

Planning Board Zoning Workshop
April 29, 2021 – Virtual Zoom

Present: Members Coons, Delisio, Foley, Mastrogiacono, Olney

Absent: Gilbert, Russell

Other Staff, Board, Committee members Present: S. Mellish (ZBA), S. Brown (Town Planner)

Chair Mastrogiacono called the workshop meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., welcomed participants, provided an overview of the Recodification and Update process and noted the purpose of the workshop is to hear input from the public on the proposed Zoning Bylaw changes. Mastrogiacono 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 Attorney Bobrowski, the Town's Zoning Consultant.

Mr. Bobrowski introduced the following bylaw sections, identified the primary proposed changes and answered resident and Board questions.

Section 8.2, Residential Conservation Cluster (RCC)

Attorney Bobrowski noted that the RCC as proposed takes the place of three existing bylaws: 6.7 Provision for Open Space Planning, 6.8 Planned Residential Development, and 6.13 Residential Conservation Cluster.

The basic idea is to provide an alternative to conventional subdivision that requires dividing the property into lots and typically results in a type of development described as sprawl with larger homes and lots, no preserved open space, and an excessive amount of roads and infrastructure.

As an alternative RCC allows flexibility in lot size and layout, doesn't require lots or minimum size lots results in more contextual design. An RCC development:

- Can have individual lots or a single lot with multiple buildings
- Has a density by right that is the same as that allowed by a conventional subdivision, and offers a density bonus for benefits such as affordable housing, additional open space
- Requires a minimum of 20% of the project be contiguous open space
- Requires 10% of units be restricted as affordable

RCC Projects are by Special Permit only.

Attorney Bobrowski recommended reviewing Cluster Type developments such as Riverwalk in Concord, MA and Cannon Forge in Foxborough, MA.

Section 8.3 Senior Housing

This is a new section that allows for different types of senior housing including multi-family in any district by a Special Permit from the Planning Board. Senior Housing requirements include:

- Minimum lot size and frontage in district
- 35 foot height in Residential Districts, 45 in General District and Limited Commercial District – greater height by special permit
- 50 foot set back from residential dwellings
- Transportation services and 10% open space required

Questions and Comments on RCC and SH include:

- It would be helpful to explain why each change to the bylaw is being considered.
- The RCC should be explicit as to if fractions for bonus units are rounded or not counted.

Section 9.0 Special Districts

Includes 9.1 Flood Control Overlay District; 9.2 Flood Plain Overlay District; and 9.3 Ground and Surface Water Resource Protection District

Very few changes have been made in Section 9 other than renumbering due to organization of bylaw sections and reference to subdivision regulations where determined illegal.

Sue and Attorney Bobrowski will look into whether the State is requiring an update to Flood Plain Control Bylaw.

Section 10.0 Energy Regulations

Includes 10.1 Solar Photovoltaic Installations and 10.2 Wind Energy Conversion Facilities. Very few and only minor changes proposed.

Section 11.0 Administration and Procedures

Principal changes include:

11.1.3 Noncriminal Disposition is a new section that provides the Town the ability to fine zoning violations as an alternative to criminal proceedings.

11.4 Added section for the Planning Board to match the section for the Zoning Board of Appeals

It was noted that there is not an alternative Planning Board member under current regulations.

Some language in this section that focuses on policy is recommended to be moved from Zoning to the Boards' regulations, thereby allowing it to be changed as needed without Town Meeting vote.

Attorney Bobrowski noted that he offered alternative language and organization of much of section 11.0 without substantially changing its purpose or effect.

Attorney Bobrowski noted that he did separate Site Plan Review and Special Permits as they are very different and cannot be together. Site Plan Review only requires a majority vote to approve or approve with conditions and is not covered in State Statute, rather it is codified through case law.

Section 12 Definitions was reviewed, with Mr. Bobrowski noting many new definitions.

There was a general discussion about how Section 8.2 regulations might impact neighborhoods. Sue and Mark will choose a few lots in a few different districts and illustrate how the regulations would or could result in different projects.

Mastrogiacomo noted that the Board would meet again to discuss public input from the past two workshops to make further changes to the draft bylaw. He also noted that the Board would identify sections that need further review and community discussion and would host workshops on those in advance of producing a final draft.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Note: Around 24 people participated

Meeting minutes prepared by Sue Brown
Approved at Planning Board Meeting of May 24, 2021