

Approved: January 27, 2016

New Castle Planning Board
Wednesday, December 16, 2015
7:00PM New Castle Town Hall

Members Present: Chair Darcy Horgan, Lorn Buxton, Dave McArdle, Kate Murray, Tom Hammer

Members Not Present: Margaret Sofio

Others Present: None

Chair Horgan called the December 16, 2015 meeting of the New Castle Planning Board to order and noted that the voting members for the evening will be herself, Lorn Buxton, Dave McArdle, Kate Murray and Tom Hammer.

1. Review and approve minutes to the meeting on November 18, 2015

Lorn Buxton MOVED to approve the November 18, 2015 minutes as written; that was SECONDED by Dave McArdle and APPROVED unanimously.

2. Announcements

a. Dave McArdle announced that he will not be renewing his term when it expires in May.

b. Darcy announced that the Select board will be voting on Monday, December 20, 2015 to appoint Rich Landry to the Planning Board.

3. Old Business

Chair Horgan asked each member of the Planning Board to report on the ordinance(s) that they promised to look into.

Kate Murray reported on pervious/impervious surfaces. She checked in with the town of Rye who stated they have struggled with this topic for years. It was noted that New Castle is covered with approximately 41% impervious

surfaces and the question was asked should the Town be concerned with only increasing impervious surfaces by a certain percentage or should the ordinance state that impervious surfaces on private property cannot be increased by more than a certain percentage. Another question discussed was if there was a target number the Town should strive to maintain and if guidelines should be set. It was noted that there are technical issues involved with this topic where expert advice may be needed. Discussion ensued on the variety of pervious pavers now available and that the use of these is more of a design decision, and is not necessarily more expensive. It was reported that these pavers were developed because of the demand for more pervious surfaces and that currently plans that are submitted to the Planning Board have pervious/impervious calculations, but are not very detailed. Kate Murray will touch base with Tracy Degnan of the Rockingham Planning Commission as a start. She will also consult with Frank Richardson from DES when he does a site walk with the PB in January.

Tom Hammer touched base on the subject of lot coverage and the definition as it appears in the ordinance book now. The question was asked if driveways should be included in the definition. It was noted that this question ties in with the pervious/impervious conversation and should be looked at together. Another question discussed was what is reasonable in New Castle for small lots and what would realistically pass at a town vote.

Lorn Buxton addressed the topic of affordable housing in New Castle. The general consensus is that New Castle has a number of stumbling blocks for affordable housing, such as there being no available land being developed for multi-units. In addition, the bonus system, which would allow more intensive coverage to entice developers to include affordable housing, isn't applicable in New Castle. It was noted that more or cheaper property would have to be available for affordable housing to be considered.

Tom Hammer is continuing to look at the subject of fines in our ordinances and analyzing if more "teeth" need to be added. His initial impression is that our fine system as it currently stands does not encourage compliance. Our fines might need to be raised significantly.

At the PB meeting in January Lorn Buxton will present a proposed correction to the chart on Z-19 in the Zoning Ordinance book to reflect the Wentworth community density.

Lorn Buxton has looked into the issue of Setbacks vs Right-Of-Way vs Property Line in our ordinances. Especially under discussion is the definition of 'Setback' on page Z-7 #62. Does the language need to be clarified? How should we really be measuring setbacks? ROW is an easement. It will always be closer to the building than the setback. Some ROWs were established by deed back in the 1600's. These are a struggle to determine. Some were established by the State by practice or prescription. The Building Inspector typically uses the lot line to start his measurement. Only future development is impacted by this definition. Mr. Buxton will discuss with the Building Inspector and report on his findings at the next meeting. If possible, he will propose new language for the ordinance by next meeting.

Chair Horgan reported on starting the discussion of driveway regulations. Currently, New Castle has no ordinance or regulations on driveways. Is it necessary to create them? Should it be an ordinance or regulation? Other topics discussed this meeting fold into this discussion such as pervious/impervious surfaces and the lot coverage definition. All of this should be considered together. Chair Horgan reviewed how the town of Rye handles driveway regulations. Planning Board members generally agreed that New Castle probably needs driveway regulations. These should be incorporated into the driveway permit application. Chair Horgan will continue to pursue and report further findings at the January meeting.

Dave McArdle reported on how to handle failing septic systems in our ordinances. He discussed with the Building Inspector who proposed establishing a team of 3 persons who could expedite approval of a new septic system without having to wait weeks or even months for approval through all the land use boards. Don Graves will pull language from other towns' ordinances as an example that we may want to follow.

Lorn Buxton promised to check with Dave Blanding to see if we need to add anything to our ordinances to align with the new FEMA maps.

Chair Horgan will consult with Don Graves on the subject of empty lots being used for temporary structures before building a permanent structure.

Chair Horgan reported that Margaret Sofio is working on the Personal Wireless Service Facility Overlay District section of the ordinance.

Chair Horgan relayed that Tracy Degnan is trying to reschedule the site visit to Lavenger Creek with Frank Richardson that was cancelled for December 14th. Members present agreed that Monday, January 11th would probably be a good date. Chair Horgan will coordinate with Tracy Degnan and confirm via e-mail.

4. New Business/Correspondence

No new business or correspondence was discussed.

5. Adjourn

Lorn Buxton MOVED to adjourn the December 16, 2015 meeting of the New Castle Planning Board at 8:50pm; this was SECONDED by Tom Hammer and APPROVED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Sue Lucius, Secretary to the New Castle Planning Board