Zoning and the DRB. E. Berner will submit a report for the PC.

Following discussion, there was a Motion by K. Mullin to establish the second Wednesday of each month for regular PC meetings, starting in January, 2020. T. Masuck seconded, all approved and Motion passed.

The next meeting of the PC is scheduled for Wednesday January 15, 2021, at 7:00 pm at town Offices.

Adjournment:

W. Brooks made a Motion to conclude the Meeting; E. Berner seconded and all approved. T. Masuck seconded, all approved and Motion passed. The Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm