

Westfield Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 9, 2023, 6pm
Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Rd., Westfield, VT

Present: Brian Dunn, Ellen Fox, Kitty Edwards, Loren Petzoldt, Pat Sagui

1. Call Meeting to Order

Pat called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

Ellen made a motion to change item three to be approval of May 8 minutes, rather than April 24 minutes (which have already been approved.) Loren 2nd. Motion passed and agenda changed.

3. Approve Minutes

A. May 8 Minutes

– Business from Minutes

Pat will ask LaDonna about a “clerk’s certificate” for the adoption process of bylaw revisions.

4. Zoning Bylaw revisions:

• Miscellaneous reader edits

The PC responded to comments from the ZA:

-Subdivisions of 1 into 2 lots is a minor subdivision. If more than 2 lots result, over a five year period, it is a major subdivision. This runs with the land. If a landowner divides a lot into two, and conveys it, then the new owner proposes a subdivision, it would be considered under the major subdivision rules.

-Subdivisions on private rights-of-way are not subject to lot frontage requirements; structures must meet setback requirements. This is to encourage clustering of housing close to existing services and infrastructure.

-Remove slope restrictions from the subdivision section and move it to part of the standards for subdivision in conditional use.

-The ZA can approve minor changes in conditional use as a permitted use. The PC is exploring a definition or examples to demonstrate what constitutes a minor change. Ideas include minor changes are interior alteration or a change in the footprint of less than 500 square feet.

-A permanent occupant on a parcel may have an accessory unit on the parcel used for short term rental and the use is still a single household dwelling. If there is more than one unit used for short term rental (regardless of if it is attached or detached) the use will be reviewed and approved (or not) as short-term rental.

-Planned Unit Developments must protect common land. Remove lease to a farmer because it is too unstable. The PUD must use a more permanent protection instrument. A lease to a farmer will be in addition to the more permanent protection.

-All development in the Rural – Recreational District will be conditional. It is a very small percentage of the land area, with important views and close to roadways.

-Description of condominium and townhouses will be included in the Planned Unit Development section.

• From Zoning listserve: Conditional Use review of an "open-air storage facility"? We have an Applicant considering using a parcel for the outdoor storage of boats and RV's but our definitions don't match this use.

The PC discussed that this would be reviewed and permitted under self storage units, and recommends that the use be revised in the Zoning Bylaw to be “storage units” and specifying that it can be indoors or outdoors.

- By-law proposed revisions public engagement
- Discussion/Edit draft Purpose document
- Outreach plan for PC informational meeting
 - Flow Chart

PC reviewed the flowchart and table of dates to reach out to landowners, warn and hold hearings. There was discussion of who needs to receive copies of the draft revisions and at what point in the process including abutting towns.

– Materials for public engagement

- Announcement re: Where to find draft revisions w/ track changes

Tentative date to post on the website is 11/15/23

Proposed revisions will not be discussed outside of the hearing so that the entire PC and other interested parties have equal access to all comments and suggestions.

Homework

Pat will draft and send a letter of notice for the landowners in the potential conservation district making them aware of the upcoming hearing on the proposed changes. Anyone can bring questions to the hearing or write a letter before the hearing date.

5. Sewer hook-up

- RFQ (request for qualifications) submissions
- RFQ evaluation criteria
- Next steps

The Town received one response to the RFQ. Pat will proceed to present the response to the RFQ to Tom Brown

6. Hazard Mitigation Plan

Tabled to next meeting

7. Other Business

No other business

8. Next Meeting

October 30 6 pm

9. Adjourn

Kitty made a motion to adjourn, Loren 2nd and the meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen Fox

