

ZONING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Of the Hopkinton Planning Board

Thursday, August 23, 2007 7:30 PM
Fire Station Meeting Room

MINUTES

PRESENT: Ken Weismantel, Chairman, RJ Dourney, Vice Chairman, Sandy K. Altamura, Don Bartlett, Alex Brown, Richard DeMont, Peter Ficarri, Gary Haroian, Mavis O'Leary, Nancy Peters, Ron Roux, Joseph Strazzulla

Elaine Lazarus, Planning Director

1. Reorganization

It was noted that since this was the first meeting after members had been appointed, the Committee needed to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman for the next year. The floor was opened to nominations for Chairman. Mr. Bartlett nominated Mr. Weismantel. Ms. Altamura nominated Mr. Dourney. Mr. Dourney stated he would like to be Chairman but does not have the time to devote to it right now. Ms. O'Leary nominated Ms. Altamura. Ms. Altamura stated she does not have the time either. The Committee voted unanimously to elect Mr. Weismantel as Chairman.

The floor was opened to nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr. Dourney was nominated, and there were no other nominations. The Committee voted unanimously to elect Mr. Dourney as Vice Chairman.

2. Meeting Schedule

The Committee decided to meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, and set the following meeting dates: Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Nov. 13, Nov. 27 and Dec. 11. The Committee decided to meet from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Fire Station Meeting Room if available.

3. Work Program

Mr. Weismantel suggested that the Committee advertise a public hearing for the next meeting and invite ideas for proposed zoning changes. Ms. Altamura agreed it would be a good idea but recommended that the Committee tell proponents that it might not get to them this year, given limited time and the complexity of some issues. Mr. Bartlett suggested asking people to submit their ideas ahead of time in writing. The Committee decided to advertise the hearing for the next meeting and encourage people to submit their ideas in writing ahead of time.

The Committee reviewed items on the draft work program previously distributed:

1. Site Plan Review streamlining where applications to Board of Appeals also required: Ms. Lazarus briefly described the proposal, which was suggested by the Board of Appeals in 2005.

2. Incremental traffic bylaw: Ms. Lazarus noted this had been suggested by a Planning Board member because of concerns about cumulative traffic impacts from smaller developments, and it had been suggested that there could be a point where no further development could be approved which would negatively affect an impacted intersection. Mr. Strazzulla questioned whether that would be legal. Ms. Altamura noted that the Planning Board can require mitigation of impacts, and a concern was that traffic studies are paid for by applicants so aren't necessarily unbiased. She recommended that the Town hire the consultant to do the traffic study. It was noted that it may not be practical to do that. After discussion, the Committee decided to remove this item from the work program, but ask that the Planning Board look at developing specific requirements for the content of traffic studies and insert them in the appropriate regulations or submission requirements.
3. Investigate options for producing modest scale homes: Mr. Dourney noted that current zoning doesn't allow the construction of the downtown scale homes with character that people like, and the cost of land is also a factor. Mr. Strazzulla stated that the only to provide small homes is to have them built on small lots, and the Town needs to provide infrastructure to have them too. Mr. Roux noted that the kinds of zoning proposed for East Hopkinton may include the types of homes that are being discussed. The Committee agreed to address this item along with East Hopkinton.

Mr. Brown arrived at this time.

4. Signs (municipal signs, off-premises signs, consolidation of sign bylaws): It was noted that the Committee had been waiting for information from the Chamber of Commerce before proceeding with possible changes. Mr. Roux stated the Chamber will have a recommendation in the fall. It was decided that the municipal sign issue no longer needed to be addressed.
5. Rezoning – Weston Nurseries: It was noted that Boulder Capital has hired a consultant to write the proposed change and that it was expected in the fall. The Committee decided to make this item a high priority and to send a letter to Boulder Capital letting them know of the Committee's timeline for working on this item.
6. Rezoning – East Hopkinton (non-Weston Nurseries): The Committee decided to request that representatives of Sasaki Associates attend a meeting to present the recommendations in the East Hopkinton Master Plan.
7. Parking: Ms. Lazarus stated she recommended this item to address the issues of shared parking and downtown parking. Mr. Roux noted there is a model that engineers use to calculate parking for mixed use buildings, and that could be helpful. Mr. Dourney stated that if there isn't enough parking, this might encourage people to carpool etc. He added that businesses can manage themselves and won't go where there isn't enough parking for their customers. Mr. Roux noted that if there isn't enough parking, it is hard to lease commercial space. Mr. Strazzulla noted that for restaurants, for example, parking required on site is excessive when people can use adjacent lots at night that are not used. He noted that lots in downtown Hopkinton are very small and that is a factor to consider.
8. Hours of operation for trucks: Ms. Altamura stated there is a bylaw that addresses noise from construction vehicles, but not other kinds of trucks like the ones that empty dumpsters. She stated there is a need for a regulation to prohibit noisy truck activity at

night and in the early morning hours. She suggested tweaking the existing bylaw to cover this. Mr. Dourney recommended caution as there is a lot of business that happens in the off hours, and there might be ways to address this other than new regulation.

9. Terry property rezoning: It was noted that the 200 ± acre property is zoned Industrial B and Agricultural. It was decided to look at the wetland delineation for the property and the location of the current zone line. Mr. Haroian suggested looking at Lumber St. as a whole and the recommendations for zoning changes suggested by the Economic Commission a few years ago.
10. Stormwater Management Bylaw: The Committee decided to review the bylaw and assess it, to assist the Planning Board in this regard.

4. Other Business

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of January 23, 2007.

Russell Ellsworth, 6 Curtis Rd., asked for information about when Boulder Capital would be coming in with their proposal and whether it would be an overlay district. Ms. Lazarus noted it has been said that it will be in the fall, and the Planning Board will know more when Boulder Capital attends its meeting on Sept. 10 to give an update.

Adjourned: 9:00 PM

Elaine C. Lazarus, Planning Director

Approved: September 11, 2007