

WATERBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
Approved Minutes
Monday, March 1, 2021

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

Staff: Steve Lotspeich, Community Planner; Patti Martin, secretary.

Public: Alyssa Johnson

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m. The Planning Commission (PC) members, staff, and members of the public participated via Zoom.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

The agenda was reviewed and no changes were made.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There were no announcements or comments from the public.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Eric Gross moved and Katya D'Angelo seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 22, 2021, as amended.

VOTE: The motion passed 4 – 0 with one member absent.

Katya D'Angelo moved and Eric Gross seconded to approve the minutes of February 8, 2021.

VOTE: The motion passed 4 – 0 with one member absent.

SELECT BOARD DIRECTION AND TIMELINE FOR PLANNING COMMISSION WORK ON DRAFT BYLAWS

Steve Lotspeich and Mary Koen attended the Select Board meeting on this night, prior to this meeting and provided this feedback. Mary, therefore, joined the meeting late and did not vote on the minutes as approved above.

Ken Belliveau reviewed a possible timeline to get the Planning Commission's draft of the bylaws complete and schedule the Planning Commission's public hearing. The goal of the timeline is to get a draft of the bylaws transmitted to the Select Board by May 1st of this year. This means that the Planning Commission's draft needs to be completed by the end of March leaving a total of three meetings, including the meeting this evening, to complete the draft.

Steve Lotspeich commented on the state statute, 24 V.S.A. Section 4442, regarding the adoption of bylaws. Steve had difficulty finding the state statute that relates to new zoning permit applications that can be reviewed under the draft bylaws, once the Select Board public hearing on that draft is warned. This issue relates to the current Perry Hill Partners appeal of the Development Review Board decision to uphold the Zoning Administrator's denial of their application for a brewery with a

tasting room in the new building located at 28 Stowe St.

The Select Board requested that the Planning Commission consider the following:

1. The square foot thresholds in the use table for permitted versus conditional use should be adjusted. The 2,000 sq. ft. threshold was discussed as “too small”, with something in the range of 3,500 sq. ft. proposed as a number to consider. Steve pointed out this threshold varies by use with some uses such as Food and Beverage Manufacturing, and Light Industry proposed with a maximum square footage limit for these uses, for any type of review.
2. Parking bylaws and possible exemptions from parking requirements for the downtown area were discussed. It was decided that it is ok if the PC doesn't tackle this issue in the next three meetings.

DISCUSSION OF THE DOWNTOWN ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS IN THE DRAFT UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

The PC discussed Section 1606.2, Dimensional Table as follows:

1. Should there be a “Maximum principal building footprint” for the Downtown zoning district? Currently the draft shows this a “n/a” meaning that there is no maximum in this proposed district. It was observed that the Waterbury Square Shopping Center building is over 37,000 sq. ft. in footprint. It was agreed that limiting the scale and size of buildings in this area is important, especially for new buildings. A maximum building footprint in the range of 10,000-15,000 sq. ft. was discussed. The need for a limit on building footprint will be discussed at the next PC meeting.
2. The “Build-to-line” concept was discussed. It was decided that this dimension should be changed to “Maximum front setback” and it should be 10'. This is a balance with the recommendations in the State's “Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods”.
3. Consideration of creating some architectural standards, especially for new structures was discussed. It was observed that the review standards in the current Downtown Design Review Overlay District bylaws would still apply to the new Downtown zoning district, if the draft bylaws are enacted.
4. The definition of “Maximum lot coverage” was discussed. The definition in the current Zoning Regulations is the percent of the lot covered by only the building footprint. The definition in the draft bylaws is the percentage of the lot covered by all impervious surfaces including buildings and parking areas. It was agreed that the limit in the draft bylaws should be 100% and not 90%.

The size threshold for the various uses was discussed. It was suggested to review the spreadsheet sent by Steve that has the square footages for various uses, the building footprints, and the existing lot sizes for all the parcel with commercial uses in the proposed Downtown zoning district.

Steve will update the draft bylaws with the items that were decided on and send that out to the PC prior to the next meeting on March 8th.

OTHER BUSINESS

Steve asked if the Zoning Administrator's Report for December, 2020 that he sent to the PC is in a format that is acceptable. The new format is based on the information in the Town Clerk's log for the zoning permit applications when they are submitted. The PC indicated that this format is fine for now and requested that the most up-to-date report be sent out before the next PC meeting. After reviewing the reports, if additional information is needed on the report, the PC will let Steve know.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular scheduled Planning Commission meeting will be held on Monday, March 8th.

ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Martin

Patti Martin, Secretary