

PLANNING BOARD

January 18, 2024

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

Board Members Present: Tim Bray (chair), Jen Roberts, Ken Jacques, Mike Howard, Darrin Patten, Dan Saulnier, Amy Lewis (alternate for Selectman Poul Heilmann) and John Trachy (alternate).

Also present: Tim Josephson (UVLSPC), Geri and Royal Monty, Tanner Jacques and Josh McGraw

Chairman Bray opened the meeting at 7pm

Gene Hayes received approval for a Lot Line Adjustment in November 2023 but with a Map and Lot # error. Surveyor Clayton Platt fixed the error, dropped off an updated copy of the mylar and 3 paper copies to be signed. The Board signed each copy, Josh McGraw took the mylar and paper copies to be registered and returned to Gene Hayes.

The Board reviewed the proposed zoning amendments. Chairman Bray asked if there were any changes, corrections, or additions from the Board. Chairman Bray spoke with Selectman Poul Heilmann, and they felt that including “site plan” in the definition of Short-term Rental following “special exception” would be a good idea and the Board agreed. Chairman Bray moved to amend the sentence to read: “The use of any type of property as a short-term rental constitutes a type of guest facility requiring a special exception and a site plan under this Ordinance, and is classified as a business/commercial use rather than as a residential use”. Jen Roberts seconded the motion. John Trachy questioned if Cluster Development in the Forest Conservation District should also be further defined as “not short-term rental”. After discussion the Board agreed to add: I. Cluster Development (not short-term rentals)

Jen Roberts rescinded her second to the original motion. Chairman Bray rescinded his original motion.

Chairman Bray moved to include the following in the proposed Zoning Amendments:

1. Add “not short-term rentals” to I. Cluster Development under Section 3.21 (Permitted uses in Forest Conservation District), to wit:

I. Cluster Residential (not short-term rentals)

2. Include “site plan” in Article XIII. Definitions, proposed “Short-term Rentals”, to wit:

“...The use of any type of property as a short-term rental constitutes a type of guest facility requiring a special exception and a site plan under this Ordinance and is classified as a business/commercial use rather than as residential use.”

Mike Howard seconded the motion, the Board unanimously voted in favor of the changes.

Chairman Bray opened the Public Hearing at 7:12pm

Chairman Bray recognized Tanner Jacques, Zoning Board chair. ZBA Chairman Jacques stated that support for the proposed Zoning changes is vital, and all should be in support of regulating these activities so that there is some control over Short-term Rentals in Springfield. Getting the word out to friends, neighbors and fellow residents of the town is essential so that there is an understanding of what is being requested. Chairman Bray agreed and stated that there would be no changes for the Planning Board; the current Site Plan process is robust and it is attempting to keep safety first. Chairman Bray related that the Town Attorney (Christine Johnson) fully supports the proposed changes. Ms. Johnson feels that, if approved, the proposed changes are defensible.

Chairman Bray recognized Royal and Geri Monty, Winding Wood Rd in the Springfield section of Eastman. Mr. and Mrs. Monty came before the Board to discuss a situation between them and a neighbor who has a water drainage issue. The neighbor's drainage was compromised by excess water and a broken pipe. The neighbor hired a company to fix the problem and, in doing so, water was re-routed which in turn caused excess water to enter upon the Monty's property and around their buried propane tank. The Springfield Zoning Coordinator visited the properties and discussed solutions with the property owners. Mr. Monty brought up that other residents in Eastman that are in the Grantham and Enfield towns have stricter requirements when building. Why doesn't Springfield? The lot sizes are very small, and problems come up when houses are so close together. Chairman Bray shared with Mr. Monty that other towns have building inspectors, which are costly, and Springfield does not have one. If that changed it would be a Select Board and a Budget Committee decision.

There was discussion of mobile businesses such as the Pizza Hero food truck. Chairman Bray voiced that he did not feel this was a Planning Board issue because it is a mobile business without a dedicated site for which a Site Plan can be processed. He felt it is a business that may require a permit from the Select Board. Tim Josephson volunteered to find out what other towns do for food trucks. Tamara Butcher shared that Amherst, NH did a Christmas Market in December and had 3-4 food trucks so that Amherst's approach might be one to look at.

Minutes of December 21, 2023. Ken Jacques moved to accept as written, Jen Roberts seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously; Amy Lewis abstained having not been at the meeting.

Ken Jacques shared with the Board a proposed bill (HB 1291) being considered by the NH House. Wording below:

*HB 1291 proposes changes to current law regarding accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The bill increases the number of ADUs allowed by right from one to 2 and adds definitions for "attached unit" and "detached unit." It also allows municipalities to require ADUs to meet the definition for workforce housing. The bill removes the requirement for an interior door between the principal dwelling unit and the ADU and allows attached ADUs to have independent means of ingress and egress or ingress and egress through a common space shared with the principal dwelling. Additionally, municipalities can apply aesthetic standards to ADUs if they have also applied such standards to the principal dwelling unit.*

*The bill also establishes minimum and maximum sizes for ADUs. The minimum size would be increased to 1,000 square feet for one unit and 850 square feet for any additional units. Municipalities would be prohibited from requiring a familial relationship between the occupants of an ADU and the occupants of the principal dwelling unit, and they would not be allowed to limit ADUs to only one bedroom. ADUs may be considered units of workforce housing if they meet certain criteria, and existing structures like detached garages can be converted into ADUs regardless of current dimensional requirements. The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2025.*

Mr. Jacques also shared that 60 affordable housing units are to be built in New London across from the hospital and behind Hannaford; 40 will be singles and 20 will be doubles. The argument is that people that work at the hospital and at the college are not able to afford to live in New London and this would help solve the problem.

John Trachy asked if the Board wanted to look at the updated driveway permit application and regulation changes. The Board agreed to schedule a work session on Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm to work on those items.

Members of the Board that have terms up for reelection are Ken Jacques and Tim Bray.

Chairman Bray recognized Josh McGraw who wished to thank the Board for its support of the land purchase east of NH State Route 4A by NH Fish & Game. He also shared that in doing some research he found some information about a “greenway” along NH State Route 4A. He didn’t find what exactly it is and suggested that the Board might be interested in finding more information about it.

The meeting and hearing closed at 8:51 pm.

The second hearing for the Proposed Zoning Amendment changes will be held on Thursday January 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Butcher