

**Town of New Haven
PLANNING COMMISSION
New Haven Town Office
Monday, January 10, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Planning Commission Members Present:

In Person: Kathy Cahill

Remote: Co-chairs Benj Putnam and Rob Litch; Maggie Eaton, Bev Landon

Absent: Pat Palmer

Visitors:

Remote: Amanda Bodell; DRB co-chair Kathy Barrett

Staff Present:

In Person: Peggy Connor, Zoning Administrator & Minutes

I. Call to Order:

Co-chair Benj Putnam called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Adjustments to Agenda

Add:

- IV a. Grant Opportunities

2. Visitors' Business

None

II. ZA Update

ZA Peggy Connor reported that since the PC's last regular meeting, prior to their joint meeting with ACRPC in December), the DRB has met twice and approved two minor subdivisions: 1) a 2-lot subdivision of an existing 44.9-acre parcel on Field Days Road owned by Paula and Chris Roeloffs who plan to build a 2-bedroom single-family home; and 2) an existing 2.42-acre parcel on 181 South Street owned by Tim Bouton and Barb Torian to build a 2-bedroom single family home. Their goal is to provide an affordable housing opportunity in the village. Also, the DRB reviewed a sketch plan by Lauren Higbee and Daniel Seals and agreed to proceed as a minor subdivision hearing in February. Lauren's mother, Susan, Coombs, proposes to subdivide her property at 2479 South Street, withdraw 1.52 acres from current use and create a 19.6-acre parcel to build a 3-bedroom single-family home to be owned by Lauren and Daniel. Peggy is preparing a 2021 year-end zoning activity summary for the Town Plan and will share with PC members once completed.

III. Energy Committee Update

Maggie Eaton reported that last month the Vermont Climate Council adopted the Vermont Climate Action Plan outlining 230 recommendations for how Vermont can cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030, in compliance with the Global Warming Solutions Act. The document focuses on how the state can meet the requirements for the first decade while building programs and gathering funds needed to stay on track for 2050.

Upon completion of Window Dressers, a collaborative project that built insulating window inserts for households in New Haven, Bristol and Lincoln, Rick Shappy of the Home Energy Assistance Team (H.E.A.T.) Squad will compare heating costs before and after installation in a Lincoln home to encourage more homeowners to consider installing window inserts.

IV. UVM Local Democracy Towns Internship Program

In preparation for hosting a UVM intern through the college's Local Democracy Towns Internship program, the following ideas were considered for possible assignments for the intern during the spring

semester (January 18 – May 16):

- Transportation Survey to promote public transportation and car-sharing
- Possibly collaborate with ACRPC and/or other towns, noting it is anticipated the intern will be available 8-10 hours per week for 15 weeks
- Affordable housing: define, study the concept, and draft an amendment to the zoning bylaws
- Update New Haven’s 2015 Landscape Analysis citing the Town’s natural resources. Maggie suggested a subcommittee be established to consult with Vermont Fish & Wildlife conservation planner Jens Hawkins-Hilke on overlay districts. Overlay districts are superimposed over one or more underlying conventional zoning district to address areas of community interest that warrant special consideration such as historic preservation, or protection of a particular natural resource such as shorelands or wildlife travel corridors.

Maggie agreed to contact the coordinator of the UVM internship program to obtain the specific student requirements and availability for the transportation project.

IV a. Grant Opportunities

Kathy Cahill suggested applying for a Small Grant for Smart Growth through the Vermont Natural Resource Council, noting that a \$1,500 grant opportunity is being accepted on a rolling basis. Kathy proposed using the funding for ways to engage the community to determine the best use of the train depot in its new location on North Street to include public meetings, mailings, posters, and surveys with incentives such as a gift certificate drawing. Kathy volunteered to meet with the Selectboard for their input prior to submitting a grant application.

It was agreed to include “Grant Opportunities” as a standing PC agenda item.

V. Continued Business:

Review of Public Comments to Draft Unified Bylaws

In her email to the Planning Commission on September 27, 2021, Amanda Bodell asked if the PC will consider expanding lot width to 600’ and maintaining the depth at 200’ as it is today and is consistent with the form of development throughout New Haven. Amanda contended that revising lot width rather than lot depth would have the benefits of 1) limiting the number of curb cuts on each road; and 2) avoid expanding development in the back land, which the Town Plan would seem to support. Amanda added that utilizing planning tools for PUD’s and easements will serve to protect property rights and development opportunities.

Bev Landon proposed changing the language to read “up to” 600’ deep. Benj Putnam agreed that the PUD language needs to be strengthened. Amanda suggested the PC consider the PUD language proposed by Anthony Stout included in his recommendation to the Planning Commission on February 24, 2020 (posted on the Town’s website). In his example, Anthony noted that “the RA-2 and RA-5 zoning districts could be merged with larger and deeper conventional lots and PUD review as an option for smaller, more carefully planned lots.”

