

TOWN OF STAMFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
April 13, 2020
(UNAPPROVED)

Planning Commission present: Aaron Malachuk, Chair, Debra Burchard, John Dupras, Helen Fields, Jenifer Hughs, Sheila Lawrence, Daniel Potvin and David Saldo.
Kurt Gamari and Annemarie Potvin were not present.
Visitors: James Sullivan, Bennington County Regional Commission.
James Stimpson, Administrative Officer.
Lori Shepard, Secretary.

Aaron Malachuk called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was conducted remotely by phone and video and Aaron Malachuk reviewed some rules to assist with the meeting.

MINUTES

Aaron Malachuk reviewed the minutes from the last meeting. Sheila Lawrence said that although she was marked absent in the minutes, she called to participate by phone. It was so difficult to hear, she hung up after a bit. Aaron Malachuk said they have suspended the rules about missed meetings due to the difficulties presented by the COVID-19 situation.

MOTION by Aaron Malachuk to accept the regular meeting minutes of March 16, 2020 as written.

SECONDED by Jenifer Hughs. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DISCUSSION OF ZONING BY-LAWS

Helen Fields said it was hard to tell if and where changes were made since they are not bolded or in different colored ink. Deb Burchard and Dave Saldo agreed. They would like to be able to track the changes.

The board reviewed the changes made concerning land development in Section 7.2. John Dupras suggested a revision to allow the Administrative Officer to approve uses that do not require a site plan and to have the Planning Commission approve uses that do require a site plan. The board agreed.

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the titles Administrative Officer and Zoning Administrator. Jim Sullivan said that functionally and legally there is no difference; it is the same position. Jim Stimpson did not have a preference.

MOTION by Helen Fields to change the title from Administrative Officer to Zoning Administrator.

SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by John Dupras to strike the camp definition since it is also defined in the "Seasonal, Vacation Structure or Camp" section. SECONDED by Dave Saldo. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

John Dupras noted that state law says if you use a primitive camp for less than 21 consecutive days or less than 60 days per year, you do not need a wastewater permit. He suggested the By-laws be changed to align with the state wastewater code. Sheila Lawrence said we already have people who are living in their camps year round. Aaron Malachuk said the Planning Commission does not enforce the rules. It was ultimately agreed that the sections referring to seasonal use will be updated.

Section 2.2 itemizing uses that do not need a permit was modified to allow above ground pools, not just children's pools. John Dupras was concerned about the construction of farm structures allowed without a permit because they could potentially be built in the flood plain. Jim Sullivan suggested requiring a Letter of Intent to be filed with the town so the town would have a record of farm buildings. Our flood regulations allow for building in the flood zone as long as certain conditions are met.

Under Conditional Uses, there appeared to be a discrepancy between the aggregate building size allowed of ten percent compared to the Dimensional Standards allowed in the tables. Jim Sullivan explained that this was for specific public, municipal buildings, and churches itemized in Section 2 which could be regulated separately than other structures.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to change the aggregate area of building percentages for buildings identified in Section 2 to match the conditional uses percentages in the tables. SECONDED by Aaron Malachuk. Dave Saldo thought allowing a building which was 30% of the size of the lot would be a very large building. John Dupras said this clause could allow a large wastewater treatment plant right in the center of town. After further discussion, a vote on the motion was requested. No votes were in favor, all were opposed. Motion was NOT APPROVED.

MOTION by Dave Saldo to keep the conditional use aggregate building size for buildings listed in Section 2 for all three districts at ten percent. SECONDED by John Dupras. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be Monday, May 11, 2020 at 7 p.m.

Deb Burchard respectfully disagreed with the way the last meeting was handled and felt the meeting should not have been held in person. Aaron Malachuk said he didn't realize that the town office was closed and he might have changed his mind about holding a meeting in person if he had known.

Sheila Lawrence thanked Lori Shepard for all she has done to help. Deb Burchard welcomed Dave Saldo back and felt his wisdom and experience are very important.

MOTION by Deb Burchard to adjourn. SECONDED by Aaron Malachuk. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Aaron Malachuk
Planning Commission Chair

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