

Planning Board Zoning Workshop
February 2, 2021 – Virtual Zoom

Present: Members Delisio, Foley, Gilbert, Mastrogiacomo, Olney, Russell

Absent: Coons

Other Staff, Board, Committee members Present: S. Mellish (ZBA), P Orlando (Zoning Enforcement Office/Building Inspector) S. Brown (Town Planner)

Chair Mastrogiacomo called the workshop meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed participants and noted the purpose of the workshop is to hear input from the public on the proposed Zoning Bylaw changes. Mr. Mastrogiacomo provided an overview of the process that produced the proposed bylaw. He also noted that no decisions would be made at this workshop, and that input would be considered at future PB meetings. He identified ground-rules for the discussion and introduced Mr. Bobrowski, the Town’s Zoning Consultant.

Mr. Bobrowski identified the procedure followed to develop the proposed bylaw and noted the coded version (available online and shared on screen) was available for anyone wanting to see existing and proposed text.

Mr. Bobrowski then proceeded through each section of the proposed bylaw, highlighting significant changes as the coded version was shared on the screen.

Section 1, Purpose and Authority: No significant changes

Section 2, Districts: Propose dividing Residential District D as two districts RD1 and RD2 as RD1 allows 2-family by right and RD2 allows 2-family by Special Permit. A new map would replace the text identifying the boundaries.

Section 3, Use Regulations: Reorganized and added a Use Table to replace text and create an easier to use format.

Comments from residents included:

Side Yard is often a driveway against the lot line – consider allowing vehicle storage there by right or special permit.

Consider adding additional Commercial Uses to the Use Table

Clarify that the weight of a vehicle is the vehicle alone and not a trailer

Consider the impact that refrigerated trucks that use compressors may have

Consider expanding home occupations to include professions such as software development, Information Technology and others. Mark suggested language that allowed any occupation without clients, customers or employees at the home location.

A resident asked about Sober House regulations – Mark responded that this has not been a part of the discussion to date. Section 11.7 provides regulations regarding special accommodations for protected uses, which a Sober House is.

Section 4, Dimensional Regulations: No significant changes in existing dimensional requirements. Dimensional Table is consolidated. New Section 4.3.2 addresses dimensional requirements for accessory structures.

Section 5, Nonconforming Uses and Structures – Completely rewritten to allow changes to nonconforming structures or structures on non-conforming lots upon approval by the Building Inspector, as long as the change meets all requirements and does not increase sq feet of the building by more than 100%.

Comments from residents included:

Request for text of previous warrant when a similar change was rejected.

Consider a 50% increase instead of 100%

How do abutters get noticed of changes being proposed? Mr. Bobrowski responded that some communities send notices to abutters when a substantial building permit is issued.

Mr. Bobrowski defended the change as in keeping with the intent of case law that looks to regulate changes that increase non-conformities and significant size changes on non-conforming lots or buildings while allowing changes that don't .

Section 6, General Regulations: Added relief from parking and sign regulations by Special Permit, added new landscaping and performance rules for commercial and multi-family uses, deleted Development Scheduling – sewer connection limitation and replaced old Earth Removal Regulations with updated Regulations.

Comments from residents included:

Are changes that reduce the regulations a good idea?

Consider creating landscaping and screening standards that speak to stormwater management and other environmental protections rather than simply concentrating on screening certain uses. Mr. Bobrowski asked if suggested changes could be forwarded.

Assure that regulations protect sidewalks from changes by new development.

Section 7, Special Regulations, Moved Junk Vehicles and Curb Cut regulations to General Bylaws, deleted Marijuana Moratorium (as it is replaced by previously approved regulations) and added Adult Entertainment Regulations – that previously did not exist.

Section 8, Special Residential Regulations: Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw revised, Planned Residential Development Bylaw and Division of Land Bylaw deleted and replaced by a revised Residential Conservation Cluster Bylaw. Also deleted Inclusionary Bylaw and Rate of Development Bylaw. Added a new Senior Housing Facility Bylaw.

Comments from residents included:

Concern that the regulations don't protect interests of neighbors.

Concern that the new ADU regulations allow too much development by right.

How are ADUs going to help address housing needs?

Align purpose statement and regulations to allow an owner to be either in the primary or the accessory unit.

Consider strengthening language to prevent short term rentals, perhaps longer residency required.

Concern that there is not adequate data to support the reduced regulations for ADUs.

Concern about too many ADUs changing the character of the Town and having an adverse impact on Town finances.

Need clarity on front entrances for detached ADUs.

There are considerable constraints on building ADUs, it is unlikely an unreasonable amount would be developed.

Chair Mastrogiacomo noted that the workshop would end following the discussion of the ADU Bylaw and another workshop would be scheduled to complete review of sections not discussed. It was noted that the next workshop would cover sections 8 – 12.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Note: Over 60 people participated

Meeting minutes prepared by Sue Brown

Approved at Planning Board Meeting of March 8, 2021