

Town of Conway

Minutes of the Conway Planning Board Meeting – January 19, 2017

Present: Co-chairs Joseph Strzegowski and Mary McClintock, Andy Jaffe, Sue McFarland and David Chichester

Absent: Beth Girshman (Associate)

Guests: Sign-in sheet of those attending is in the Minutes Binder in the Town Office.

Co-chair Strzegowski opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Conway Town Office.

1. The Minutes of the January 5, 2017, meeting were approved as written.
2. Recognizing that there were approximately 18 people in attendance, plus Planning Board members, Mr. Strzegowski informed the group that the Planning Board had invited members of the Housing Committee to the meeting to focus on the task of crafting a Protective Bylaw that reflects what the Town would like to see in shaping cluster housing development. [Please see addenda for the complete list of people attending; filed in the Official Minutes Binder in the Town Office] According to Mr. Strzegowski, current Conway Zoning Bylaws do not allow cluster construction, such as a senior housing project, and would require a Town Meeting approved amendment. This meeting was designed to identify a workable model, discuss common elements, raise pertinent questions and to seek public and Housing Committee feedback.

Pixie Holbrook, Chair of the Housing Committee, explained that the committee had obtained Selectboard permission to make a \$1,000 deposit on a 4 acre portion of the Sheehan property. There were contingencies that included; 1) passing perc tests, domestic water and septic requirements for twelve units; 2) satisfying all wetland and Conservation Commission requirements; 3) ensuring the property is free of hazardous waste and other risks; 4) complying with all zoning and general bylaw requirements. Points raised:

- Confirm whether or not a housing project such as this would, by State law, require a minimum of 5 acres. Could this be waived?
 - Try to maximize open land.
 - If a shared well, are there implications regarding Public Water Supplies?
 - Shape this bylaw so the concepts could apply to any similar project in Conway.
 - Buildings should fit into the character of the neighborhood.
 - There should be adequate parking and avoid what could be hazardous street parking. Limits should be specified in the bylaw.
 - Would want to require Special Permit process for each project.
 - Project should have a brief, but explicit Business Plan.
 - Should there be age restrictions?
 - Should there be a limit of dwelling units in a particular project? 8 – 12 recommended.
 - Should there be a percentage limit of affordable units in town?
 - Should there be bedroom limits? Maximum of two but some way to add exceptions? Ratio of two family dwellings vs. quads.
 - Setbacks?
3. Discussion then turned to subject of the general public being given adequate notice of committee meetings and the lack of opportunity to participate in decisions that could affect them significantly.

The fact that the PB agenda had been posted at the Town Office, in accordance with state law, seemed inadequate to some. Suggestions were given as to how to better keep the citizens informed and involved and improve the sense of community. Attendees were asked to provide their email addresses. Ten people did.

ACTION PLAN:

- Mr. Strzegowski will pass on to the Town Administrator the sentiment of the group in hopes that some larger effort could be made to improve public notice procedures.
 - Mr. Strzegowski will ask the Town Administrator if it is possible to post the Planning Board's agenda, in advance of the meetings, on the Town's web site. Mr. Chichester will report the result of this inquiry to those who provided their email address.
4. Regarding recreational marijuana, Mr. Strzegowski reported that he had recently attended an informational meeting and learned the following:
- The state will be organizing a Cannabis Control Commission. Apparently, they will be writing their own regulations.
 - The Legislature is creating another standing committee, including House and Senate members.
 - New taxes will be added, including a structure for towns to exact their own – to be determined.
 - The timetable for clarifying the regs has been extended by 6 months, to become available by July, 2018.

The PB agreed that, considering the state's timetable for writing regs and guidelines, it would make sense to plan to go to a Fall, 2017, Special Town Meeting and seek a one year moratorium vote. That would give Conway time to then develop its own bylaws and put them in place.

ACTION PLAN:

- Place this subject on the agenda after the May, 2017, Town Meeting.
5. Ms McClintock reported that she will draft the Planning Board's Annual Report in time for the next PB meeting's review.
6. The PB agreed that the Priority Projects List for the next several months will be:
- Developing Housing Bylaw
 - Solar and Accessory Structure setbacks
 - Protective Bylaw Table of Contents/Index

There being no further business, the members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: The next regularly scheduled PB meeting will be on Thursday, February 2, 2017, 7:00 p.m., at the Conway Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,
David I Chichester