



MINUTES OF MEETING **ZONING BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Date: May 21, 2014

SCHEDULED TIME: 7:30 p.m.

Location: TOWN HALL (Mural Room), 878 Tremont St.

Minutes Prepared By: Nancy Johnson

Members Present: Kathy Muncey, Scott Casagrande, Nancy Johnson, George Wadsworth, Freeman Boynton, Jr., Mary Steinke

Members Absent: Judi Barrett

Also Present: Tom Broadrick

Meeting was called to order at 7:45 by the Vice Chair, Scott Casagrande.

Minutes

The minutes from April 2, 2014 were approved as amended.

Discussion- Consultants' memo

1. Special Permits and Subdivision Activity (Wall Street v. Westwood)

The Planning Board will discuss and advise ZBRC on the Conservation Cluster Issue. There was some discussion on the pros and cons of conservation subdivisions as opposed to standard subdivisions with individual one acre lots. As the current bylaw clearly intends to promote conservation, we should consider offering incentives. Tom Broadrick said that other communities do offer incentives for conservation subdivisions. He suggested allowing smaller lots than the current 20,000 square foot minimum.

One big deterrent to a cluster is the homeowner's association having to maintain the roads. Kathy believes that other towns maintain private roads. Tom mentioned that town roads require a 50 foot wide right-of-way because of the DPW equipment.

It was also suggested that we redefine the conservation subdivision and drop the word "cluster", as some have negative associations with that word.

3. Non-Conformity

The agenda was to discuss this item, but it was postponed again because of Judi Barrett's absence.

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Discussion- DRB documents

Scott Casagrande led a discussion of the memo of suggested topics provided by the Design Review Board.

1. Building Height -this topic was included on the ZBRC report that was given to the consultants. It was suggested that if building height limitations remain relative to finished grade, the bylaw should limit the extent of alteration of the natural grade to prevent excessive mounding that creates unnatural, unattractive construction that is incompatible with the neighborhood. Many houses are being raised due to flood plain issues. Special cases, such as flood plain issues or problematic sites could be reviewed and permitted by special permit.
2. Additional Height and Volume create increased non-conformity- This topic was addressed in the consultant's memo.
3. "Structures" and "Accessory Structures" - This will be reviewed.
4. Garages - This item was also on the ZBRC report as a consideration. It was noted that as an Accessory Use (302), a detached garage must occupy less land area than the principal use. There is currently no height limitation noted for garages or other accessory structures. Old barns are often higher than the principal residence, and they are attractive and appropriate, but many new large garages with rooms above can detract from the appearance of a smaller existing home.
5. Fencing - There is currently no provision in the bylaw for fencing. Tom Broadrick said that the town allows fences in a public right-of-way as long as they are not a hazard to sight lines or snow removal. Some committee members believe this issue is out of the scope of the ZBRC.
6. Buildings on small lots (4.10.4) - This issue has been discussed with the consultants and should be addressed within the scope of work.
7. Large House Review - This item is beyond the scope of ZBRC.
8. Dwelling and Dwelling Unit - This needs clarity in the definitions. There were good examples given from other towns.
9. Administration and Procedure - This item was not discussed.

Judi Barrett will be asked to get a list of stakeholders that are being contacted by the consultants.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 4, 2014.

Meeting adjourned @ 9:30 pm.

List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting:

Horsley Witten Group Memorandum to Judi Barrett, dated March 11, 2014

Design Review Board - Comments for the ZBRC, March 2014

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