

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
March 22, 2017
Approved April 10, 2017**

Members Present: Maggie Gordon, John Kiedaisch, James Donegan, Dennis Place, Joe Iadanza, Rolf Kielman arrived at 8:21 pm

Members Absent: Barbara Forauer, Jeff French

Public Present: None.

Also Present: Dawn Morgan (Recording Secretary), Alex Weinhagen (Director of Planning & Zoning)

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:37 pm.

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items: None.

Housekeeping Changes – Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Revisions

- Accessory Uses/Structures – better definition and examples

Alex W. explained that Section 5.8 could be refined to provide more clarity between accessory structures and accessory uses, both for residential and non-residential situations. He said that the section appears to be primarily focused on residential uses, yet it lists some but not other types of accessory residential uses (e.g., residential recreation uses like backyard ice rinks, etc.). In addition, Alex W. said that the section applies to all principal uses but says little about non-residential uses.

Alex W. suggested either specifying more items or utilizing generalized language that doesn't dwell on specific structures/uses. He went on to suggest that accessory uses be addressed separately from accessory structures, and that distinctions should be made between residential and non-residential situations. Alex W. also suggested adding better references to related sections of the regulations (e.g., accessory apartments in section 5.9, home occupations in section 5.1, backyard recreation as defined in "Outdoor Recreation Facilities" definition in section 10.1).

There was some discussion about previous instances where more clarity would have been helpful to the Zoning Administrator. Joe I. said that he supported separating the residential and commercial uses and structures. Maggie G. asked if anything in a generalized category would require conditional use permitting. Alex W. responded that there should either be a comprehensive list or no list with a broad

category saying that structures/uses are allowed, with certain criteria triggering permitting requirements. Alex W. went on to say that in other towns this section typically specifies structures that don't need conditional review.

John K. said that he also supported making residential and non-residential distinctions. He then asked if agricultural operations would fall under this category. Alex W. said that generally there are exemptions for agricultural operations but the Commission might want to mention forest and agriculture for clarity.

Alex W. said that he would take a look at sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.9 to see if any of those sections need to tie in with section 5.8. He said he will draft language for the Commission's review.

- **Design standards & redevelopment of existing properties – should redevelopment projects have to meet design standards (e.g., eliminating front yard parking)**

Alex W. said that section 5.10 speaks to the redevelopment of existing non-complying structures. He gave examples of existing non-residential properties that have parking lots in front of the building, even though there are now parking restrictions for new structures in section 5.6.3. Alex W. said that it is unclear what the trigger would be for requiring a currently non-complying structure to comply with current regulations.

There was discussion surrounding possible triggers such as rebuilding after partial damage, a complete knock-down and rebuild from scratch, and/or significant changes of use. Joe I. said his general thought was that if damage sustained to a property was out of an owner's control (e.g., extreme weather event, fire, etc.) then the regulations could allow for non-complying structures to be restored within a limited amount of time. However, he said that if the rebuild was the owner's choice then it would be in the town's best interest to work toward compliance.

John K. asked if the Cheese Plant property was an example of a non-complying structure (e.g., parking in front, buffer encroachment, etc.). Alex W. said that he did not believe it was a non-complying structure, but acknowledged that if it had been non-complying it would be a good example of the need to balance zoning compliance with positive development for the community.

There was some discussion about how to move a non-complying structure toward compliance. Joe I. said that the concept of conditional use permitting might work, where a rebuild is put before a reasonable group of citizens to look at the benefit to the town and whether it is moving in the right direction. James D. said that if a rebuild is a fresh start then the property should be in compliance and John K. agreed.

Alex W. said he will draft language for the Commission's review.

Village Growth Area – Rezoning & Design Standards (cont'd from 2/22 mtg) – mixed use definition

- Official Map Revisions

Alex W. said the Official Map has not been revised in 8 years and is in need of updating. The town's Official Map has the power of a regulation in that it lays out future community facilities, and compels new development to accommodate these facilities. New development does not have to build or install these facilities, merely accommodate them (i.e., make room for them in the development plan).

Joe I. said that he would like to see community storm water incorporated into the Map to encourage the town to take a proactive stance. Alex W. said that Andrea Morgante is compiling various studies completed over the years and some of that information might be useful for the Map. Alex W. went on to say incorporating stormwater locations into the Map would show that there are "shovel ready" projects if funding became available. He said that it would also be a useful starting point for conversations with owners of land earmarked for these sites. John K. reminded the Commission of UVM's project seeking to work with towns on stormwater projects.

There was discussion about intersections, roads, green spaces and municipal facilities identified on the Map and whether it was appropriate to remove, relocate or continue to include them. Joe I. suggested expanding the explanations for the items.

There was discussion about options for green space configurations and Joe I. drew one example on the whiteboard. John K. suggested a green space pattern running perpendicular to Rte 116 running all the way to the recreational fields, with the potential for restaurants/shops near the recreational fields to help reinforce activities at the fields. Alex W. noted that it is easier to identify general development areas on the Map where green spaces are desired, but more difficult for smaller "parklets" since those would depend on a developer's design. Maggie G. suggested putting those specifics into the regulations instead of on the Map. Rolf K. suggested increasing the green space area along the LaPlatte River to encourage outdoor activities in the area. Rolf K. encouraged keeping in mind some of the green space and trail areas when discussing connectivity throughout the town. James D. suggested preserving green space at the top of the hill near Renewable NRG Systems, and Alex W. said that might be something to discuss as that property moves through the development process.

There was additional discussion about how to encourage additional connectivity through the use of roads and trails, as well as key areas with stormwater issues. John K. asked if the Map should reflect updated parcel lines, and Alex W. suggested adding map insets showing a larger view of denser areas. Rolf K. asked if the capital improvement plan should be considered to make sure the Map is consistent with those goals. Alex W. said that he could provide the Commission with the plan. John K. agreed, saying that the Map was a means of voicing a need for community development. A discussion of ways to fund identified improvements followed.

The Commission summarized that the Map should include items such as vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, green spaces, municipal areas, Iroquois and Sunset lakes, stormwater “hot spots”, etc. Alex W. said he would work on revisions for the Commission’s review at a later meeting.

Minutes of 03/08/17 Meeting: Rolf K. **made a motion to approve the 03/08/17 minutes as written.** Joe I. **seconded the motion.** The Board voted **6-0.**

Other Business & Correspondence

John K. said that there was an interview for the Zoning Administrator position. He and Alex W. said that they will ask the candidate to meet with the Commission, and James D. requested reference checks prior to that meeting. Alex W. said that he would make the request to the Town Administrator.

Rolf K. shared a magazine that featured Renewable NRG Systems and also solar trackers with a different aesthetic to what is often seen in town.

Joe I. **made a motion to adjourn the meeting.** Rolf K. **seconded the motion.** The Commission voted **6-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Morgan, Recording Secretary