Conway Planning Board

Public Hearing

7 p.m., Town Hall, Conway

Planning Board members in attendance: Beth Girshman, Bill Moebius, Mary McClintock, Joseph Strzegowski, associate member Sue McFarland

Absent: Andy Jaffe

See sign-in sheet for attendance

Mary McClintock called public hearing to order, 7 p.m.

Proposed Zoning Bylaw reviewed

PB members introduce themselves

Handouts explained. Joe gives background and why PB chose to include special permit process, as part of this zoning bylaw.

Questions from public included

Why building size limits?

(MM – rural character concerns)

Martin Dagoberto Lydgate Driggs, NOFA, reads testimony into the minutes (attached). General concerns re: unnecessary barriers for small,local growers. Particular concerns about proposed ban on outdoor growing and detectable odors.

What’s process for public input?

(MM – this hearing – PB will discuss and make possible changes to draft proposed zoning bylaw, based on input from this hearing. Citizens can make proposed amendments from floor of town meeting; come prepared with specific language)

Why limit to indoor growing only?

Much discussion, including setbacks, dimensional requirements

Canopy sizes and calculations

What is definition of parks or recreation areas?

Should the term “regularly congregate” be added to the section referring to children?

Why the 3% tax?

Impact fee seems high

Can we clarify distance from residential use, especially as it concerns owner who is also grower

Some confusion about ability to grow and sell directly (explained that this is not allowed under state law)

Starter plants – seem to be in grey area; although to get license seems prohibitive

“Undetectable odor” clause – who defines it?

Several encourage PB to support smaller growers and outdoor farming (“sun grown; live soil”)

Joe responds that for businesses in town, our current bylaw states that odors can not be detectable at perimeter of property.

PB thanks everyone for attending. Move to adjourn, Joe Strzegowski; seconded by Beth Girshman, meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Mary Mcclintock informs everyone that Board of Health has already issued and adopted regulations

Reps from Westhampton zoning board asks why Conway PB allowed all uses? He is also concerned about potential for future federal litigation. Afraid of federal uncertainity and state law.

Joe Strezegowski points out that our proposed bylaw is slanted towards lower end of growing, Tier 1 and 2

Tom Lesser is not aware of other towns w/10,000 square foot restrictions, but concludes that waiver could be granted if operation wanted to expand

Bob Armstrong asks where this new proposed bylaw differs from state law, in regards to both more and less restrictive

Planning Board members thank everyone for attending. Beth Girshman moves to adjourn the hearing, Bill Moebius seconds, and the hearing is adjounred at 8:20 p.m.