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Town of New Haven
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
New Haven Town Office
Monday, March 13, 2023
Meeting Minutes

[Approved by unanimous voice vote at April 10, 2023 PC meeting.]

Planning Commission (PC) Members present:

In person: Co-chair Kathy Cahill, Benj Putnam

Remote: Bev Landon, Rob Litch

Absent: Maggie Eaton, Megan Ooms

Visitors:

Jeff Glassberg, Kathy Barrett

Staff Present:

Peggy Connor, Zoning Administrator & Minutes

I. Call to Order:

Kathy Cahill called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Adjustments to Agenda

Add:

- 1.a. Discussion re: Addition of Habitat Connectivity Overlay District

1.a. Discussion: Addition of Habitat Connectivity Overlay District on Zoning Map

Kathy Cahill advised that Conservation Committee member Susan Smiley has requested the Planning Commission (PC) consider identifying conservation areas on the updated New Haven Zoning Map and adding a section on preserving wildlife corridors to the revised Regulations. PC members agreed that because their work on the revised Zoning and Subdivision Regulations is near completion, they will revisit the issue of habitat connectivity when they begin work on updating the Town Plan.

2. Visitors' Business

Jeff Glassberg commended the Planning Commission on its work; specifically, the expectation that density based zoning will be a positive step going forward. He added that the Town of Waltham is currently considering a 7-lot application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which he anticipates will result in a positive outcome by utilizing density-based zoning.

II. Zoning Administrator's Report

ZA Peggy Connor shared the process for adoption of the revised Zoning and Subdivision Regulations:

Once the Planning Commission has a draft of the revised Zoning and Subdivision Regulations ready for public review and comment, it must hold at least one warned public hearing. Fifteen days before the date of the hearing, the Planning Commission must send a copy of the draft and the Planning Commission's written report via certified mail to each abutting municipality, the regional planning commission, and the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Affairs. Any of these parties may submit comments on the proposal in writing, or appear and be heard at the Planning Commission's public hearing. After the public hearing, the Planning Commission may make revisions before submitting their report and the proposed regulations to the Selectboard who will hold additional public hearing(s) prior to adoption.

Recommendation by D. Gilmore re: Road Width

Dean Gilmore of the New Haven Fire Department has recommended that the Planning Commission consider requiring a 22-foot road width for new and private roads to allow adequate access for fire trucks. It was also suggested that the Fire Department conduct an assessment every 4-5 years at landowners' expense to ensure compliance. Following discussion, PC member concluded that such

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an assessment would not be practical for the Town to oversee. However, it was agreed that there needs to be further research in connection with Section 926 – subsection 8 to better direct people to road standards (i.e., Classification of Town Highways, 19 V.S.A. §302). Kathy Cahill volunteered to provide this information, as well as research rural vs. non-rural areas, for the commission’s next meeting in April.

III. Update re: Work with UVM Intern Jenna Abbey-Lowell – Maggie Eaton

Deferred until the April meeting.

IV. CONTINUED BUSINESS: Review Updated Working Draft of Zoning and Subdivision Regulations (f/k/a “Unified Bylaws)

1. Discussion: Benj Putnam’s Research re: Definitions for “Light Manufacturing” and “Events”

Deferred until April meeting.

2. Continue Review of Definitions (beginning with “Residential Use”)

Following review, PC members agreed to the following changes:

- Delete “Resubmission”
- Delete “Sanitary Landfill”
- “Sketch Plan” to read: “A sketch of the proposed subdivision showing information specified in Article IX, Section 920 of these Regulations to enable a preliminary review by the DRB.”
- Delete “Solar Collector”
- Delete “Solar Energy System” (solar is addressed in adopted Energy Plan)
- Delete “Split Lots” (now “Lots in Multiple Zoning Districts” – Section 510)
- Delete “Stable, Private”
- Add to “Recreation-Indoor”: “A facility open to the public that offers physical fitness....”
- Add to “Recreation-Outdoor”: “A facility open to the public that offers physical fitness...”
- Delete “(Storage)” in definition of “Structure”
- Add to “Structure” definition: “(not including roads and parking lots.)”
- Add comma in definition for “Subdivider”
- Redefine “Variance” (in accordance with VLCT): “A device which grants a variation from the literal provisions of the Zoning Regulations in instances where strict enforcement of the regulation would cause undue hardship due to circumstances unique to the individual property under consideration.”
- Redefine “Waiver” to read: “V.S.A. Chapter 117 authorizes the use of waivers to grant reductions in applicable dimensional requirements which may be applied in lieu of variance criteria, under standards and review procedures specified in these Regulations.”
- Delete “Warehouse”
- Delete “Wind Energy Conversion System”
- Add space between “Yard” and “Yard, Front”

3. Discussion: Review Comments from Kathy Barrett on Working Draft

Deferred to April meeting.

Town of New Haven
Planning Commission
Monday, March 13, 2023

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NEXT STEPS:

- K. Cahill: Research VTrans website for specific information re: road standards (rural /non-rural)
- K. Cahill: Define “Street”
- K. Cahill: Define “Street Line” (for both private and public roads)

- B. Putnam: Define “Light Manufacturing:” and “Events”
- B. Putnam: Provide alternate phrase for “Stand-Alone Lot”
- B. Putnam: Redefine “Substantial Improvement”
- B. Putnam: Review definition for “Tree”

V. Approve PC Meeting Minutes for February 13, 2023

Bev Landon moved to approve meeting minutes for February 13, 2023; Kathy Cahill seconded.

Motion passed unanimously by voice vote (4-0).

VI. Adjourn

Benj Putnam moved to adjourn; Kathy Cahill seconded. **Motion passed unanimously by voice vote (4-0).** Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Connor,