

Wilmington Planning Commission Minutes

Monday, January 24, 2022 at 4 p.m. remotely over Zoom

Meg called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM. In attendance, Meg Staloff, Chair, Michele Carlson, Angela Yakovleff

Mike Tuller, zoning administrator

Possible Additions to the Agenda

None

Public Comment

none

Discuss having meetings in February over Zoom and then re-assess resuming in-person or hybrid meetings.

Meetings on February 14 and February 28 will be held over zoom.

Approve Minutes from 12/13/2021

Michele made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 13, 2021 meeting. Meg seconded.

In favor: Meg, Michele, Angela Opposed: none

Update on recent Select Board actions:

Vacant Building Ordinance approved 12/21;

-Stand alone ordinance.

-Waiting period before it goes into effect.

-Adopted middle of February

-Mike and Gretchen want to reach out to property owners who will be impacted (6-8 properties.)

-Meg noted Mike Eldred and Chris Mays did a good job at covering this in the Deerfield Valley News and the Brattleboro Reformer respectively.

-The planning commission addressed the ordinance at several meetings, but there were no public attendees.

Changes to Articles 4, 7, & 10 vis a vis Senior Housing approved 1/4/2022

-All changes passed.

-Planning Commission members will need an up-to-date copy of these changes. The changes are already in effect. We need to make sure changes are reflected on the website.

Update on Bylaw Modernization Grant Award

Approved for full amount, waiting on paperwork from ACCD

-Paperwork went in on Friday, January 21. Meg has been in touch with Sue Westa (WRC). She will attend our next meeting to update and walk us through the timeline.

There will be a kick-off meeting.

The grant is JUST for Wilmington

Timeline

This will go to the Selectboard in March. There will be a kick-off in April (first week?). Images of Smart Growth Development will be shown at a public meeting in late May or early June. This meeting will seek public input. Work with the WRC on ideas for possible options.

A second public meeting in September or early fall. Steering committee will wrap up and send information to a consultant for proposed code changes, then to the Planning Commission to work on changes.

A year from now begin a rewrite, then follow the process-public meeting, hearing.

Have robust public updates.

Next steps: discuss makeup and members for Steering Committee. We will send a list of proposed members to Select Board for their approval once the grant is executed.

We will need to form a steering committee.

Possible make-up, 1+ planning commission members, a representative from the bi-town housing, Gretchen, an OSEC board member, one local landlord, perhaps one with multiple properties, a selectboard member (Tony Tribuno could represent the Selectboard. He is also a realtor and a small business owner.) Someone from Windham/Winsor housing trust, any senior organizations such as Senior Solutions, SASH, Senior Housing in Butterfield Commons (Shires)

Becky Arbella, Geri Kogut, Claudette Hollenbeck (Aging in Place)

Time commitment would be about six committee meetings and two public meetings.

Meg will reach out to Tony. Any Planning Commission members interested in serving on the steering committee should let Meg know.

We have two years to complete work on the grant fulfillment. This will result in the match of \$2500.00 be forgiven.

Resume discussion around Solar Panels and Public Art (Article 4, Section 421 F and G)

Article 7, section 732J Conditional use, other specific standards. Meg thinks exempting from permitting process may create problems. She shared exemptions from Brattleboro's established standards as a possible model for wording we may want to consider.

Mike has no problem with amendments.

We had a lengthy discussion about permitting vs. no permit. The state does not require permits for arrays under 15KW.

John noted in the zoning document posted on the Town web-site there is no mention of height in a roof mounted array.

Section 730F speaks to buffers. Is this enforceable?

Do we need more language around 732I? Ground mounted arrays need to be 35' or less. It's a safety issue since the Town has no fire trucks with higher capabilities. (Perhaps the last sentence needs to be removed?)

Meg will look for a "best practices" document for solar energy. At WRC Chris or Alyssa may be able to help. Mike suggests looking at the Public Service or Public Utilities Commission. Meg will look at Bennington, Woodford, and Woodstock screening by-laws, and send out documents for review. We want clear zoning around solar.

Items for the next meeting, Monday Feb 14 at 4 pm (over Zoom):

Sue Westa to discuss Bylaw Modernization Grant Award

Planning Commission members interested in possible appointment to a steering committee

Electric Vehicle charging stations

Banner sizes for temporary banners

Adjournment

John made a motion to adjourn at 5:36. Meg seconded.

In favor: Meg, John, Michele, Angela Opposed: none

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Yakovleff, scribe