

Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2023
Approved July 26, 2023

Members Present: Lenore Budd, James Donegan (via Zoom), Barbara Forauer, John Kiedaisch, Alison Lesure, Denver Wilson

Members Absent: Dan Baldwin, Nicholas Chlumecky

Staff: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning)

Public Present (In person): Jennifer Decker, David & Kathy Newton, Luke Valentine

Public Present (via Zoom): Margaret McNurlan, John Little

Denver W. called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 PM.

1. Agenda Changes:

None.

2. Public Comment for Non-agenda Items:

None.

3. Minutes from June 28, 2023 meeting:

Denver W. **made a motion, seconded by** Lenore B., **to approve the minutes from the 6/28/23 meeting as written. The motion passed 5-0**, with John K. abstaining.

4. Public Hearing – Proposed Revisions to the Zoning & Subdivision Regulations

Continued from June 14th and June 28th meetings

Alex W. reminded the Commissioners that the public hearing for the proposed zoning and subdivision regulation changes began at the June 14th Planning Commission (PC), and was continued to meetings on June 28th and July 12th, to allow for additional public comments and feedback. Alex W. shared that two new comments were received from Dan Hogan (property owner on Buck Hill East) and Margaret McNurlan (on behalf of Responsible Growth Hinesburg).

a. New public comments and questions:

- Jennifer Decker – Asked whether the Commissioners had considered contacting the Abenaki community regarding the proposal, and Alex W. said the focus has been Hinesburg residents and landowners so the Commission had not specifically reached out to the Abenaki. Lenore B. said her assumption was that if someone was interested in participating in the process, they would and noted the Commission was not intentionally keeping someone from the conversation. Jennifer D. said it would be beneficial to bring others into the conversation prior to making changes, especially those who lived on the land in a sustainable way. Jennifer added that it could be difficult for some individuals to participate in the process for assorted reasons. Jennifer D. asked if any changes had been made to the proposal based on the feedback that has been received and Alex W. noted the Commission plans to discuss each comment received, and had started to do so at their last meeting. Jennifer D. re-read her statement from the previous meeting (*available on Planning Commission website*).

b. Recognition of new comments received:

- Alex W. reviewed the new comments received after the last PC meeting in his introduction (See above).
- Alex W. shared that he met with the LaForce's (Pat & Dean) at their home. They discussed future development on the LaForce's property, and their ability to cluster any new development. Alex said that while the conversation was positive the LaForce's still have some concerns, but after their conversation feel a bit more comfortable with the proposal and how it could impact their development potential.

c. Continue discussion of revisions based on feedback received:

See (https://www.dropbox.com/sh/cgyuva5pj7vk5yd/AACgux49EDUnJwG-yqPHq_q4a/2023/062823/rr1_zoning_revisions/revision_recommendations_alex_062723.pdf?dl=0) for each comment.

There was general discussion about what made the most sense for the area east of Iroquois Manufacturing and whether to keep that section (including Birchwood Drive) in Res-3 or move it to Res-4, considering only part of the area has municipal water and sewer. Alex W. brought up S100 and the increased density associated with that new legislation. The Commissioners were in agreement, after their discussion, to have the area east of Iroquois Manufacturing be included in Res-4.

There was discussion about Rural-1 and Res-4 densities, and whether they should be reconsidered based on feedback from landowners. The Commissioners were all in agreement that they did not think the proposed density should change for those districts.

There was discussion of the Res-4 "donut hole" that encompasses part of the Buck Hill Road West area, and whether to keep that or get rid of it. Alex W. shared that the "donut hole" is a more developed area of town, that has had several subdivisions built over the years, and also noted the steepest slopes and core wildlife habitat fall mostly outside of "donut hole". Alex W. said while it is important to get individual feedback, the policy and decision making need to take into account the priorities of the town and community, not just individual landowners. The "donut hole" also plays a part in the connectivity of the area, allowing for wildlife passage. The purpose statements for Rural-1 and Res-4 were reviewed to see if one applied to the "donut hole" more than the other. Alison L. wondered whether soliciting feedback from landowners in the purposed "donut hole" area might be worth it. Alex W. reviewed the "donut hole" and the resources that were used to draw the Rural-1 district lines, such as steep slopes and core wildlife habitat, etc.

Alex W. clarified that at the beginning of this process a mailing was sent out to landowners in the Rural Residential 1 district who had a parcel large enough to subdivide, not everyone in the RR1 district.

The discussion of revisions based on feedback back will continue to the meeting on July 26th.

5. Bylaw Modernization:

Alex W. shared that the *PlaceSense* consultants provided him with a list of options for ways to modernize the regulations, and he needs the Commissioners feedback.

- Allow for two principal dwellings per lot, anywhere in town. Not driven by statutory requirement, just a suggestion.** Alex W. noted this is allowed in the Village Growth

Area (VGA) only. There was discussion about the pros and cons about utilizing this suggestion. Will be discussed at a future meeting.

- b. **Mobile home parks – current regulations are out of date and make it very difficult to improve the existing parks (by adding new units or infrastructure), or put in a new park.** The Commissioners agreed this is a larger conversation and project, and want to discuss it at a future meeting.
- c. **Village Growth Area Consolidation – a repackaging of the Village Growth Area and bring all the regulations for VGA into one section, and ultimately reduce the number of village districts.** The Commissioners agreed they would be interested to see what the consultants propose for this section.
- d. **Inclusionary Zoning** – the consultants will be getting feedback from the Affordable Housing Committee shortly, and then will incorporate that to their work. A draft of this section will be forthcoming.

Alex W. said he is hoping to discuss a final bylaw modernization draft at the meeting scheduled for August 23rd, and use the next two PC meetings to work on the proposed RR1 changes.

Other Business:

- e. News, announcements, correspondence, etc.
 - i. A new Road Foreman has been hired.
 - ii. Public hearing will remain open to the July 26th meeting.
 - iii. Two Planning Commissioner interviews scheduled for the Selectboard.

Denver W. **adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:06 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Danielle Peterson, Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant