

**Westfield Planning Commission – Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

April 12, 2021 at 6:00 pm by Zoom

1. Call Meeting to Order

Pat called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm

Attending: Brian Dunn, Kitty Edwards, Ellen Fox, Pat Sagui

No guests

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Pat added under “other business” - set a hearing date for a zoning application

3. Approve Minutes:

• **March 22, 2021 PC Meeting**

Motion by Ellen, 2nd by Brian, Amendments to be made to the minutes include change “zoning” to “voting” in the section

... Recommendation is for Ellen to abstain from zoning to recommend the bylaw changes.....

and clarify that Ellen will create the slideshow for public information on the bylaw revision process for the town website, and the Planning Commission will govern the process for public input to the bylaw revision at public meetings or hearings.

Motion to approve as amended passed unanimously.

A. Business from the Minutes

Pat reported that the Town’s regulation of helipads would be for air traffic piloted by a human and would not include drones in that regulation.

4. Review Town Plan and discussion of homework (what parts of the town plan directly relate to bylaw revisions)

Pat mentioned that the General Recommendations and Priorities still hold true and reflect accurate priorities for the Town. The idea of having a conservation or wilderness district as an overlay with different development regulations is supported by the vision of the Town Plan. The value of Westfield as a land-based community calling for orderly development and consideration of future land use is embedded in the Town Plan. The Planning Commission will need to pay close attention to structures that already exist in the flood plain and how the upcoming changes may affect those properties. Brian mentioned that we think about flood control and resilience, we need to keep in mind that upland changes to land use such as timber cutting has a large impact on the floodplain areas lower in the watershed.

All members of the Planning Commission will continue to send to Ellen, areas of focus for the bylaw revision that come out of the Town Plan or other land use conversations for Westfield. Ellen will reach out directly to Loren to include his perspective.

5. Revisions to the organizational structure of the Bylaw

Ellen presented a table showing the current structure of the Zoning Bylaw and the proposed structure for the revision. There are three main differences between the current and proposed organizational structures.

- 1) The current format has administrative authority and recordkeeping of effective dates, interpretation, separability, and repeal split between a partially at the very beginning and then mostly at the end of the document. The proposed format places all the administrative authority for the document at the beginning.
- 2) The current format has a “General Regulations” section which is a list of overall standards and specific measured requirements. The proposed format has a section for general regulations which would include descriptive regulation such as governance of existing small structures and home occupations, for example, which do not have a measured component and a separate section for specific standards which contains measurable requirements for land development such as parking area required or square footage for signage, for example.
- 3) The current bylaw has the process for application, and application for different types of approvals, and the process and criteria for those approvals in several different sections. The proposed bylaw structure would contain a section that describes the application process, the different kinds of review processes and the criteria which are used for each type of review.

6. Timeline/work plan to complete Bylaw revisions

Ellen presented a work plan for the committee to review each section of the zoning bylaw. Each section has a draft date for the reorganized Article to be drafted by Ellen for review by members of the Commission, then a meeting date to discuss the draft and make revisions to it, then a final draft date for Ellen to incorporate revisions and amendments from the meeting and follow up comments. Some sections which require more attention also have a pre draft date, for preliminary information and discussion to be distributed by email to inform the initial draft of revisions.

7. ByLaw revisions

Helipad permitting letter from Vtrans

Pat will ask ZA’s from other towns for any examples of bylaws or ordinance regulating use of personal helipad facilities. It is possible that we could add a section to the Zoning Bylaw to regulate the height of any associated structures, screening requirements, frequency and time of day use. Discussion ensued about impending use of drones for delivery services and increasing use of small aircraft in the near term future and how the town might address air traffic.

8. Other Business

Public Hearing date set for May 24

Pat mentioned that ANR affirmed our decision at the Town level in the Act 250 permit issued to Demuth.

9. Next Meeting

April 26

10. Adjourn

7:37 pm Motion by Brian, seconded by Kitty.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen Fox