

## **Land Use Regulation Update Committee** *Town of Ferrisburgh, Vt.*

FINAL – Minutes for meeting of September 4, 2019; approved September 24, 2019.

**Members present:** Arabella Holzapfel (chair), Bonnie Barnes, Bob Beach, Gail Blasius, Anne Cohn, Carl Cole, Karen Pettersen, Jean Richardson, Norm Smith.

**1. Call to order; approve minutes.** Arabella Holzapfel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Anne Cohn made a motion to approve the minutes of August 27, 2019, as submitted. Karen Pettersen seconded. Arabella Holzapfel, Bonnie Barnes, Gail Blasius, Anne Cohn, Carl Cole and Karen Pettersen voted in favor. Bob Beach and Jean Richardson abstained. **Motion approved.**

**2. Municipal grant 2019 update.** Arabella Holzapfel and Bonnie Barnes said they had met with Katie Raycroft-Meyer from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission about the application for a municipal planning grant from the state for a study called “Visualizing Density.” The state grant will help the town better define what residential density means and might look like in rural Ferrisburgh. The grant request, for about \$9,000, would require a 10 percent match from the town, or about \$900. Holzapfel and Barnes said Raycroft-Meyer expects to meet with the committee and talk about whether there are areas of Ferrisburgh where the town might want to use innovative zoning tools to encourage higher residential density. Her study would also involve getting feedback from townspeople and disseminating information on zoning issues.

Arabella Holzapfel reported the town hopes to learn whether it has received a grant in early December.

**3. Timeline discussion.** Arabella Holzapfel said a recent version of the timeline had the committee beginning public outreach in October, but with the town pursuing the state grant, October appears too soon. She also said the timeline had the committee deciding on rules for PUDs by December, but the grant-funded study would just be beginning at that point, so January or February seemed like a more realistic schedule. She said the results of the study might be ready to present to townspeople at town meeting in March 2020. She still hopes the committee can wrap up its work on the zoning bylaws rewrite by June 2020.

There was a brief discussion of the implications for the committee’s work from the recent announcement that the Addison Northwest Supervisory Union is considering closing the Ferrisburgh Central School and sending its students to schools in Vergennes. It was noted the school closing would have a psychological effect on the town, since FCS is generally acknowledged to be a high-quality elementary school, and is part of the reason Ferrisburgh is seen as a great place to live. Closing the school might result in less pressure for residential development, since a town without a school would be a less attractive option for young families. Some board members said they believe the town competes for young families with Charlotte and other Chittenden County towns, known for their quality school systems, and would be at a further disadvantage were the FCS to close.

Returning to the timeline, the committee decided to tackle further work on the town zoning maps at its meetings on September 24 and October 2. The group will consider the use tables, describing what uses are permitted, conditional or not allowed in the various zoning districts, at its meeting on October 22. Also at that meeting, the committee will discuss definitions of uses that have been assigned to various committee members.

At the meeting scheduled for November 6, the group will consider how or whether to incorporate material from Jean Richardson's 2007 draft zoning regulations, which for various reasons were never adopted. That will be the only meeting in November, and there will also be just one meeting the next month, on December 4, when the committee will consider river corridor language contained in Brandy Saxton's bylaw drafts. The committee may also know about the status of the grant by then. The group will then hold two meetings in January, on the 8th and the 28th.

**4. Other business.** While the committee had decided to hold off on discussing use table definitions, Carl Cole, who had been assigned to research the definition for "Warehouse," said he wanted to let the members know he had looked at the definitions found in the zoning bylaws of several neighboring towns. He found things he liked, but decided Ferrisburgh's current definition was pretty good. There was a brief discussion of whether a holding tank containing hazardous material would fall under the definition of warehouse, which led to a suggestion the town might need to define a separate use such as "Hazardous Materials Storage Facility." One example given was the AmeriGas, formerly Blue Flame, propane storage depot in North Ferrisburgh.

**5. Next meeting.** The next meeting will take place on September 24 at 5:30 p.m.

**6. Adjournment.** Jean Richardson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Anne Cohn seconded. All voted in favor. **Motion approved.**

— Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells