

UNDERHILL PLANNING COMMISSION

Thursday, April 27, 2017 6:30 PM

Minutes

Planning Commissioners Present: Chair Cynthia Seybolt, Carolyn Gregson, Catherine Kearns, David Edson, Pat Lamphere, Nancy Bergersen, David Glidden, Johnathan Drew

Staff/Municipal Representatives Present: Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

Others Present: Kurt Johnson, Selectboard Member

[6:25] The Planning Commission convened at Underhill Town Hall at 6:25pm.

[6:30] Chair C. Seybolt called the meeting to order.

[6:31] Chair C. Seybolt asked for public comment. Selectboard Member Johnson asked for clarification regarding the memorandum sent to the Selectboard about assembling a task force to examine alternative transportation. Commissioner Kearns expressed her desire to be on the task force.

[6:35] **Chair C. Seybolt asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 13, 2017.** Commissioner Bergersen made a motion to approve the minutes of April 13, 2017. Commissioner Kearns seconded the motion. Commissioner Edson proposed a correction for one grammatical mistake. **The minutes of April 13, 2017, as corrected, were approved unanimously.**

[6:37] Staff Member Strniste advised that he would update the Rules of Procedure and have a copy for the Commissioners to sign at the next Planning Commission meeting (May 4).

[6:38] Chair C. Seybolt provided a quick update regarding Commissioner Phillips.

[6:39] Chair C. Seybolt advised the Commission of being cognizant of staying on point and reminded them that the Regulation updates were intended to reconcile discrepancies with the Town Plan, clarify specific issues, and keep the Regulations as simple as possible.

[6:42] Commissioner Gregson provided an overview of her research task of discerning which districts should allow multi-family housing, and began by providing a summary of how the Regulations progressed from the early 1990s to present day. She also provided an explanation of how the current zoning districts came into existence. Commissioner Gregson continue to explained that the Regulations were once very limited in regards to multi-family housing, whereas now they are very expansive.

[6:48] A discussion ensued about accessory dwellings, as Commissioner Gregson explained it become a statutory requirement sometime in the early 2000's, which is why the Regulations began incorporating accessory apartments. Staff Member Strniste provided an overview on why the DRB Wishinski Application was denied, specifically stating that the multi-family dwelling would not be consistent with the neighborhood. Commissioner Lamphere stated that he was unaware of how 8-unit, multi-family dwellings in the various district were inserted into the Regulations.

[7:00] Commissioner Drew asked Commissioner Gregson if she had a proposal. She suggested reverting back to the 2003 Regulations regarding two-family/multi-family housing, and allowing multi-family housing only in the Underhill Flats district. Staff Member Strniste provided an overview of the map illustrating the locations of all the multi-unit housing in Underhill. Commissioner

Edson agreed single-family dwellings (with an optional attached accessory dwelling) and two-family dwellings should be a permitted use.

[7:11] Staff Member Strniste recommended that multi-family housing be a conditional use in the Water Conservation District. Chair C. Seybolt stated that the Commission should be utilizing a philosophical approach when proposing new regulations, and if a developer could attain all the permits and meet environmental standards, then he or she should be able to develop where permitted. Staff Member Strniste explained that the Water Conservation already contains a lot of the Town's density. Commissioner Kearns stated she would be in favor of permitting multi-unit dwellings if there was a tie to Underhill Center, but not the entire Water Conservation District. Staff Member Strniste recommended that 3 or 4 unit houses be permitted in the Water Conservation District and 3, 5 or 6 unit houses be permitted to the flats. Commissioner Kearns explained that allowing multi-unit housing in the Water Conservation zoning district leaves open the possibility of multi-family housing near Underhill State Park.

[7:20] Commissioner Drew expressed his concern about relying on impediments to assure multi-unit housing would not occur near Underhill State Park. Commissioner Gregson recommended no more than 3 units in various districts, excluding the flats. Commissioner Kearns recommended not permitting multi-unit dwellings in all districts except the flats. Commissioner Drew recommended that the Flats allow between 3 to 5-unit housing as a conditional use. Commissioner Gregson recommended that Underhill be sensitive to Jericho in the flats. Staff Member Strniste was asked to provide information about Jericho's multi-unit regulations for the Flats at the next meeting.

[7:30] Commissioner Edson provided an overview of his most recent proposal regarding accessory apartments, specifically identifying that he believed attached accessory dwellings should align with the State's definition and be permitted with administrative review, whereas detached accessory dwellings could be reviewed by the Board as a conditional use application. Commissioner Lamphere explained that he believes the Flats should allow for more than 5 units, as he remembers that the Commission agreed to that many units, as 8 units was the least number for an entrepreneur to pursue when developing a multi-plex. The Commission had a consensus on permitting single-family dwellings; two-family dwellings; and tentatively, accessory apartments in every district; while allowing multi-unit dwellings, between 3 and 5 units, in only the Underhill Flats District.

[7:46] Staff Member Strniste explained that Commissioner Edson's proposal and his proposal were essentially the same, except he would recommend having an owner occupancy requirement for all accessory dwellings and site plan review for two-family dwellings. Commissioner Gregson supported the idea of requiring site plan review for two-family dwellings as it would provide more comfort to the community. Commissioner Kearns stated her opposition to the owner occupancy requirement. Commissioner Lamphere echoed Commissioner Kearns's sentiment towards the owner occupancy requirement. Chair C. Seybolt advised that the Commission may be trying to cater towards specific situations.

[7:58] Chair C. Seybolt advised the Commission that herself and Staff Member Strniste would be sitting down soon to review what was accomplished and what still needs to be addressed.

[7:59] **Chair C. Seybolt asked for a motion to adjourn.** Commissioner Bergersen made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Drew. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted By:
Andrew Strniste, Planning Director

The minutes of the April 27, 2017 meeting were accepted this 4th day of May, 2017.

Cynthia T. Seybolt
Chair C. Seybolt, Planning Commission Chair