

**Westfield Planning Commission
Meeting October 28, 2019
6:30 pm – Westfield Community Center**

Present: Brian Dunn, Pat Sagui (chair), Loren Petzoldt joined at 7:23, Ellen Fox
No members of the public were present

1. Call Meeting to Order

Pat Sagui called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Pat noted that Kitty Edwards is interested in serving on the Planning Commission and Pat and Kitty will attend the next Selectboard meeting to recommend her appointment to the Planning Commission. Also, the agenda will be arranged so items that require a quorum will be addressed when a quorum is in attendance.

3. Approve Minutes

Skipped until quorum present.

When quorum present, Loren motioned to accept the minutes from the September 23 meeting. Brian seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Adopt/Sign Rules and Procedures for PC and BOA

Skipped until quorum present.

When quorum present, Loren made a motion to adopt the rules and procedures for the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment. Brian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and all members present signed the printed copy of the rules and procedures to forward to the Selectboard.

5. Update Planning Grant application submitted 100119

Working with the NVDA, the Town has submitted a planning grant for a potential affordable housing project at the former Scenic View Community Care Home. If awarded, there are significant tasks which will need to be performed by the Planning Commission. Pat and LaDonna have included a small budget in the grant to compensate members of the Planning Commission for their time to complete these tasks.

6. Discuss composition of PC/BOA - # of members, use of alternates, other options and draft recommendation to Selectboard

Discussion of options to recommend a change in the number of members from 7 to 6 or 5, reducing the quorum to 3 rather than 4. We have had challenges to maintain attendance of at least 4 members at monthly meetings. If there is a reduction in membership, some current members would have the option to serve as an alternate. We need clarification on the function of alternates. It is clear that an alternate can participate in a Board of Adjustment Hearing and vote as part of the quorum. The entirety of the matter is covered at the hearing.

It is not clear how an alternate can or cannot vote as part of a quorum for ongoing issues in front of the Planning Commission. For example, if an alternate is not attending meetings to discuss or develop a certain issue, then the alternate can and does attend a meeting at which there is a motion on that issue, is the alternate in a position to make an informed vote? Ellen will find the statute governing use of alternates.

It may be manageable to leave the membership as is, at 7 members, with an appointment of Kitty allowing the Planning Commission to consistently achieve attendance of at least 4 members.

7. Review and Edit Bylaw

Pat shared language from another town's bylaws (Strafford,) and an ordinance, governing outdoor storage. This would replace our section regulating "junk yards." Brian discussed that outdoor storage structures already require a permit, such as containers and hoop structures. There was discussion that it seems extreme to require that all items stored outdoors must be concealed from view from adjacent properties. There was general agreement that the items in the draft Public Health and Safety section to require draining of fluids for longer term storage of vehicles is important. Pat will communicate with Strafford to gauge how their Ordinance is working.

Proposed language was discussed for the bylaw regulating outdoor storage. It is being considered that outdoor storage of seasonal and recreational equipment shall not be stored between the house and the road or right of way.

Loren joined at 7:23 pm, and having a quorum, we returned to items 3 and 4 (see above.)

8. Tasks and Timeline for next steps to update Bylaw

The discussion will continue around outdoor storage and consideration of what is achieved in the Zoning Bylaw versus an Ordinance. There was general agreement that Pat will add new dwelling unit definitions to our definitions section.

9. Other Business

No other business

9. Next Meeting

Monday, November 25, 2019 at 6:30 pm

No December meeting

Monday, January 27, 2020 at 6:30 pm

10. Adjourn

Ellen made a motion to adjourn. Loren seconded. Motion passed.

Adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen Fox