



Town of Westminster

MASSACHUSETTS 01473
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

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. Jon Wyman - Chairman, Marie N. Auger - Vice Chair, Michael Fortin Jay Shenk .

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

Room 222, Town Hall

Attendees: Jon Wyman, Marie Auger, Mike Fortin, Jay Shenk , Town Planner Stephen Wallace

Absent:

Additional Attendees: None

7:00 p.m.

Jon opened the Planning Board meeting and informed those present the meeting was being audio recorded.

7:00 p.m. - *Minutes*

Jon asked PB members to review the April 14, 2015 minutes. Jon noted three minor typos and asked to have them corrected. Jay motioned to approve the minutes with the changes. Seconded Marie. The PB voted AIF to accept the minutes as amended.

7:02p.m. *Zoning amendment work: Table of Uses*

Stephen asked Marie and Jay if they had comments to the revised “working meeting” Table of Uses compiled by Jon, Mike and Stephen. Marie noted she had sent an email saying Daycare facilities should be allowed for B11 - *Day nursery, nursery school, kindergarten... in industrial districts*. Many larger corporations have on site facilities for their workers. Marie noted daycare is exempt by State zoning law. Marie also noted rehab and assisted living should be allowed across the board in all districts. After discussion, the Board concurred on both points.

Stephen asked the Board to review D3 - *Research and development laboratory or research facility excluding Biological Safety Level 3 & 4 facilities*. Stephen had sent the Board an email regarding the subject. The Board discussed excluding level 3 and level 4 facilities would not be conducive in attracting BioTech firms to town. Jon had spoken with a Shrewsbury Selectman who noted level three is fairly common and level 4 facilities are fairly rare. Stephen noted only two level 4 facilities in the State, one in Boston, another in Grafton. The Board decided to allow level 3 facilities by right and allow level 4 facilities by special permit.

Jay asked about D5 - *Radio and television transmission* and asked why it was excluded from R1 and special permitted in all other districts. After discussion, the Board asked Stephen to find a definition to help them understand what had been intended.

Jay asked about F3 *Automobile and motorcycle repair...* and asked to have the use allowed in all three Commercial districts.

Jay asked about G1 - *Laundries and dry cleaning plants*, asking whether that was like the dry cleaner downtown. Stephen said the dry cleaner downtown would fall under E7 - *Personal services...*, G1 was for regulating industrial plants. Mike noted the Scanlon Report recommended the PB include a definition of Personal Services.

The Board changed G2 - *Printing binding publishing and related arts and trades* to be allowed in CI and CII and by special permit in CIII, the intention being that the changes would encourage small publishers.

Stephen told the Board that the owners of the Westminster Crackers building were getting ready to sell their property. The Selectmen have been told they will be given the first right of refusal when the property is put up for sale.

G4 – *Plumbing, electrical or carpentry shop...* was changed to be allowed in CI, CII, and still by SP in CIII.

Mike noted that many of the small businesses listed in section G are already allowed as home occupations in the R districts, but with all materials stored inside.

Jay asked about the definition of wholesale in G6 – *Wholesale business and storage in an enclosed and roofed structure*, and if small retail operations are allowed to wholesale materials. The Board agreed to allow the use by SP in CII and CIII after Stephen told the Board that you are allowed to say no on a use by SP if the use is not in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Items H4, H5, H9, and H10 had all been tentatively changed to no in all commercial and industrial districts at the request of the Building Commissioner, the idea being to not encourage new residential business uses on residential properties in said districts. Jay asked what happens to existing residential homes in those districts and what is the harm for using present homes for home occupations. Jay asked why people in R districts should be allowed to have a home occupation but those who had residences in C or I districts would not be allowed the same? New residences are presently allowed to be constructed in the R districts and in only a CIII district, not in CI, CII, I-I and I-II. After discussion, the Board agreed to revert back to yes for H4,H5,H9 and H10 in C and I districts.

Stephen told the Board he would make the changes discussed, and then was going to compare the changes made with the existing businesses to see if the changes have made any existing businesses non-conforming. After that, the PB would tackle adding new uses to the table.

The Board then discussed the bigger picture of the Table of Uses and whether or not just making revisions to the present table was the right way to go about updating Westminster's zoning or whether a completely new approach might be more appropriate. The Board discussed zoning at Devens and in Westford and compared it with Westminster. Stephen agreed to take a look at Westford's zoning book and to call up a former planner there to see what drove their newly revised zoning(2014) changes.

8:19 p.m. Town Meeting PB Articles

Mike agreed to read both PB warrant articles. Stephen will speak on both articles to the voters. Mike asked if there are any articles that PB members are not agreeable to if asked for a PB opinion by the moderator. There were none.

8:27 p.m. Adjourn.

Jay made a motion to adjourn. Mike seconded. The PB voted AIF to adjourn.

2 Pages of Minutes
Respectfully submitted,
Michael Fortin

1 Attachment :

1) Table of Use Regulations (Revised Table of Uses – Draft #2 marked up in red) dated April 8, 2015. 4 pages