

## **Residential Project Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**July 18, 2011**

**Present:** Kate Connolly, Iain Sim, Judith Esmay, Michael Hingston, Jonathan Edwards, Judith Brotman, Vicki Smith

Judith Esmay distributed lists of uses recognized in Hanover zoning district dated June 2009. These are uses listed in the 204 tables and not all the uses regulated in the ordinance.

The discussion focused on two questions.

#### **What types of non-residential uses do we have in rural residential areas?**

A non-exhaustive list of non-residential uses in rural area was reviewed. Whether a use is secondary to a residential use or a principal use was discussed and contrasted with non-residential uses that are nuisances. Home businesses, bee keeping, sugaring, arts and crafts, woodworking shop, trail heads, cemeteries, parks, conservation land, and water company were added to the list. What is acceptable versus not acceptable with regard to contractor's yards was discussed.

#### **What sorts of issues and complaints come to mind regarding these uses?**

Storage associated with businesses can either be done in an acceptable way or not. The visual impact has a lot to do with complaints. Traffic, noise and parking also generate complaints. Other sources of complaints mentioned included: horses, cow manure in streams( Agricultural run-off is a source of pollution in many rural areas. Proper management must be implemented.)

It was noted that the rural area is not homogeneous. Some uses may not be appropriate in all places. It was suggested that we think positively and determine what we want to see. Many members expect to see some junk in a rural area. An area that is too scrubbed and uniform is not real. A mix of uses is very positive and lends reality to a place. It was agreed that diversity in land use is good.

#### **Civic/Community Uses**

The Etna Fire station whistle has annoyed neighbors. Post office lights have also been the subject of a complaint. Churches and other places of public assembly can generate complaints, but none recently in Hanover. Most members agreed that all civic/community uses are acceptable in rural areas.

#### **Educational**

The uses listed as educational are really day care uses so the heading should be changed. Whether there are differences between public and private schools was discussed. Size of the educational institution seemed to be the continuum on which to rate appropriateness. The committee discussed the possibility of the conversion of the organic farm barn to an educational space and whether the rural

area is a good place for a school. Many felt that it was not sensible to put a new school in the rural area due to scale, impact and population distribution.

#### Commercial

Traffic, noise, lights and signage were mentioned as potential adverse impacts for commercial uses in the rural area. Commercial uses attract people and there are a large range of potential impacts depending on the scale. There should be different parking regulations for commercial uses in the rural area. Both size and activity generation are measures to use to set limits on commercial use in the rural area. Retail is desired in Etna but there is an economic reality based on background traffic. More professional offices may be appropriate in Etna. The park and ride function is an additional use of the Etna Post Office.

Three kinds of commercial activities were identified: uses for which employees gather at a central location and disperse to work sites; uses for which customers come to a location; and uses where the employee works at home with no customers ever coming in.

Commercial uses of the second type need to attract customers so need a sign and employee and customer parking. Pathways Consulting is an example of a business that grew too big for its site.

Lights and floodlights need to be regulated in town and all over town.

Contractor's yard may be appropriate depending on the style and scale. Someone asked: If you can't see it, is it ok? How close to the road is desirable? What type of screening?

Is there adequate regulation of care and treatment of animals? There are rules about how much exterior space is needed per animal.

For most commercial uses, members concluded that scale and ensuring that there is no storage in the front yard are important elements.

Communications and energy generation by wind and solar are technologies that the Planning Board should consider and accommodate. Rural land values and commercial viability is very dependent on the communication system available.

Storage of materials that is visible from road is undesirable and enclosed storage was thought to be better controlled, but not really a rural activity. In this case, aesthetics is more important than other impacts such as traffic.

The next meeting will be next Monday at 1:30 PM. The group expects to finish discussing the list of non residential uses and to try to define how we judge appropriateness.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Smith