

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
June 10, 2020
Approved June 24,2020**

Members Present: Maggie Gordon, Dennis Place, John Kiedaisch, Barbara Forauer, Denver Wilson, Marie Gardner, and Rolf Kielman

Members Absent: James Donegan and Dan Myhre

Public Present: Jen Winegar and Catherine Goldsmith

Also Present: Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning) & Laura Sau (Recording Secretary)

Maggie G. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:05 PM.

- I. **Remote Meeting Connection & Procedures:** Meeting was held remotely due to the current State of Emergency in our best conformance with the Governor's executive order.
- a. Mute/ unmute at lower left of screen with microphone icon. Alex W. will mute people if there are echoes.
 - b. Identify yourself when you start to speak since not all participants are on video.
 - c. This meeting is being recorded by VCAM
 - d. If there are bandwidth issues and audio is crackling, you can try turning off the video and using only audio.
 - e. Chat has been disabled.

- II. **Agenda Changes:**
- a. No Agenda Changes

- III. **Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items:** None.

- IV. **Architectural & Streetscape Design Standards:**

---Continuation of Draft Discussion---

- V. **Retail Building Size Cap Revisions** Alex W. proposed Discussion questions displayed in Italics. Current regulation size cap does not apply to the commercial district. Discussion if it should, and should it specify to type of use? Ie: Grocery stores. It has been brought up over the years to be re-addressed due to community interest and controversy.
- VI. *Should a retail size cap apply to the building footprint or the total size on all floors?*
- a. Maggie G.- discussion last meeting of multiple stories, would a mezzanine count?
 - b. *Proposal:* Rolf K.- If the P.C.'s purpose is for dense growth and efficient land use, size cap limit should be set on specifically the footprint. There are other regulations to limit a size cap in other ways, such as height. Makes more use of valuable resource of land.

- Denver W.- *Agreed* with Rolf. Also simplifies for regulations.
 - Barbara F. – *Agreed*. Referenced Shaw’s in South Burlington’s mezzanine which includes an eating area
 - John K. *Agreed*. Other regulations will limit business size in other ways.
- c. *Concern*: Dennis P.- Doesn’t see a grocery store having a second floor unless there were apartments. Agrees but doesn’t think a grocery store would be 20,000 sq ft with 10,000sq ft in apartments above.
- Rolf K.- Upper levels can be anything, but wont count towards limit.
- d. John K.- Most agree on setting limit for a footprint.
- e. *Concern*: Dennis P.- If there’s a bigger grocery store that wants to come into town on a small footprint, doesn’t make sense to force them for a 2-story grocery store.
- f. Rolf K.- Asked if this was comparable to other towns
- *Clarification*: Alex W.- Size cap typically based on footprint.
 - Other ways communities provide limits: Maximum Lot coverage, Floor area ratio (urban settings)-- governs how much of the lot can be used and height based on coverage.
 - Being looked at regarding *aesthetics and character*, makes sense. If looked at regarding *traffic impact and intensity of use*-- Might be looked at differently.

VII. For buildings with multiple retail uses, how should a size cap be applied

- a. Maggie G.- Addressed buildings like Aubuchon plaza has multiple uses, do you go by individual businesses or overall building?
- If a business took down walls between units, would it be change of use?
 - What about big space rented out to various small vendors? Like antique or food
- b. John K.- Example of 2 story parking garage converted to multiple uses.
- c. Maggie G.- Talking ownership? Aubuchon is leased.
- *Clarification*: Alex W.- currently regulations is based on use, not ownership. Building with multiple uses is discrete vs. overall building.
 - Antique Market would be different because there is collaboration between vendors.
 - If a small use within Aubuchon plaza became popular and wished to expand space-- If they bought plaza and kicked out other businesses. It’s for permitted businesses currently. Once that one business passed line of 1,000 sq feet, it would become conditional Use. They wouldn’t allowed to be above 20,000 sq feet
- d. *Concern*: Barbara F.- PC job is to *maintain Hinesburg as small-town feeling village*—referenced written language. Footprint-- smaller businesses should be part of footprint rather than their own to avoid shopping mall syndrome. If businesses each had their own footprint it would expand everything instead of fitting in. Supports 2/3 story buildings to build up instead of out.
- Alex - If there’s individual business cap, could end up with a large footprint bigger than the cap. Thinks another NRG building is unlikely
 - Marie G. Usually one entity owns the building and each space is leased out. It should be a cap applied to the overall building footprint.
 - Rolf K.- *Agreed*. To tie to size of individual business is hard to pin down due to fluctuations. Overall building size is how it should be done.
 - Denver K.- *Agreed*

VIII. What should the size cap apply to? Currently applies to retail stores and service establishments.

- a. John K.- Interpretation of ‘service establishments’?

