

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**January 9, 2023**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Planning Commission: Debra Burchard, Chair, Carolyn Brooks, Kurt Gamari, Aaron Malachuk, Daniel Potvin, and David Saldo.

Maura Hawkins, Jenifer Hughs and Sheila Lawrence were absent.

Visitors: Debra Righi, James Righi and Pamela Tworig.  
Lori Shepard, Secretary.

Deb Burchard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Carolyn Brooks advocated for Maura Hawkins to be able to participate by phone. They discussed recently when a board member was allowed to participate by phone in order to have a quorum while driving to the meeting, yet remote participation has previously been discouraged. Ultimately Maura Hawkins could not be reached. Aaron Malachuk stated that the board had voted that members could not miss several consecutive meetings, but they reversed that decision last year.

#### MINUTES

MOTION by Aaron Malachuk to accept the regular meeting minutes of December 5, 2022 as written. SECONDED by Dave Saldo. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### BUDGET

The Planning Commission reviewed their expenses from 2022. Lori Shepard advised that her secretarial wages for 2022 was \$1,026.00. There is only \$710.68 left in the account which probably will not be enough for 2023. They could increase their budget or they could end the position and the Planning Commission clerk could take the minutes. The secretary position was started when they were making many large revisions to the Zoning By-Laws, but that is no longer the case. The board chose not to add additional funds for the position in the 2023 budget.

#### ZONING BY-LAW REVISION

Several board members had researched various definitions in an effort to create or modify the definitions in the first section of the By-laws. Carolyn Brooks found a definition for campgrounds in state statutes: "A recreational campground or camping park is property where transient residence is offered or provided for seasonal or short-term vacation or recreational purposes on which may be located cabins, tents, or lean-tos, or campsites designed for temporary set-up of portable or mobile camping, recreational, or travel dwelling units, including tents, campers, and recreational vehicles such as motor homes, travel trailers, truck campers, and van campers." The board noted that it did not mention sanitary facilities, but agreed that it would be subject to Vermont state environmental standards. The board could determine what zone campgrounds would be allowed in.

Airbnbs, glamping and a trending desire for non-traditional housing was discussed. Dave Saldo felt that our mountains are our best renewable resource.

Aaron Malachuk found the definition for a driveway from the Vermont Agency of Transportation website: "A minor, private travel way, serving up to three parcels, which provides vehicular access from an adjoining road to a parking space, garage or other structure." The board discussed the AOT standards for driveways connecting to state highways. The board also reviewed the town's Highway Ordinance which contains the definition of a driveway.

Dave Saldo suggested adding a catch-all phrase to the By-laws that if a landowner proposes a new type of development, project, business etc. that is not already allowed or regulated by a section in the By-laws that it would have to go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment for approval.

Pam Tworig feels the By-laws are not being enforced adequately. Carolyn Brooks felt the Planning Commission should review all permits on a monthly basis. Perhaps copies of permits could be sent to residents who have signed up for the Selectboard's email list. Notice is given when the big "P" sign is posted, but some questioned whether the "P" notices were always put up. Kurt Gamari would like the Zoning Administrator to give a quarterly report to the Planning Commission. The Zoning Administrator's fee was discussed and the fees from a nearby town were reviewed. Some felt the position should pay more. Dave Saldo felt money is the wrong approach and that a higher salary doesn't always improve performance. Carolyn Brooks suggested the board develop a plan to present to the Selectboard to increase building permit fees. Kurt Gamari asked how important it is to the town to enforce the By-laws.

The state regulates all septic systems so if someone questions whether there is a proper septic system and a valid permit, the inquiry/complaint should be made to the state.

Dave Saldo suggested creating a Development Review Board where the whole board decides on building permit applications instead of a Zoning Administrator.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Deb Burchard asked whether it was still necessary to have a nine-person board. It is harder to reach a quorum than with a five-member board. Others saw no problem and wanted to keep the board at nine members. They did feel a board member who has not attended regularly should be consulted to see if they want to remain on the board.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be Monday, February 6, 2023 at 6 p.m.

MOTION by Aaron Malachuk to adjourn. SECONDED by Deb Burchard. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Debra Burchard  
Planning Commission Chair

DB/las