

TOWN OF WESTFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MINUTES FOR MARCH 2, 2021 MEETING
Approved on April 5, 2021

Commission/Board Members Present: Koi Boynton, Gordon Gebauer, Seth Jensen
George Lamphere and Mark Letorney.

Also, Present Melissa Manka, Town Planner; Steve Willard, Fire Chief; Daniel Strobridge; Josh Smith; and Glenn Rogers.

Began: 6:31 pm.

Amendments to Agenda: none.

Citizens to be Heard, Announcements, Correspondence & Other Business: Guests are here for the WLUD amendments.

Melissa reviewed other business. There is a request from the Green Mountain Gazette to interview someone about the Town Center Revitalization project. Mark will follow up with them.

Liz Curry would like to talk about Northern Borders. Koi will follow up with her.

John Farrell from Northeast Site Solutions reached out regarding leasing town land to put in a cell tower 1 to 2 miles from the town center. Melissa will continue to talk with him and has brought in Mark Drapa, chair of the Economic Development Committee.

Minutes of the February 15, 2021 Meeting: *VOTE – Gordon makes a motion to move the minutes of February 15, 2021. George seconds. Motion carried.*

Westford Land Use & Development Regulation (WLUD) Amendments: Melissa discussed the priority items:

- Campground included as a use.
- Barb Peck R5 Planning & Design recommendations.
- Craig McDonald fire pond issue.
- Josh Smith request to expand adaptive reuse and allow taverns in the R10.
- Travis Lavallee request to reduce the wetland buffer from 100 to 50 in the town center.
- Nonconforming use language.
- Historical society waiver of form-based code for replicas of historic structures.

Melissa reviewed edits. Campgrounds were added to the R5 and R10 with 3 or fewer sites on a parcel an allowable use and 4 or more is a conditional use. Conditional use would require a site plan and approval. Melissa confirmed that 3 or fewer is in line with the state. According to the state 3 or more would require waste water and potable water. Josh Smith asked via chat how the number of sites is defined and asked if Act 250 was being used. He also asked if in the

definitions section if photos could be included. Melissa explained that Act 250 is not being used. She also explained that photos can't be used for definitions because they are not legally binding only language is. There was discussion regarding the size of campers and how to define it. The decision was made to allow one axel campers.

Adaptive reuse of historic barns was extended to the R10. It will still need to go through conditional use and site plan. There was discussion regarding if the barns would need to retain their historic architecture. It was explained that preservations guidelines require that the outside remains the same. Adaptive reuse is for the inside on the structure.

There was extensive discussion regarding fire ponds in water resource overlay. There are two questions at hand, could the town require payment in lieu of fire ponds or allow ponds in the water resource overlay. It was discussed that this topic is new to the PC and more time is needed to consider all the factors. It was decided to move forward with the existing edits and address the fire ponds separately in order to meet the amendments deadline.

Historical Society waiver for replicas of historic structures was discussed. Glenn Rogers reviewed the language and supports the language.

A nonconforming use and structure discussion took place. A sentence about conforming to all other regulations needs to be included.

Principle uses and structures. The amendment to include multiple uses makes principle use no longer relevant. It is confirmed that multiple principal structures can be allowed on a lot.

Scoring section: The maximum number of points has only increased by 1, 40 to 41, but it is easier to get point, overall. Move forward with scoring as is and see how it works.

Form based code language. The language transitions away from calling out uses and just refers to mixed use. There is no longer a maximum density. It is now by structure. Common Road setbacks were changed to 10 feet minimum or 100 ft maximum, so that existing development is not nonconforming. It was discussed to keep residential language as is and address secondary principle structures in the next round.

Chapter 3. Accessory dwelling can be 1,000 square feet of living area. Porches and basements are not included. This means that an unfinished basement could not be finished.

WLUD Format & Public Hearing Timeline: Table of contents and statement of purpose is all that is needed for public hearing warning. Public hearing needs to be wared 15 days prior. Public hearing will take place April 19, 2021.

2020 Work Plan: No discussion.

Wrap up & Next Meeting: No discussion.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 9:58 PM