- Maggie G.- Hairdresser, tailor, animal hospital, etc.
- b.** Rolf K.- What's the rationale of retail and service? What about senior housing and other uses? Why not applied to any structure regardless of use?
- Alex W.- Thinking about current community. Has list of businesses sizes in Dropbox. Some larger like Cheese plant and NRG. Some civic buildings. Might not want to apply if another NRG wanted to come to Hinesburg. Previously, Lake Champlain Chocolate entertained coming to Hinesburg. So if a company that wants to bring a larger well designed building with job, wouldn't want to limit. Hasn't thought of residential buildings of that size.
- c.** Rolf K.- Referenced Black Rock, Haystack Crossing--- Hunch that some proposed buildings are close to 20,000 Sq ft. What is NRG footprint?
- Maggie G.- 48,000 sq ft. Would hesitate to place limit for light industrial. Village NE is zoned for Light Industrial.
 - Alex W.- Referenced Haystack Masterplan- In initial phase and overall masterplan
 - Senior Housing Building- "H" 20,100 sq ft.
 - Building J- Mixed Use- 11,500 sq ft
 - Building E- 2 story Mixed Use – 1700 sq ft
 - John K.- Blomstrann formal proposal- Industrial footprint?
 - Alex W. Proposal Riggs Rd and 116- 3 buildings in 20,000 sq ft realm
 - John K.- Idea for industry of useable space.
- d.** *Concern:* Rolf K.- Situations of buildings of certain size restriction, but there's connective tissue such as covered walkway, to another max size cap building. NRG for example. One building was built first, Second linked on.
- John K.- Reads NRG as one building. Wouldn't want to limit someone like Elon Musk? from bringing business to Hinesburg.
 - Maggie G.- All uses or specific? Doesn't think cap should apply to light industrial
- e.** Barbara F.- What are the sized of the new box apartments in Williston? Light industrial is not aesthetic
- Maggie G.- Green mountain solar had to leave Hinesburg because there wasn't a big enough building.
- f.** Rolf K.- There are big buildings that are broken down into aesthetic segments. Should it apply to most uses--- comes down to scale of structure. Partially inclined to apply constraint to all structures. Would result in buildings similar in size instead of one out scaling others. Cheese plant isn't offensive. Segmented. Other than Charlotte Rd, doesn't feel like big building from 116. Thinks it should be applied uniformly.
- Maggie G.- Cheese plant is 86,000 sq. ft. --Success story in town, providing a lot of jobs.
 - Catherine G.- Different uses carry different schedules, different amount of parking, different traffic patterns.
 - Alex W.- Catherine makes a good point. Reason for caps is not just for aesthetics, but also what brings with them like surface parking area. What mighty boxes bring with them such as Walmart, vs Church or School.
 - John K.- Differentiate for that category? Versus one category for all uses?
- g.** *Clarification:* Alex W.- Displayed Riggs Rd and 116, which withdrew application. 1A and 1B was 27,000 sq ft, for multiple businesses, but no specific ones in mind. If you can put a piece of paper between structures, it is separate buildings.
- h.** Denver W.- Not that much area designated for industrial. Couple of buildings or a lot of different

businesses? Is there space?

