

Residential Project Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2011

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

Minutes July 11 and July 18, 2011

The minutes of July 11, 2011 were reviewed and amended. On a motion by Kate and a second by Judith, the minutes were approved as amended. The minutes of July 18, 2011 were reviewed and amended. On a motion by Kate and a second by Judith, these minutes were approved as amended.

Continuation of Discussion about Uses in the Rural Area

Storage was described as an essentially harmless use. It can manifest as storage space for rent or storage accessory to a profession. Traffic impact and aesthetics are the potential negative impacts. In addition, potentially hazardous materials may be stored. State and Federal requirements regulating hazardous materials were mentioned.

Lodging and the uses accessory to lodging were discussed next. Distinctions were drawn between inn, motel, bed and breakfast and vacation home. The accessory uses such as a restaurant that serves the public in addition to guests and a facility being used for events such as weddings were identified as being potentially disruptive to the neighborhood. Regulating functions and placing limitations on non-overnight guest activities should be considered. Traffic, hours of operation, noise, signs and lights are all appropriate for review. The size of the enterprise itself, the lot size and how many there are need to be considered. The scale and how the lodging establishment is operated are very germane to a lodging establishment's ability to blend into the neighborhood. In Hanover, some neighbors were concerned about their personal safety with a lodging establishment in the neighborhood. Simply the presence of unknown outsiders was their concern.

The questions were posed: If a land use poses documentable dangers, why should Hanover allow it? What objective factors can we use to measure scale and scope?

Agricultural use was discussed next. The question, "How much latitude do we have to regulate agriculture?" was posed. State law regarding agriculture provides the presumption that agriculture is permitted everywhere unless prohibited explicitly. What better place for agriculture than the rural district was one member's feeling. Agriculture is a commercial enterprise and as such will have traffic impacts, maybe even daily, if milk truck service is needed. Large scale farming should be treated differently than smaller enterprises to control negative impacts. While many residents like fields and animals, agricultural run off can be a source of water pollution. The current zoning definition presumes

that there needs to be an economic return for an activity to be agriculture. Should an economic return have anything to do with allowing the use? Current zoning rules include special lot line setbacks for manure storage. There is a difference between solely horticultural operations and those with livestock. Scope, scale and management are intimately related to compatibility with other rural uses.

Forestry was discussed as a necessity to maintain a productive forest. It is a sort of agriculture. It is the preference of the Committee to allow people to use land to make money instead of depriving them of their right to use the land for forestry or agriculture. The zoning should be clear about the difference between tree cutting and forestry. State-established best management practices should be the standards for both forestry and agriculture. With forestry, not only are trees harvested, but also tops can be chipped and the logs can be milled. Regardless, forestry involves large vehicle traffic.

Considerations for outdoor recreation include: trail head parking in the front setback, shelters or other buildings, signs, noise, lights, and traffic. Some noted that the rural area is underserved by trails compared to the downtown area.

A golf course is a use we might see. Zoning should differentiate between high and low impact activities, e.g. a dock vs. a marina. This might include consideration of facility-based vs. informal use, indoor vs. outdoor activity and individual use vs. group use. Scope and scale must be dealt with.

Water sports require a land base.

The next meeting will be held on August 1 at 1:30 PM. Members should review the May 2nd memo with a focus on concepts. The main use in the rural area is residential and a goal is to reduce sprawl. Members were asked to think about how the rural area should look in the next ten to twenty years and what factors help us judge scope and scale? Jonathan and Michael will work on a list of questions.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Smith