

**Town of Hinesburg**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**January 26, 2022**

*Approved February 9, 2022*

**Members Present:** Lenore Budd (via Zoom), James Donegan, Barbara Forauer (via Zoom), Marie Gardner (via Zoom), John Kiedaisch, Denver Wilson (via Zoom).

**Members Absent:** Nina Friscia.

(There are currently two vacancies on the Planning Commission)

**Also:** Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning);

**Members of the Public:** Michael Aruzza (via Zoom), Arnold Hayden, Chad Hayden, Dawn Peters (via Zoom), Kathleen Newton (via Zoom), Kim Hopwood (via Zoom).

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

**1. Agenda Changes**

None.

**2. Public Hearing – Zoning Regulation Revisions – Home Occupation Contractor Yards and Home Occupation Vehicle Repair Services**

a. Brief overview of proposed revisions – what is changing and why

Alex W. began by summarizing changes to Section 5.3 of the zoning regulations (home occupation contractor yards), the most notable being clarification that home occupation contractor yards are only allowed in the more rural districts of Town, a revision of the definition of use, a reduction of the required 600 foot setback to surrounding homes, a reduction of the property line setbacks from 200 feet to 50 feet, an increase in the size allowance for these types of businesses, an addition of screening requirements with vegetation, and clarification that outdoor processing of materials is only allowed for topsoil screening with limitations on when that can occur and how often it can occur. He said that these changes would make home occupation contractor yards more attainable for properties in Town. He said that the most common examples of these types of businesses are excavation companies operating out of someone's residence and snow-plow services.

Alex W. then summarized changes to regulations around vehicle repair services as a home occupation. He said that the proposed changes would move them from Section 5.3 of the zoning regulations and place them in another section of the regulations. He said that some of the significant provisions include a requirement that all new home occupation vehicle repair services go through a public hearing process through the Development Review Board (DRB), that the majority of work on vehicles be conducted indoors (unless the vehicles are large), that a maximum of 10 vehicles can be stored outside at any given time (unless the DRB determines that the site is too small for 10 vehicles), that the maximum size is reduced from 2,000 square feet to 1,000 square feet, that it greatly reduces the minimum setback requirements, and that it clarifies that any work areas must be screened with vegetation to reduce visibility from the road and abutting properties.

Denver W. opened the public hearing.

John K. asked about the limitation on the number of hours that materials can be processed at a home occupation contractor yard. Alex W. replied that any day where equipment is used for 60 minutes or more would count toward the daily total.

b. Public input & discussion – questions, concerns, ideas

Kyle Aruzza of Aruzza's Automotive asked whether the acreage of his property complies with the regulation revisions. Alex W. replied that there is an acreage requirement for contractor yards in the proposed regulations, but there is no acreage requirement for vehicle repair services.

c. Discuss the need for additional revisions. Continue hearing to February 9 meeting.

Denver W. noted that the hearing will continue to February 9 and that the public can submit written comment prior to that. He said that at the February 9 meeting, the Planning Commission will be prepared to finalize the proposed revisions and send them to the Selectboard for their consideration.

### **3. Public Comment for Non-agenda Items**

None at this time.

### **4. Zoning Revisions – energy action items**

a. Review existing regulations

Denver W. said that at the previous meeting, the Planning Commission met with the Energy Committee and reviewed action items related to the energy chapter of the Town Plan. Alex W. noted that Commissioners specifically discussed ensuring that new development is designed to be ready for electric vehicle charging and solar (rooftop or otherwise), discussed energy efficiency and what level of efficiency makes sense, as well as considering adopting the energy stretch code. He provided a summary of energy-related topics in existing regulations. He recommended considering two new requirements in Section 5.23: a requirement that new residential dwellings be built to be electric-vehicle ready, and a requirement of the installation of a certain number of charging stations where vehicle-charging can't be linked to a dwelling's electric meter (such as an apartment building). He also recommended standardizing existing language the zoning regulations and subdivision regulations to state that development shall include maximum passive and solar gain, in order to make it a mandatory design feature. He finally recommended considering implementation of the stretch code for new residential buildings (and noted that South Burlington is the only municipality in Vermont that has elected to implement the State's stretch code).

