

**Town of Hinesburg
Planning Commission
February 14, 2018
Approved March 14, 2018**

Members Present: James Donegan, Rolf Kielman, Jeff French, Dennis Place, Joe Iadanza, John Kiedaisch, Barbara Forauer

Members Absent: Marie Gardner, Maggie Gordon

Public Present: Gill Coates

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

Joe I. chaired the meeting, which was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items: None.

Housekeeping Changes to Zoning & Subdivision Regulations (cont'd from 1/10/18, 1/24/18):

- Review final draft
- Consider a motion to forward the proposal to the Select Board

Alex W. provided the Commission with a summarized two-page memo of the proposed changes. He said that this was an opportunity for them to make any final changes before submitting the proposal to the Select Board.

John K. said that the time period for public notice was sometimes listed in the regulations as seven days and sometimes as fifteen days. For consistency, he suggested standardizing the time period to 15 days which would also give community members more time to respond. Alex W. said that there are currently different notice periods for several different actions such as DRB proceedings, issuance of zoning permits, and the time frame for someone to cure a violation. John K. said that he was specifically talking about notice periods.

Alex W. said that having shorter notice periods for simpler actions can allow simpler projects to move through the permitting process faster. John K. said that he was particularly concerned with the notice period for major subdivisions, as those were more likely to result in community feedback. General discussion about the subdivision hearing process followed and the Commission decided to change section 3.3.2 of the subdivision regulations from seven to fifteen days. They also decided to add similar relevant language to the section governing sketch plan notifications.

Barbara F. made a motion to forward the proposed Zoning Regulation and Subdivision Regulation revisions to the Select Board for review and action, as detailed in the regulation documents dated February 6, 2018 and as amended as discussed this evening. James D. seconded the motion. The Commission voted 7-0.

Size Limit for Retail Establishments

- Information on sizes of existing Hinesburg buildings
- Information on use of size limits in other jurisdictions
- Planning for a roundtable discussion at a future meeting with invited speakers

Alex W. said that Jeff F. and Maggie G. met (as discussed at the previous meeting) for research and planning. He said that Jeff F. performed some internet research about the use of building size limits in other towns and Maggie G. contacted representatives from grocery stores in hopes of gaining some insight into their needs. He said that Maggie G. is hoping to have speakers at an upcoming meeting if the Commission is still interested.

Jeff F. said that in an attempt to break the larger discussion of the village growth area into smaller actionable pieces, he was originally focused on trying to standardize the size limit of commercial buildings across all zoning districts. However, he said the Select Board had denied the Commission's request for interim zoning (based on legal feedback), so it now makes sense to him to discuss the village growth area as a whole.

Jeff F. described some of his research into other towns, and said that one potential metric for determining building size limits is a floor area ratio (FAR). FAR is the relationship between the total amount of usable floor area for which a building has been permitted to the total area of the lot on which the building stands. He said that this could possibly be used as a design and development tool.

Joe I. said that he is interested in ways to incentivize or de-incentivize design standards that the Commission develops. There was general discussion about various commercial buildings that currently exist in Hinesburg and the allowable density bonuses under the current zoning regulations. It was noted that the 20,000 square foot cap on commercial spaces is only applicable to individual spaces within a building. This means that a much larger building could be developed that had multiple retail or commercial spaces that were each limited to 20,000 square feet.

Joe I. said that at this stage of the discussion the bigger question is what the Commission would like such a potentially large building to look like (e.g., lot coverage, building height, frontage, etc.). General discussion about Hinesburg's current design standards and bonus incentives followed.

The Commission discussed various ways to define and break down the village growth project into smaller, more easily defined and achievable pieces. Alex W. suggested determining the Commission's most important features that they would like to see in the community and build from that. Jeff F. suggested referencing work that was previously performed by the Village Steering Committee. Dennis P. suggested beginning by looking at the proposed Haystack Crossing project. General discussion followed.

Rolf K. suggested that each Commission compile ideas of what they felt were important design elements for the village, and Alex W. said that he would compile them for discussion at future meetings.

Minutes of 1/24/18 Meeting: Rolf K. **made a motion to approve the 1/24/18 minutes as written.** Barbara F. **seconded the motion.** The Board voted **6-0**. John K. abstained.

Other Business & Correspondence

- **Notice - Hannaford project, 401 water quality certification, February 26 public hearing:** Alex W. briefly described the notice and suggested that Commissioner's contact the Agency of Natural Resources if they had any questions.
- **Community dinner update – scheduled for May 25:** Barbara F. said that the Select Board has agreed to join the Commission in hosting the dinner. She said that it will be at the United Church hall from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm and donations will go to the Hinesburg food shelf.

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Morgan, Recording Secretary