

Westfield Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2022, 6:15 PM
Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Rd., Westfield, VT

Present: Brian Dunn, Kitty Edwards, Ellen Fox, Loren Petzoldt, Pat Sagui
Members of the public: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Pat called the meeting to order at 6:20 pm

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Added discussion of church building under other business

Added discussion of request to authorize the Town Attorney to review proposed Bylaw under other business.

3. Approve Minutes

A. Approve October 10, 2022 minutes

Brian made a motion to approve the minutes, Kitty 2nd and the minutes were approved.

– Business from Minutes

To be covered under other business

4. Report out from Ellen/Pat meeting with the Selectboard

• Outdoor Storage Ordinance

Pat reported that the Selectboard does not support adoption of an Outdoor Storage Ordinance with concerns about creating problematic or unequal enforcement and creating hard feelings among neighbors. The Selectboard is interested in incorporating regulation in the Zoning Bylaw around outdoor accumulation of stuff. We explained that the Zoning Bylaw has little authority over this kind of activity and what we can do via Zoning is very limited because it does not concern a structure or a use, and has a statute of limitations of 15 years. Pat proposed a public forum to gather feedback from citizens of the town and the Selectboard and to talk with other towns that have adopted and implemented a similar Ordinance. The Selectboard agreed this would be helpful.

The Planning Commission discussed the thinking that we are living in a more and more supply constrained economy and reuse of materials is important. There was a sense that “junkyard” regulation in the Zoning Bylaw is ambiguous and judgmental. Members of the PC are to think about ways to gather information from the public in Westfield on this subject.

• Zoning Bylaw Revision

The Selectboard has scheduled a work session with Ellen and Pat on Nov 1 to begin an overview of the proposed changes to the Bylaw. The tentative timeline for a public hearing on the proposed revisions is February 2023.

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5. Zoning Bylaw revisions:

- Performance Standards

Ellen asked Pat to research and suggest a decibel level at the property line for the performance standards. The PC will review the standards at the next meeting.

- Miscellaneous topics

Ellen asked Kitty to review a draft of the Definitions.

6. Next Zoning Bylaw draft section/s

Updates from Ellen

Revised schedule to complete Bylaw draft

The next sections for review include the Special Flood Hazard Area and the River Corridor review with Sacha Pealer who is the State Floodplain Manager with the Dept of Environmental Conservation, and Ellen will have a report on that review at the next meeting.

7. Other Business

Pat mentioned that the members of the church in town would like to give the building to the town and encourage PC members to think of uses that would support community development in Westfield if the gift were to occur. The Selectboard will put the gift idea to voters at Town Meeting.

Pat confirmed that the Selectboard has approved that the Town Attorney will review the proposed revisions. The tentative timeline is for the PC to submit a final draft of the proposed, revised Bylaw in January for her review.

8. Next Meeting

November 14 at 6:00 pm

9. Adjourn

Kitty motioned to adjourn, Loren 2nd the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen Fox