

TOWN OF STAMFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING
March 24, 2025
(UNAPPROVED)

Planning Commission: Peter Greenbush, Chair, Alden Finney, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Lawrence, Marta Miller, David Saldo, Jim Stimpson, and David Tatro.

Daniel Potvin was not present.

Visitors: Nancy Bushika, Kurt Gamari, Jedidiah Gramlin, Debra Righi, James Righi, Diane Saldo, Lori Shepard, Pam Tworig, and Douglas Wright.

Peter Greenbush called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jim Stimpson, Marta Miller and Lisa Gramlin, who were assigned as a subcommittee to look into making changes to the Bylaws in regard to signs, presented their draft. They explained that they drew from several similar surrounding communities' bylaws in drafting the new sign bylaws and utilized what was applicable and worked for Stamford and also delved into the state statutes. Their aim was a detailed but not overly restrictive set of bylaws.

The bylaws we currently have regarding signs are very short paragraphs under the rural, residential, and forest district sections; they do not get into many specific guidelines. Therefore, language addressing signs in the separate sections was removed and stand-alone sign bylaws that apply to the town as a whole were created under *General Regulations* (Section 7).

After the presentation, led by Jim Stimpson, the group discussed questions and suggestions.

Aldy Finney questioned the disparity between 7.16.2.b and 7.16.2.m. in regard to the sign heights and correctly pointed out that they are in conflict. 7.16.2.m. was changed to 8 feet for consistency.

Pam Tworig asked what construction signs referred to and asked for clarification on the state law. It was clarified that the current bylaws restrict signs to 12 square feet and that the municipality is allowed to create stricter bylaws than what the state requires. Going forward under the new bylaws the municipal signage would defer to the state statutes.

Marta Miller explained that the subcommittee thought the word "permitted" most likely caused some confusion in the past as it can mean either "allowed" or "requires a permit" and so tried to clarify between the two meanings in the new language.

Kurt Gamari thought that we should define “right-of-way”. Nancy Bushika also wondered if we needed to specify whether it is a town or a state right-of-way. It was noted that the right-of-way varies in different locations. It was decided that a reference to the Stamford Highway Ordinance would be included in this particular bylaw.

Nancy Bushika suggested there could be a definition for “sign” at the beginning of the Bylaws.

Nancy also questioned what “designated locations on town property” in 7.16.2.d. referred to. Lori Shepard asked if this would be for town or school sponsored events only. Pete wanted to consider moving this to the General Sign Regulations section. It was indicated that signs must identify an on-premises use.

Sign posts were discussed. It was decided not to include the posts in the square footage since the state definition of sign directs to “include panels and frames”.

Dave Saldo believes we need to get someone from the state scenic highway board to come down to okay what we’re doing and that it meets Scenic Highway regulations. He is concerned about federal funding. Lisa Gramlin reiterated that she had been in communication with VTrans and they did not have any problem with our proposed new bylaws. Marta Miller acknowledged Dave’s concerns and requested that if he has something specific he share it with the board.

Dave Tatro stated that most state and federal regulations are within the right-of-way, not on signs out of the right-of-way.

MOTION by Jim Stimpson to send the revised draft of the Bylaws to the Select Board.
SECONDED by Peter Greenbush. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Nancy Bushika asked if the previous sign made by McCann students could go back up facing the correct direction and with additional lettering put on the other side. Most members of the Planning Commission agreed that it could since the new bylaws would give the municipality an exemption from needing a permit and would fall under state regulations. Sheila Lawrence disagreed and felt the town would need a new permit.

MOTION by Peter Greenbush to adjourn. SECONDED by Lisa Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:17p.m.

Lisa Gramlin
Planning Commission Clerk