

Conway Planning Board Minutes
Thursday, Oct. 5, 2023 - 7-9 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, General Purpose Room

Present for the Planning Board: George Forcier, Chair; Members Bill Moebius, Cheryl Case. Associated Member Joe Strzegowski.

Absent: Jennifer Mullins.

Also attending: Kimberly MacPhee, Franklin Regional Council of Governments land use planner.

Meeting called to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes of Sept. 21, 2023, meeting. Moved by Moebius, seconded by Case. Unanimous.
2. Discussion of draft River Corridor Protection Overlay Zone proposal. The current draft was begun about three years ago under different Planning Board membership, part of town flood mitigation and river protection efforts that have been in the works for a dozen or more years. (The proposed corridor totals about 638 acres, with about 223 acres overlapping the current floodplain overlay zone, with another 415 acres within the river corridor overlay alone.)

Discussion covered sections 1-5, including purpose of the district, scope of authority, delineation of the corridor, how to handle boundary disputes, and permitted uses within the district.

Under permitted uses, Strzegowski suggested refining the language to distinguish between dwellings and accessory structures, where the draft simply uses the term “structures” generally. There was consensus on the point.

Discussion also held about how much existing buildings should be allowed to be enlarged by right. The draft’s 25% figure met general agreement, although the board decided to come back to the specific maximum square footage numbers later.

Work will resume at the next meeting.

3. MacPhee notified the board that the town planned a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness information event in the Ballfield Oct. 21 from 11 to 2, and that she could discuss that concept of river corridor protection, and in that context note that the Planning Board is working on a draft river corridor protection bylaw.

4. Strzegowski reported briefly on a Regional Planning Board discussion about Franklin County's housing needs. He said that while the county's population is slowly decreasing, the local demand for new housing is increasing — apparently reflecting the changing size and nature of local households.

5. Discussion of a proposed public comment policy was postponed until the next meeting as river corridor discussion ran late.

6. Public comment: None.

6. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m. Motion by Moebius, seconded by Case. Unanimous.

Upcoming Meetings: Oct. 19, Nov. 2, Nov. 1