

Wilmington Planning Commission

Meeting minutes

Monday June 8, 2020 via Zoom

**Open Meeting**

Cheryl opened the meeting at 4:06 PM

In attendance: Cheryl LaFlamme. Chair, John Lebron, Meg Staloff, Angela Yakovleff

Mike Tuller (at 4:30), Zoning Administrator

Visitor: Nicki Steel

**Possible Additions to the Agenda**

Discussion of Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

Approve Minutes of June 5, 2020

**Public Comment**

Nicki came to listen to and take part in the hearing discussion of the proposed Zoning Ordinance changes.

**Approve Minutes from May 11, 2020**

Meg made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2020 and June 5, 2020 meetings.

John seconded.

Approve: John, Cheryl, Meg Angela

Oppose: none

Abstain: none

**Discussion of Local Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Cheryl requested we each look at and read the draft plan sent by Alyssa Sabetto. Any comments should be forwarded to her.

**Follow up on Select Board hearing on Zoning Ordinance change**

Meg thought the hearing went smoothly and noted the proposed addition to the article to allow outside dining for a limited time passed. She said Wilmington Works was asked by two restaurants what the next steps are for them to follow. They need to contact Mike Tuller.

John wondered if we should push to have public space open for use? This is under the purview of the Select Board.

It was also noted that there is limited indoor dining as of June 8, 2020. There are a few restaurants in town that are ready to begin indoor service.

Meg and Cheryl attended a workshop about a VTRANS permit that would allow dining set up in the roadway if there is no other outdoor dining available.

Cheryl asked if the Town got a copy of the report from the Town Attorney concerning the by-law change. It could be deferred if community members object to the implementation.  
Mike said the report had been received.

Cheryl suspended the meeting at 4:37 PM.

### **5 p.m. Open Hearing on Zoning Ordinance**

Cheryl reopened the meeting and opened the Public hearing at 5:00 PM

Visitor: Nicki Steel

Nicki voiced her disagreement with the proposed changes in article 8 concerning deleting and rewording. She feels the lack of enforcement of the sign ordinance is not a reason to delete it. She would like to see it tightened up and reworded. She thinks without some oversight The Town will lose its historic feel and opens the possibility to windows being used as billboards. She stated the architecture is an important part of an historic district and the lack of oversight in signage could take away from the Town's architecture, making it more casual.

Mike said he would say approximately 50% of businesses have windows in violation of the ordinance.

Nicki said one doesn't need to challenge businesses. She thinks reviewing the ordinance with them and telling them the signs are in violation will not create a bad feeling.

The hearing was closed at 5:15 PM.

The Planning Commission meeting resumed at 5:15 PM.

Cheryl asked if the board members wanted to move the changes on and send it to the Select Board or to redo the ordinance.

John gave kudos to Nicki. He agrees that as written, the ordinance is leaving the door open to poor signage.

Nicki noted that "window" could be better defined, making a distinction between pane and window.

Meg doesn't think this change will create a rush to clutter up windows. It allows a little more leeway so business owners won't need to get a permit.

Mike said he did talk to Dunkin' Donuts to ask them to remove some of their signs which they did. He also spoke to Ratu's and they, too, were "OK."

John said we shouldn't legislate based on what is or isn't going to happen.

Cheryl said by dropping this we will open up to the possibility of covering windows completely.

She suggested we address this again at the June 22 meeting, go back and reword to better serve the community. We will look at 822L and ask, "How can it be better?" We will work on how best to change rather than just deleting.

John thinks we should go back and work on wording.

Angela thinks we should reword to better address the issue.

Meg thinks we should put it on hold and do all clean up at once.

Nicki requested photos of the buildings that are not in compliance with the present sign ordinance. Mike will forward those to her.

Cheryl would like us to brainstorm new language.

Further discussion and possible rewording will be on the next meeting agenda, June 22.

#### **Old Business**

none

**Next Meeting – June 22 , 2020 4:00 PM.**

#### **Adjournment**

Meg made a motion to adjourn at 5:39 PM.

John seconded.

Approve: John, Cheryl, Meg, Angela

Opposed: none

Abstain: none

Respectfully submitted,  
Angela Yakovleff, Scribe