

Wilmington Planning Commission

Meeting via Zoom

Monday September 28, 2020 at 4 p.m.

Open Meeting

Cheryl opened the meeting at 4:06 PM.

In attendance: Cheryl LaFlamme, John LeBron, Meg Staloff, Angela Yakovleff

Mike Tuller, Zoning Administrator, Gretchen Havreluk, Economic Development Specialist

Visitors: Jessica Lee Smith at 4:55 PM.

Possible Additions to the Agenda

None

Public Comment

none

Approve Minutes from September 14, 2020

John made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting of September 14, 2020.

Cheryl seconded.

In favor: John, Meg Cheryl, Angela

Oppose: none

Abstain: none

Continue Discussion on housing needs in Wilmington

Meg shared information on the zoning bill S. 237. The House and Senate have passed it although it is changed quite a bit, and the Governor has not yet signed it. The session has ended.

The bill states that single family dwellings with a single accessory dwelling can not be excluded. It is centered around affordable housing. Housing does not need to be on Town Water and Sewer as long as there is enough waste water capacity to support the dwellings.

This won't have a measurable effect based on our present zoning laws.

A short term rental must have fewer than 30 calendar days.

Are we considering multiple family dwellings?

People can't afford housing in Wilmington. Some subsidized housing is available if you fall into that category.

Gretchen noted there is a need for workforce and senior housing. Much of the workforce is in hospitality.

Meg said the housing stock in downtown needs renovation.

Do we have to have to deal with present density limits and review processes?

What are some changes that might be most helpful or urgent?

Mike said it depends on where you're looking. There is need for long term, year-round rental. The key to vibrancy is development in downtown. Some renovation or building is possible.

Meg asked if we can cap the number of short term rentals.

Jessica Smith said the State had some money for affordable housing. She noted Brattleboro gets a lot of money.

Gretchen said 67% of Wilmington's grand list are second homeowners.

Meg wondered in what districts would lifting limits help?

Cheryl doesn't think we should take approval away from the DRB.

How do we determine what is affordable housing?

Gretchen said the state standards are used. We need senior housing. This would be better downtown. Workforce housing can be on other properties. Presently there are several available Inns. It would be a change of use.

John asked what zoning would prevent someone right now from developing the Horizon. If there are issues in upgrading the property it's out of our hands.

Meg asked if use transfers with the sale of the property.

There is enough land to turn the property into housing.

Mike pointed out the availability of infrastructure. We are really looking at redevelopment.

John said it's possible to build as multiple dwelling housing.

Meg asked if senior housing can be specified in zoning. Is age restricted housing allowed in general?

Cheryl said Act 250 and the DRB have to be considered.

She wondered if we have a problem with senior housing? Gretchen said there is a need. We should look at vacant properties and see what district they're in.

She will put something together. Senior housing is probably the easiest to address.

Meg asked what are the best language, practices, and zoning to put senior housing in place?

Before the next meeting Gretchen and Mike will look at available properties that may be considered for senior housing.

Review Wilmington Water and Sewer Maps

John shared the sewer district map from Town View. There is no map specific to the water district. The water district does not fall under the Town purview.

Old Business

none

Next Meeting – October 12 , 2020 at 4:00 PM via Zoom

Hearing on Proposed Zoning Ordinance changes 5:00 PM via Zoom

Adjournment

Meg made a motion to adjourn at 5:22.

John seconded.

In favor: Cheryl, John, Meg, Angela

Oppose: none

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Yakovleff, scribe