

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minutes for August 21, 2017 Meeting
Approved on October 16, 2017

Commission/Board Members Present: Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen and Mark Letorney.

Commission/Board Members Absent: Wendy Doane.

Also present: Melissa Manka (Planning Coordinator), Koi Boynton and Stuart Pratt.

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

Amendments to Agenda

Gordon proposed moving public comment on the land use regulations to the beginning of the meeting in order to hear Stuart's request. The Commission agreed.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments

Stuart explained that he wishes to construct a home for his family with an adjoining home for his in-laws. He said the latter home would exceed the accessory apartment restrictions allowing for a maximum of 1,000 sq. ft. He said the in-law dwelling would be more along the line of 2,000 to 2,500 sq. ft. He noted that revisions to the wastewater permit allowing for two dwellings to be served is under state review. He said the issue is that two family dwellings are lumped in with multifamily dwellings in the regulations which are conditional uses in the R10. He stated that the impact of a two family dwelling and a dwelling with accessory apartment are comparable and believes both should be permitted uses. He noted that the conditional use requirements are extensive, costly and detailed which is not warranted given the use.

Melissa noted that she was not aware that the new regulations treated two family dwellings as multifamily dwelling. She added that multifamily dwellings are only conditional in the R10. Seth suggested doing a word search for multifamily and treating two family and multifamily dwellings as different uses. He said they can then have a discussion as to where each use should be permitted and/or conditional.

Planning Commission Interviews

The Planning Commission interviewed Koi Boynton for the Planning Commission vacancy.

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation Amendments

Gordon said he spoke with the Fire Chief who understands the issue with the current road and driveway standards. Gordon suggested that dimensional requirements be triggered by the number of dwellings served as opposed to the length of the roadway. He said 1 to 3 dwellings could require a 14 ft. wide road, 4 to 7 another standards and 7 or more the highest standards. He wants to work out the details with the fire department however. Mark asked about roads serving 7 or more dwellings on a very short road and how does the town avoid the construction of extremely long roads which increase maintenance costs, sprawl and environmental/stormwater impacts.

Seth stated Wolcott requires conditional use approval for roads over 1500 ft. and the DRB can require a fire pond under conditional use review. Seth said he would share Wolcott's regulations.

The Planning Commission then reviewed the list of WLUD amendments and proposed revisions based on public, Administrative Officer and DRB comments and suggestions. The Commission agreed that Melissa should start a “track changes” version of the draft regulations.

Itinerant Vendors, Peddlers & Food Sales Ordinance

The Planning Commission agreed that the regulation changes were the top priority since residents are hoping revision will be adopted prior to the next construction season. Gordon stated his goal to have the revisions finalized by November and then start working on the ordinance.

The Commission agreed to focus on permitting vendors around the Common at first.

The Commission then discussed regulating vendors via an ordinance or through regulations. The Commission agreed that regulating through the regulations would create a lengthy process with lengthy and expensive enforcement procedures and regulating through an ordinance would allow for easy enforcement and permitting. The Commission agreed the ordinance should reference the performance standards in the regulations however.

Gordon asked if any Commissioners would volunteer to draft an ordinance for Planning Commission review.

Mark offered.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements & Other Business

No public comment to be heard.

Land Transactions.

There are no updates.

JFFP Signage.

Mark asked that the Conservation Commission contact him prior to the holiday busy season to discuss desired signage.

Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Commission reviewed and revised their work plan.

Minutes of the June 5, 2017 Meeting

Seth MOVED to approve the minutes.

Mark SECONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

Minutes of the July 17, 2017 Meeting

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

Executive Session

Gordon MOVED to enter executive session.

Seth SECOONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

Gordon MOVED to exit executive session and recommended the appointment of Koi Boynton to the Planning Commission.

Seth SECOONDED the motion.

The motion PASSED: 3 – 0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:21 p.m.

Submitted by,

Melissa Manka, Westford Planning Coordinator