



Town of Hinesburg
Planning & Zoning Department
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Selectboard & Town Administrator
FROM: Alex Weinhausen, Director of Planning & Zoning
DATE: May 31, 2013
RE: Rural Area Zoning Proposal – Selectboard Revisions (first draft)

Per the discussion at your May 20 meeting, I have made some revisions to the Rural Area Zoning proposal crafted by the Planning Commission. Please see the three attached “Track Changes” documents: Objective #1, Objective #2, Objective #3. At the May 20 meeting, Andrea suggested some good changes to the PUD provisions for greenspace. I am holding off on making these changes until the Board has time to review the complete set of revisions that Andrea provided. I’m sure she identified other positive changes to the proposal language, and I’d like to make these all at once, based on direction from the Board. At this point, I’ve heard no consensus from the Board that substantive changes are needed to the proposed Town Plan revision; however, I believe Mike wants to discuss that in more depth. You’ll see that I made very few changes in this first set of revisions. Changes include:

Objective #1:

- “Low Impact Agribusiness” use. Instead of allowing agricultural and forestry equipment sales as a standalone or primary use, such sales would have to be incidental to a use that focused on repairs of said equipment. This change was in response to the discussion related to Marie Gardner’s comments and the Board’s concerns about traffic levels on rural roads.

Objective #2:

- Conservation Subdivision Design – Step #2 (locating building sites). The Board has not discussed this revision. I am recommending this revision based on my realization that there are some properties that will end up being undevelopable if no provision is made to allow access across primary resource areas. This is particularly true for properties with developable land (i.e., no resource constraints) in the interior of the parcel, which are separated from the only point of access by small areas of steep slopes (25%+). In such cases, proper engineering combined with minimized impact area may be able to provide reasonable access that complies with our road standards and public safety access requirements.
- General Standards #1. Rewording for clarification of the Vermont Current Use program acreage eligibility per Board discussion.
- General Standards #6. Rewording for clarification of solar access standards per Board discussion.
- Zoning Design Standards #5. Same as above. Use same solar access standard language in both Subdivision design standards and Zoning Rural Area design standards.

Objective #3:

- Determination of Allowable Density #4. The Board has not discussed this revision. I am recommending this revision based on feedback from the Zoning Administrator and my realization that we need language to address existing undeveloped lots, as well as conversion of single-family homes on existing developed lots to duplexes or multi-family dwellings. The revision allows this sort of infill to continue as long as subdivision is not required.
- Pre-existing lot density subdivision exemption. A new temporary provision has been added, per the Board discussion, to give that large number of landowners with 10-12 acre parcels more time to do a subdivision to create one additional lot. This exemption will sunset three years from the date these regulations are adopted. This should give these landowners plenty of time to weigh their options, and seek subdivision if they wish to do so. At the same time, it avoids inflating the potential future build out by not granting a permanent ability for subdivision of parcels in this size class – many/most of which were never created with further subdivision in mind.