Denver W. said that it would be helpful to have a comparison between the minimum State standards and the State's stretch code. Alex W. replied that a side-by-side would be helpful, and said that it likely already exists. He said that he would ask State staff or staff from Efficiency Vermont if that comparison has been made.

b. Discussion potential changes – e-vehicle charging, solar gain, energy efficiency rating, etc.

John K. asked if Hinesburg could use the stretch code but modify it upward to meet more stringent requirements. Alex W. replied that he thinks that Hinesburg can adopt the stretch code as written by the State, but could also make more targeted additional requirements on top of the stretch code. John K. noted that Hinesburg has more stringent requirements than the state requirements around water and stormwater, and he would like to explore implementing more stringent requirements for energy. Alex W. noted that some energy efficiency features fall under building code requirements rather than zoning

revisions (such as insulation or HVAC requirements), and suggested that if the Planning Commission wants to pursue those, they could discuss adopting a building code with the Selectboard.

Lenore B. asked if this discussion should focus just on residential development or if it should be broadened to apply to all new development. Alex W. replied that the discussion should include both residential and non-residential buildings, but noted that both have different base codes at the state level. He said that some elements, such as electric vehicle charging stations, might be a slightly different conversation for non-residential use.

Lenore B. asked for basic information on how electric vehicle charging stations work and how the electricity is paid for. Alex W. replied that the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) has put together educational materials around electric vehicles that he will circulate among Planning Commissioners.

Denver W. suggested that when the Planning Commission has further discussions about electric vehicle charging stations in Town, they should discuss where to install them. Barbara F. suggested that the public be given an opportunity to provide input as well. She additionally asked about cost and who would be paying for the charging stations. Alex W. replied that the Energy Committee recommended to the Selectboard to put money in the budget for a charging station at the Town office.

Barbara F. asked if there is anything planned to help low-to-middle-income families make the transition from fossil fuels. Alex W. replied that there is a discussion about affordability and equity issues in the State's Climate Action Plan. He said that it is an important component of the conversation and that the Energy Committee may have discussed it further. Barbara F. also asked if Hinesburg has a specific timeline for each step to be in compliance with the State Climate Action Plan by 2025. Alex W. replied that the Town Plan outlines the goals for 2025, 2030, and 2050, and provides the action items to help achieve those goals. Denver W. added that Hinesburg needs to balance the needs of the environment with the needs of the people in Town, in terms of access and affordability. He suggested that the Planning Commission continue to focus on revisions to the zoning regulations.

Some Planning Commissioners requested an overview of density bonus-related regulations. John K. cautioned about focusing on density bonuses, saying that higher priorities should be guidelines around installing electric vehicle charging stations (among others). He said that the density bonus regulations may be too large to tackle as a Commission at this juncture. Barbara F. agreed. Denver W. said that density bonuses could be used to incentivize better uptake of energy-efficient options.

## **5. Election of Officers – Chairperson & Vice Chairperson**

**Lenore B. made a motion, seconded by Marie G., to elect Denver W. as Chairperson of the Planning Commission. The motion passed 6-0.**

**Barbara F. made a motion, seconded by John K., to elect Lenore B. as co-Chairperson of the Planning Commission. The motion passed 6-0.**

## **6. Minutes of January 12 and December 22 Meetings**

**Lenore B. made a motion, seconded by John K., to approve the minutes of December 22, 2021 and January 12, 2022 as submitted. The motion passed 5-0 (Barbara F. abstained).**

**7. Other Business & Correspondence**

- a. News, announcements, etc
- b. Agenda items for the February 9 meeting

The Planning Commission will conclude its public hearing for zoning regulation revisions for home occupation contractor yards and vehicle repair services. It will also hold a public hearing on the Rural Residential 1 Zoning District.

Denver W. **adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:25 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Coonradt, Recording Secretary