

# **WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **Approved Minutes**

**Monday, August 24, 2020**

Planning Commission: Ken Belliveau, Chair; Mary Koen; Katya D'Angelo; Eric Gross; Martha Staskus

Staff: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner

Public: Alyssa Johnson, Economic development Director; Kathi Grace; Dave Lachtrupp

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:08 p.m. The Planning Commissioner members and Steve Lotspeich participated in person and the members of the public participated via ZOOM.

### **AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS**

The agenda was reviewed and it was agreed to shorten the meeting and end at approximately 7:30pm. It was also agreed to postpone the review of the minutes for the meeting held on July 27<sup>th</sup> until the next Planning Commission meeting.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

There were none.

### **DISCUSS STRATEGIES AND APPROACH FOR THE PROPOSED UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAW**

Ken Belliveau introduced the topic saying that the recent Planning Commission meetings have focused on specific topics and the Unified Development Bylaw hasn't been discussed since March, when the pandemic resulted in the suspension of meeting in person.

The possibility of breaking the review of the draft Bylaw into manageable pieces was discussed. Steve Lotspeich reviewed the revised draft timeline that was distributed. Eric Gross asked if the Planning Commission could look at the proposed zoning for the rural areas and decide whether to down zone these areas as proposed, or stay with the current densities. Katya D'Angelo said that it has been so long since the draft zoning districts and density for these areas has been discussed, she would need to review what was proposed and previously discussed. Other Planning Commission members agreed.

Regarding next steps, Mary Koen said she would like to review Sections 3.2, Base Zoning Districts, 3.3, Use and Dimensional Tables, and 4.2, Specific Use Standards together. Ken suggested that there needs to be a review of what has been discussed and agreed on so far to refresh everyone's memory. It was agreed that the Definitions in Section 5 need to be reviewed as well.

The topic of additional areas where public wastewater service could be extended was discussed. It was agreed that this is a larger complex discussion that needs to be delayed until later on.

Martha Staskus requested that all printouts of the materials for the Planning Commission relating to the draft Bylaw have a print date in the header or footer so the members can keep track of the latest versions of those materials. Steve agreed to add those dates to all printouts.

Ken suggested that for the next Planning Commission meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>, Sections 3.1, General Provisions; 3.3, Use and Dimensional Tables; and 4.2, Specific Use Standards be reviewed

together. That approach was agreed to.

Topics that are controversial, especially for property owners and other members of the public, were discussed. The draft Historic Overlay District Bylaw Amendments that were proposed to the public earlier this year was mentioned as an example. Martha said that we need to start with the goals and objectives in the Municipal Plan and use them as the basis for the Planning Commission's proposed bylaw amendments. It was noted that down-zoning is always controversial since it raises the "takings" issue and is a "hard sell" with many property owners. It was also noted that the Municipal Plan supports lower densities in rural areas and higher densities in the village areas and that should be the basis for recommended bylaw amendments. Sometimes people have their special issue and desires for a specific property and that can easily side track discussions of proposed bylaws.

Steve offered to do any research that would be helpful for future Planning Commission discussions of the proposed Bylaw. He has more capacity now that Dina Bookmyer-Baker has returned from furlough. The inventory for downtown properties was mentioned and he offered to update the current inventory if desired. This type of research can help promote a shared understanding of the basis for proposed bylaw changes.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **PLANNER'S REPORT**

Steve provided an update for the Main St. Reconstruction project including the wayfinding signage.

The Planning Commission inquired about the status of various properties and the associated permitting. These included the following:

- Steve's recollection is that the former Residential Care Home located at 26 Union St. has been permitted for changing the non-conforming use to four multi-family units. It cannot be converted back to a Residential Care Home with more than eight residents because that use has been discontinued for more than one year.
- The former TD Bank building located at 14 S. Main St. has been permitted for restaurant use on the first floor and lower levels. The second floor is currently occupied by a financial management company.
- The former Cider House Restaurant located at 1675 U.S. Route 2 has been approved for continued use as a restaurant and an additional use for indoor and outdoor events such as weddings. The approval for events use includes a grass overflow parking area in the lower field near to the Winooski River. The building has been under renovation since it was flooded and damaged by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and now has a new owner.
- The Keurig Dr. Pepper café located in the railroad station, that is currently closed due to the pandemic, was discussed.

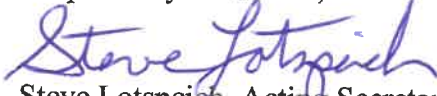
### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in person and via ZOOM. Martha said that she will be on vacation and will not be attending the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Steve Lotspeich, Acting Secretary