

FALMOUTH PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2013, 6:30 P.M.

FALMOUTH TOWN HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Lunt (Chair), Bernard Pender (Vice Chair), Kermit Stanley, Jay Chace, Rudy Israel

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Benzing

STAFF PRESENT: Ethan Croce, Senior Planner

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of minutes from the November 5, 2013 Planning Board meetings.

Jay Chace moved to approve the minutes. Bernie Pender seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Administrative Action Items

2. Oceanview Retirement Community – 20 Blueberry Lane - Request for a site plan amendment for a pool enclosure at Whipple Farm Cottages. Tax Sheet 310; Map-lot U27-013-B. Zoned RB, RCOD, and RCZO.

3. Fairway Villas, Inc. – Lindenwood Lane – Request for a subdivision & site plan amendment for footprint and grading adjustments to four detached units. Tax Sheet 300; Map-Lot U67-098-101, -102, -103, -104. Zoned MUC.

Jay Chace moved to approve the administrative items; Kermit Stanley seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Hearings

4. Public hearing on proposed amendments to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance to add certain service uses to the Business Professional District.

Public comment period opened; no public comment.

Jay Chace pointed out that the Town recently passed a new comprehensive plan and he wondered how this amendment fits in with the vision for Route 1 North.

Ethan Croce said there are two recommended action items that relate to this amendment. The first is for the Town to go through a study of Route 1 North, encompassing Route 1 from Bucknam Road to the Cumberland town line. This study, to be conducted in collaboration with the Town of Cumberland, would be similar to the study done of the southern section of Route 1 that led to the recent rezoning of that district. The second action item, intended to follow the study, was for the Council to explore adding uses to the Route 1 North area, including residential uses.

Jay Chace wasn't comfortable giving a favorable opinion on an ad-hoc zoning change if the comprehensive plan is calling for a long-range study of the area.

Bernie Pender agreed; he wasn't prepared to support this. Kermit Stanley agreed.

Rudy Israel asked about the impetus behind this amendment.

Ethan Croce said there was a property owner that spoke before the Council and expressed concerns about a lack of permitted uses in the district. He wasn't sure if this amendment was a direct by-product of those discussions.

Rudy Israel agreed with deferring this for further review by LPAC in the future.

Bill Lunt agreed; he felt they should address the district more comprehensively.

Jay Chace moved that the Board recommend that the amendment not be passed. Kermit Stanley seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Public hearing on proposed amendments to the Zoning and Site Plan Review Ordinance to amend the definition of farming in the Farm and Forest District to include commercial greenhouses.

No members of the public were present to comment.

Ethan Croce explained that the Farm & Forest district currently allows for farming, but doesn't allow commercial greenhouses. This amendment will remove the prohibition on commercial greenhouses under the farming definition.

Jay Chace asked why a new definition of greenhouse was added, instead of striking out "non-commercial" from the existing definition. He supported the proposal in general.

Bernie Pender asked about design guidelines for commercial greenhouses; those can be very large buildings.

Ethan Croce said there aren't any, beyond what is listed in the proposed definition. There are no architectural standards, though any greenhouse would have to conform to the 35' height limit imposed on all structures in Farm & Forest.

Jay Chace felt that a commercial farming business that wanted to install large greenhouses would still have to come to the Board for site plan review; Ethan Croce said that was correct.

Rudy Israel asked how they distinguish between commercial and non-commercial greenhouses.

Ethan Croce said the Town could permit a greenhouse as an accessory to a residential use. As soon as the residents start selling produce it becomes a commercial entity.

Bill Lunt wondered if there was a reason that non-commercial greenhouses were okay, but commercial weren't. He asked how the Board would deal with reviewing a commercial greenhouse.

Ethan Croce said the Board would have the discretion to apply existing buffering standards to any greenhouse that came to them for site plan review.

The Board discussed the proposed amendment versus removing "non-commercial" from the current definition. Jay Chace felt the standard definition of greenhouse would be sufficient. Bill Lunt thought adding the definition covered the newer type "high tunnel" or "hoop houses", which might not be covered by the standard dictionary definition of "greenhouse".

Rudy Israel moved that the Planning Board recommend that the amendment be passed as written; Kermit Stanley seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Other Business

6. Election of Planning Board Chair

Bernie Pender moved to elect Jay Chace as Planning Board chair; Kermit Stanley seconded. Motion carried 4-0 (Chace abstained)

7. Liaison to LPAC

Ethan Croce discussed the role of LPAC.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Tryon
Recording Secretary