

## **Planning Commission** *Town of Ferrisburgh, Vt.*

Minutes for meeting of June 17, 2020, held by remote teleconferencing.

**Members present:** Bob Beach (chair), Gail Blasius, Anne Cohn, Kristin DeBellis, Arabella Holzapfel, Walter Reed. **Absent:** Al Chamberlain, Mike Quinn, Bessie Sessions.

**Town officials present:** Bonnie Barnes, zoning administrator, Norm Smith, chair of the ZBA.

**Visitors present:** Alan Calfee, Jill Boardman, Jean Richardson.

Bob Beach opened the meeting at 7 p.m.

**Application No. 20-023 by Peter Davis for site plan review of a privacy fence at 308 Summer Point Lane. The 1.43 acre lot is in the Shoreland District (SD-2) and identified in Town of Ferrisburgh tax maps as parcel 19/20/65.**

Alan Calfee, authorized to represent the Peter Davis at the hearing, was present to speak for the application. This is a request for an after-the-fact permit for the construction of an 8 foot privacy fence for 57 feet along the easterly boundary of the property. Because the property is in the Shoreland District, where camps and single family residences must receive site plan review with regard to scenic considerations, the zoning administrator referred the application for an after-the-fact building permit to the Planning Commission for its review.

After some discussion, the Planning Commission felt that a site visit would be appropriate. Anne Cohn moved to recess the hearing until the July 15 meeting, and to schedule a site visit at 6 p.m. on that date. Gail Blasius seconded. All voted in favor. **Motion approved.**

**Other business: Update and Review of draft zoning and subdivision regulations.**

The Land Use Regulation Update Committee has been charged with revising the zoning and subdivision regulations. As of May 28, an editing subcommittee had completed a revision of substantially all of the document, and forwarded it to the Planning Commission for an informal review of its work to date. The editing subcommittee also submitted an executive summary of the edits, attached to these minutes.

Norm Smith, a member of the editing subcommittee, and chair of the Zoning Board of Adjustment presented the draft to the Commission. Bob Beach asked how public comment can be effectively done in the COVID era. Gail Blasius noted that in-person meetings are currently possible, as long as the numbers are limited. Norm Smith observed that the draft did not incorporate radical changes to the existing bylaws. The issues of deadlines and timing were raised, and Arabella Holzapfel, chair of the Land Use Regulation Update Committee, said that she had given the Selectboard an update a couple of weeks ago. Jean Richardson summarized that the intent of the draft was to streamline as well as update the regulations, with the possibility of creating a "best practices" manual to provide additional detail and guidance for land developers. Norm Smith said that the new Planned Unit Development provision added flexibility to the rules for subdividing

property. Mike Quinn asked if the intent of the PUD provision was to change the density restrictions.

Concerning specific provisions, there was no objection to the proposed deletion of a height restriction, former section 5.14. Bob Beach questioned whether the “other similar uses” language in each Zoning District section functioned as a loophole or a safeguard. After discussion, the Planning Commission suggested that the provision be removed from each of the Zoning District sections and given a specific section, with specific standards to guide applicants as well as the municipal bodies reviewing the applications. Bob Beach suggested that “laundromat” be included in the conditional uses for the Shoreland District. The definition of “resort” has been edited. The minimum lot size requirement for certain zoning districts remains open for discussion. Arabella Holzapfel noted that the two-lot subdivision loophole has been closed, and that all subdivisions of land will be reviewed by the Planning Commission, although the distinction between major and minor subdivisions will continue. Mike Quinn asked whether a major subdivision should be changed to 5 or more lots.

Bob Beach asked how the town’s municipal planning grant (“Visualizing Density”) fits into the regulation revision process. Arabella Holzapfel responded that the Committee has been meeting with a consultant who is working on a plan for public input into the determination of appropriate density rules for the town. Meanwhile the necessary updates and edits to the language the zoning regulation proceeds. The tasks are proceeding on slightly different tracks, but both processes are currently aiming for a November vote on the revision.

Bob Beach asked about the bulk fuel storage language in the definition of “heavy manufacturing.” He believes that state law has changed and the definition should reflect the current law.

Additional written comments were submitted by Bessie Sessions, Mike Quinn and Arabella Holzapfel, and are attached.

The Planning Commission agreed to continue to review the draft and to discuss it again at the July meeting.

**Adjournment:** Bob Beach moved to adjourn the meeting; Anne Cohn seconded. All voted in favor.  
**Motion approved.**

— Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Barnes