PC members continued their discussion on additional issues to be resolved in the Unified Bylaws Draft below (available on Town’s website at newhavenvt.com → “Planning & Zoning” on left menu → “Draft Unified Bylaws” → “Public Comments”)

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UNIFIED BYLAWS DRAFT: ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

DATE OF INITIAL DISCUSSION	TOPIC	ACTION
4-12-2021 PC meeting	Tiny House Regulations: uniform standard for registering tiny homes	Kathy Cahill and Peggy to draft proposed language
4-12-2021 PC meeting	Retail Cannabis: as it relates to potential new regulations; however, Town has yet to vote on matter (NOTE: per VLCT: towns that make no decision on retail cannabis through a town vote will be presumed to have allowed it by October 2023)	An article will be warned at Town Meeting in March.
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 595: Kathy Barrett noted that new construction has a different acreage requirement and asked if the lot size and density requirements for affordable housing were subject to State statute or suggested by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.	Peggy to research language in Waltham's regulations re: affordability; PC may ask UVM intern to research geology of areas; Benj suggested federal grant funds may be available for community septic system
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Article X: Zoning Districts, D. Special Split Lot Regulations: If an existing lot is in the RA-2 district, it cannot comply with RA-10, Kathy Barrett asked if existing lots were grandfathered in. She suggested substituting "proposed" for "existing" and add language in the subdivision section that a structure must conform to the district it is in.	DEFERRED
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Article IV: Definitions: Kathy Barrett pointed out that "Events" are not included in the Definitions Section; however, "Events" are referenced in Section 321: Exemptions #18. It was agreed that the Definitions Section will need further review as some include things that are not allowed in the district.	Peggy to draft language defining "Events."
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Also noted was that both "home occupation" and "home business" are defined in Section 504 but are not included in Article X. It was suggested that a decision be made regarding permitted or conditional use and in which districts.	Peggy to research definitions commonly used and where home occupations are allowed
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Article IV: Definitions: Benj Putnam proposed considering a separate category for charging stations.	Peggy to research and draft proposed language re: charging stations and allowed locations. (Maggie shared a compilation of the regulations from other jurisdictions for consideration.)
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Article IV: Definitions: Further review	Peggy to research and draft language

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	regulations for “outdoor” and indoor retail (i.e., permitted vs, conditional use for outdoor retail.	for PC consideration
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 1250.6: Preliminary Approval of Preliminary Plat: Language to be clarified as preliminary approval of a sketch plan does not require a formal hearing.	Peggy to draft language.
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 345: Appeals of the Decisions of the ZA: Is the requirement to render a written decision in 10 days statutory, or may it be extended? (See 24VSA §4470)	Benj to consult with Town Attorney Cindy Hill re: appeals
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 530: Mobile Home Park needs to be clearly defined.	Peggy to research state definition and draft language for PC consideration
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 540: Setbacks: Sentence poorly worded: “Setbacks shall apply to all land development in the NC, HC, and IN districts, including but not limited to parking areas.” [RA-2, RA-5, and RA-10 should also be included.]	Peggy to draft clearer language for PC consideration
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Section 596: Affordable Housing: (B) Applicability includes no specific type of use; (c)(1) references “10.2,” which does not appear in the document.	DEFERRED
8-9-2021 PC meeting	Definitions: “Kennels” are defined but no districts are designated for their use.	Agreed that kennels fall under “conditional use,” and will further discuss which districts will allow kennels.
9-13-2021 PC meeting	Language re: options for Split Lots to be clarified and consistent throughout the document	DEFERRED
9-27-2021 PC meeting	Section 596: Further research definition of “affordable housing.”	DEFERRED
11-8-2021 PC meeting	Section 521: Clearly define “hazardous materials”	Peggy to draft language for PC to consider
11-8-2021 PC meeting	Section 535: Are all commercial projects required to secure a maintenance bond?	Benj suggested utilizing conditional use standards where DRB may impose; Maggie to research whether a performance bond is required for solar development. All agreed to delete performance bond language in campground section.

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112 **VI. Approval of PC Meeting Minutes for September 13, September 27, November 8, and**
113 **December 13, 2021**
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115 Kathy Cahill moved to approve meeting minutes for December 13, 2021; Bev Landon seconded.
116 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE 5-0 (K. Cahill, B. Landon, B. Putnam, M.**
117 **Eaton, R. Litch) Minutes approved as presented.**
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119 Bev Landon moved to approve meeting minutes for November 8, 2021; Kathy Cahill seconded.
120 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE 5-0 (K. Cahill, B. Landon, B. Putnam, M.**
121 **Eaton, R. Litch) Minutes approved as presented.**
122

123 Kathy Cahill moved to approve meeting minutes for September 13, 2021; Bev Landon seconded.
124 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE 5-0 (K. Cahill, B. Landon, B. Putnam, M.**
125 **Eaton, R. Litch) Minutes approved as presented.**
126

127 Bev Landon moved to approve meeting minutes for September 27, 2021; Kathy Cahill seconded.
128 **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE 5-0 (K. Cahill, B. Landon, B. Putnam, M.**
129 **Eaton, R. Litch) Minutes approved as presented.**
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131 **VII. Adjournment**

132 Kathy Cahill moved to adjourn; Maggie Eaton seconded. **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE**
133 **VOTE 5-0 (K. Cahill, B. Landon, B. Putnam, M. Eaton, R. Litch) Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.**
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135 The Planning Commission's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
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137 Respectfully submitted,
138 Peggy Connor
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142 Benj Putnam

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142 Rob Litch

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146 Maggie Eaton

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146 Kathy Cahill

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