

Wilmington Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday November 23, 2020 at 4:00 PM via Zoom

Open Meeting

Cheryl opened the meeting at 4:04 PM. In attendance, Cheryl LaFlamme, chair, Tom Consolino, Meg Staloff, Angela Yakovleff

Mike Tuller, Zoning Administrator

Gretchen Havreluk (at 4:07) Economic Development Specialist

Visitor: Jessica Lee Smith

Possible Additions to the Agenda

None

Public Comment

Jessica Lee Smith thinks chat box would be helpful during the meeting.

Cheryl pointed out that there is a raise hand function.

Ms. Smith noted that when the Police station moves Bob at White Wolf will be put out. She wondered if the Planning Commission had any say in this situation? Cheryl answered that Planning Commission has nothing to do with this.

Approve Minutes from November 9, 2020

Meg made a motion to approve the minutes of November 9, 2020.

Tom seconded.

In favor: Tom, Meg, Angela

Opposed: none

Abstain: Cheryl

Continue Discussion on housing needs in Wilmington

Cheryl reported she had a lengthy discussion with John to bring her up to speed.

She noted that in the Town Plan just before the goals section it states that housing is the responsibility of the Select Board and managed by them.

Meg and Cheryl reached out to Sarah to asking her to attend meetings as the Select Board liaison. In lieu of this possibility, perhaps another Select Board member would be better able to attend Planning Commission meetings.

Cheryl asked about the potential of the State intervening with legislation concerning zoning. Did it not happen?

Meg said this was not addressed at the end of the session.

Discussion centered around what opinions are about the possible housing solutions we've come up with at our last meeting. Cheryl agrees it would be a good idea to have a joint meeting with the Select Board to hear their ideas and get input as to the direction they think we should take.

A comment was made about whether or not the present ordinance should be "trashed."

Tom said he was puzzled by this comment. Cheryl said she was speaking about legislative changes, and getting up to speed with our goal, How, When, and Where.

Gretchen reviewed briefly the timeline of housing discussions. She noted the Bi-Town committee approached both Dover and Wilmington to get help in implementation of a housing plan. Specifically, density was at the forefront. She referenced the resulting report. Tom requested a copy of the report.

Cheryl likes the direction in which we are moving.

She asked Meg who are potential stake holders?

Meg said Adam Grinold/CLEO has worked on many similar issues with BDCC.

Report from Meg on her conversation with Jacob Hemmerick

Meg reported on her conversation with Jacob Hemmerick. He clarified what he thinks is a good direction. He is in favor of not having strict restrictions. He suggested allowing for higher density but having good dimensional standards. (ex. ~40% lot coverage)

Cheryl said there are reasons for the restrictions we have such as adequate parking.

Meg said Jacob took a step back, assuming there are no particular reasons for restrictions. Are there parts of town where housing development could happen without changing the feel of the neighborhood?

The commercial/residential district fits this need.

This is current thought across Vermont, defining a different kind of PUD.

Cheryl wondered what the public is thinking?

Further housing discussion addressed gentle infill, blight, and redevelopment.

Cheryl asked about air B&Bs in town as they relate to available housing.

Questions discussed: How do you address air B&B?

Can you make/designate short term rentals?

Can you specify short term vs. long term rentals?

Jessica Lee Smith suggested looking into Federal and State grants that will impact development. She asked if there was marketing toward development in other states.

Gretchen said no. There is a Bi-Town Marketing committee. Cheryl said there are not enough opportunities.

Ms Smith wondered if the Town is allowed to invest in businesses with money made going back to the town.

This is not allowed.

Meg said there is a housing authority.

Gretchen said there is a 1% tax.

Ms Smith noted air B&B are targeted toward tourists. Low income is not what they're interested in.

Meg said Burlington is talking about regulatory tour with tiers.

Cheryl likes the gentle infill. She thinks in small towns anytime there is an attempt to adjust zoning there will be pushback.

Meg will review the Increments of Neighborhoods document and pull pictures that present the good and the bad. She will try to pull up images that might be beneficial.

Other considerations were addressed: density, structures/lot, dimensional standards
Overlay districts were again discussed. Cheryl think we shouldn't consider them at this time.
She would like a joint meeting with the Select Board before we continue discussions and the possibility of changing density in the commercial/residential district.

Cheryl noted that unfortunately the Select Board did not set a hearing date for the proposed changes to the sign ordinance.

Gretchen and Tom left the meeting. (5:32PM)

Old Business

none

Next Meeting – December 14, 2020 at 4:00 PM via Zoom

Agenda items: Look at PUD, all commercial/residential districts within the current standard for setback, % land use, discuss gentle infill, review and discuss guidelines in the Enabling Better Places document, discuss increasing the lot coverage % so it is the same as commercial lot coverage %.

Cheryl will reach out to Scott and Tom to get a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Select Board. Meg will draft specific recommendations for the new zoning suggested language referring to the Town Plan.

Adjournment

Meg made a motion to adjourn at 5:45 PM.

Angela seconded.

In Favor: Cheryl, Meg, Angela

Opposed: none

Abstain: none

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Yakovleff, scribe