- Alex W.- Would be in Village NE, surrounding NRG. Conceptual masterplan included multiple buildings. Not being proposed. Haystack crossing is zoned so if they wanted to change their masterplan down the road.
 - John K.- Pointed out another location zoned is on the Starksboro side –
 - Alex W.- Hollow Rd and 116. Elk Farm south of the Gravel Farm . Outside of Village area, so not sure if this cap would apply.
- Barbara F.- It should apply to light industrial. Commercial Park—T. Towing is under 8,000 sq ft but feels bigger.
- i.* Denver W.- Agreed. NRG appears within the vision of the village. But if there was 3 or 4 more in front, it would be overwhelming.
 - John K.- Not unlike proposed buildings Alex displayed-- were dramatically >20,000 sq. ft. each-- is that a part of vision?
 - Denver W.- Yes, Vision is more aligned with smaller buildings.
 - *Concern:* Marie G.- Understands but there are a lot of businesses that have had to move to Williston. NRG almost moved. Very restricted.
 - *Clarification:* John K.- NRG sat with town to modify zoning to fit their needs.
 - Alex W.- Extremely lucky that that worked out. Business owner that was very community minded. Couldn't see a business today waiting for a town to decide. When zoning changed, town created industrial district. Larger footprint and stable soil to support it. Later in 2009 it changed to mixed use with light industrial. Hinesburg has always had large industrial buildings, used to be a mill town. Different—not Manchester or Woodstock, Jericho or Huntington. Industrial history.
- j.* Rolf K.- Cheese plant is occupied by 4 different. What are the sizes of remainder of structures.
 - Alex W.- Public House separate building- less than 10,000 (in Dropbox)
 - Cheese plant: Vermont Smoke and Cure 40,000 initially major business but now smaller.
 - Kimbell brook 10,000 Cenex?- Front – 4-6,000 , Foam brewers took over Eastern large – 5-6,000 sq ft.
 - John K.- Kimbell brook didn't take up all of space at Western End.
 - If there's no cap, leaves up to people with broad range of space.
 - Denver W.- thinks that's what we're trying to accomplish. Doesn't want Hinesburg to be Williston and if people want more space they can go there. Pictures Iroquois Bodyshop type buildings around NRG
 - Alex W.- Never going to see 100,000 sq ft Walmart in Hinesburg.
 - *Concern:* Marie G.- Doesn't want Hinesburg to be Williston. But it's sad to lose businesses in town that can't have the space they need. Light Industrial should be separate from cap.
- k.* John K.- Wished to have more information on available air, truck transport.
- l.* Dennis P.- There are aesthetic large buildings. Company he works for 180,000 sq ft and another in Essex.
- m.* *Concern:* Maggie G.- Sad to lose business too.
- n.* *Proposal:* John K.- Could be cap other than retail cap.
- o.* Maggie G.- Tempted to move ahead and have separate cap for retail vs grocery store. Not comfortable setting cap for Light Industrial as the same as retail. Especially for village NE which is zoned for that

use. Maybe re-address when talking size to see if its acceptable. Originally brought up to avoid big box stores. Would like to focus on retail and grocery first, then address Light Industrial afterwards.

- Denver W.- How would you feel about 5,000 sq ft?
- Maggie G.- Moved to wrap up discussion due to time.
- *Proposal:* Marie G.- Size for Retail, Light Industrial and does Grocery fit into Retail? Categorize more.

---Discussion questions to be continued at next meeting---

- p. Where should the size cap apply? Extend to the commercial Zoning District or not?*
- q. What should the size cap be? Should there be a different cap for grocery store buildings?*

IX. Minutes of March 27 Meeting

- a. Minor adjustments were made.
- b. Rolf K. **made a motion to approve the May 27 Minutes.** John K. **seconded.** The board voted 7-0.

X. Other Business and Correspondence

- XI. Maggie G. spoke with Bryce of Lantman's to follow up with PC's questions on grocery store size functionality. He doesn't want business owners to have undue influence on regulations. A larger size would certainly allow for more options. Lantman's is just under 14,700 sq. ft. footprint including storage. 18,000 sq. ft. with apartments.
- a. Notice (after the fact)- Town of Richmond- June 3 regulation revision public hearing
 - Not something new- series of zoning changes in Dropbox.
 - Barbara- is James D. no longer with us?
 - Alex: James D. contacted Maggie and Alex-- things are crazy at the farm. Dan M.'s schedule is hectic until the end of the school year.
- b. Agenda items for June 24 meeting
 - Continuation of Retail Size Cap Discussion.
- c. John K.- Front Porch Forum -Available apartment in Hinesburg. Modern and what not. Sense of market for 3 bedroom, 2 ½ bathroom. \$23,000 a year for an apartment in Hinesburg.
- d. Denver W.- In person meeting?
 - *Clarification:* Alex W.- Town offices are still closed. Unknown when it will reopen. Would be difficult to hold meeting in conference room with 6' distance. Would have to be held in Hall with horrible acoustics. With small public attendance, remote is best advised.
- e. Maggie G.- Topics will be continued next meeting

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura Sau, Recording Secretary