

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for July 17, 2017 Meeting
Approved on September 18, 2017

Commission/Board Members Present: Wendy Doane, Gordon Gebauer and Mark Letorney.

Commission/Board Members Absent: Seth Jensen.

Also present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), Kye Richter, Crista Richter, Sue Thibault, Peg Nichols and Jay Buermann.

The meeting began at: 6:39 p.m.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments

Kye Richter began by stating that he had hoped to construct an accessory structure prior to constructing a primary structure. However, Kate informed him that he needed to apply for a temporary structure permit in the interim. He did so in order to place a shipping container on the property to store personal items and construction materials.

Gordon asked what the issue was.

Kye said that the permit would need to be renewed each year and there was a fee associated with that.

Gordon asked if Kye had plans to keep the shipping container permanently.

Kye said yes.

Wendy asked the size of the structure.

Kye said 8 feet by 40 feet or 360 square feet.

Gordon asked what Kye's timeframe for building the primary dwelling was.

Kye responded within the next couple of years.

Gordon asked what Kye would propose with regard to the accessory structure if the primary structure was never built.

Kye said he felt that was not an issue and he should be able to keep the structure regardless.

Gordon asked the use of the structure.

Kye said it's a garage and storage structure.

Gordon informed him that the Planning Commission would discuss this issue further and respond to his recommendation/request.

Sue Thibault, Peg Nichols and Jay Buermann (engineer) then began to explain their request. Jay explained that Sue plans to construct a dwelling on an existing lot once owned by her parents. He stated that they developed the driveway plans using the old standards requiring a 14 foot wide driveway. The cost estimate for said 1260 foot long driveway was \$85,000. However, under the new standards the driveway will need to be 18 feet wide which will cost \$145,000. Jay stated that the impact of such a driveway serving 1 dwelling was excessive and asked if there could be a hybrid standard for lengthy driveways or could the standards for a driveway serving 1 dwelling be reduced.

Mark stated that the issue is with allowing fire trucks hauling water to pass each other on lengthy private roads and driveways. He said any change would require fire department approval.

Jay made some additional suggested revisions 1) width could be defined by number of dwellings not length with emergency pull offs required for lengthier driveways 2) the maximum grade

should be 12% for roadways less than 900 feet, 10% for roadways greater than 900 feet and 8% for roadways serving 7 or more dwellings.

Sue added that the environmental impact and cost of the current driveway regulations were too great.

Melissa stated that the regulations allow the DRB to reduce the width for circulation and safety reason. However, this is an environment impact and stormwater issue and building permit applications are not reviewed by the DRB.

The Planning Commission stated they would talk to the Westford Fire Department about the matter or invite Steve Willard, Fire Chief, to a meeting. Gordon asked Jay to send the Commission a PDF of the plans presented at the meeting and provide a summary of the issue.

All Hazard Mitigation Plan

Melissa explained the purpose of the AHMP and stated that mitigation strategies that are the responsibility of the Planning Commission to implement are developing fluvial erosion regulations. Melissa stated that she has been in contact with Staci Pomeroy, Vermont River Scientist, with regard to the status of the revised State River Corridor maps. She has been informed that the Westford revisions should be available by September.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements & Other Business

No public comment to be heard.

Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised their work plan.

Minutes of the June 5, 2017 Meeting

The Planning Commission will review these minutes at their next meeting.

Minutes of the June 19, 2017 Meeting

Wendy MOVED to approve the minutes.

Mark SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by,

Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator