

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the February 18, 2015 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder, Steve Quinn,
Mark Jones

Voting Associate Member: Margaret Costello

Lori Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Planning Board Minutes of February 11, 2015

Steve Quinn motioned to approve as written.

Ernie Dodd seconded.

VOTED: (3-0) unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn)

Correspondence Comments

Lori Clark said that it appears that the MassDOT letter is not stating what they would approve, rather that they cannot approve the bylaw as written. The Board agreed that they would like an opinion from Town Counsel on the letter.

Planning Board Annual Report

Lori Clark noted that the 2014 Public Forums should be noted in the Annual Report.

Member Updates

None.

Planner's Report

Annual Report

Karen Kelleher drafted an annual report which is included in the packets. Karen Kelleher asked the Board members to forward any edits to her by tomorrow so it can be submitted to the Selectmen's Office.

Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Fences

Karen Kelleher noted, that as requested, in response to an inquiry from Don Hawkes, she checked other town bylaws to see if any require fences to be installed so that the finished side faces the abutting properties. Although it is common practice to put the more finished side of the fence facing the street and neighbor's yard, it appears that most town bylaws only have dimensional restrictions. The only exceptions Karen Kelleher said she could find

in Massachusetts were Ipswich and Fairhaven. Those bylaws include a requirement that “All fences shall be installed so that the finished side faces the abutting properties”.

Karen Kelleher said that Don Hawkes requested that the Board advise as soon as possible whether or not they will sponsor a bylaw amendment so he can begin preparing a citizens petition.

The Board agreed that they would sponsor the article for amendments to fences.

Hammerhead Lots

As requested, Karen Kelleher drafted a bylaw amendment relative to hammerhead lots so that the requirement for the minimum width between the street line and buildable area is consistent with conventional lots. It appears that the language for area suitable for BUILDINGS and minimum width from the street Line and the buildable area are consistent for both hammerhead and conventional lots. Text is provided in Planning Board packets.

The Board discussed the consistency of the bylaws texts. Mark Jones said that when a driveway cannot utilize the hammerhead lot due to wetlands, the driveway has to overlap on multiple lots which can cause issues in the future. The Board discussed the benefits and unintended consequences of altering the bylaw.

Medical Marijuana Moratorium

Since the Medical Marijuana Overlay District was adopted there is no longer a need for the Moratorium said Karen Kelleher.

Hours of Operation

Mark Jones said it would be nice to have a general bylaw that sets hours of operations for construction activity. The issue can be discussed with Craig Martin at an upcoming staff meeting said Karen Kelleher. The Board instructed staff to look into what other cities or towns have for construction hours.

Airport Zoning

In the Planning Board packets is a letter from MassDOT concerning Stow’s Zoning Bylaw, said Karen Kelleher. The Town Administrator asked Town Counsel to provide a brief memo explaining to the Board of Selectmen his thoughts on potential next steps relative to enforcement of the Bylaw.

Lower Village Update – March 18th Update

The Board discussed the need to look into the following items when revisiting Lower Village zoning.

- Lighting
 - Maintaining full cutoff and hours of operation
 - Look to maintain average footcandles

- Different lights for the business district.
 - Different levels of compliance depending on the district
- Design Guidelines
 - The Board discussed the possibility for input from Jack Zettler on design guidelines.
- Bose volunteer potential
 - The Board discussed whether Bose employees may have any real estate or design expertise to guide in the development of regulations for Lower Village.
- Potential visit from another department
 - The Board discussed potentially seeking out best practices from other communities in establishing and working with Design Guidelines.

Planned Conservation Development Updates

The Board reviewed the most recent draft of the PCD updates and planned to focus on the open land sections at the next working meeting.

Ernie Dodd moved to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jesse Steadman