

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
TOWN OF GROTON
ZONING COMMISSION
MAY 23, 2016 – 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – 134 GROTON LONG POINT ROAD
COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Marquardt, Sutherland, Sayer, Hudecek
Alternate members present:
Absent: Smith
Staff present: Glemboski, Jones, Reiner, Gilot

Chairperson Sutherland called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

III. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. WRPD Permitted Uses Spreadsheet

Staff provided a brief overview of the goals for this meeting: finish the WRPD permitted uses with a solid consensus from the Commission. Nate Kelly and Jeff Davis of Horsley Witten Group would guide the discussion.

Staff said the FY 17 budget for the Office of Planning and Development was approved, so the zoning regulation rewrite will continue into the next fiscal year. Staff recommended subcommittees, or a Saturday workshop, to get through the process. The commission and staff discussed the process and funding available for the project. The Commission would like to be kept apprised of the funds available, and a progress report. They recommended that staff keep the Town Council apprised of the progress (percent of project completed). The Commission discussed having longer work sessions when the consultant is present.

Discussion ensued on the list of WRPD uses spreadsheet begun at a previous meeting.

11) and 12) Animal Feedlots/keeping of livestock: Mr. Kelly discussed contamination from waste; this could be allowed but require specific standards. The commission discussed removing feedlots and keeping farms as a use, the need a definition for a farm and livestock, determine the difference between livestock and a pet; livestock in WRPD – the commission agreed to permit with conditions. The commission needs to consider allowing farms, and standards for farms near watercourses with regard to pesticides and buffering from wetlands or watercourses – address with performance standards.

13) Auto/truck rental-(in regulations, not in WRPD): discussed risks/protection in the area. One issue is whether equipment will be repaired and serviced on site. They asked to review before deciding.

14) Cemetery – no new cemetery uses

- 15) Contractor's Construction Equipment and Vehicle Storage - look at performance standards for auto with #13
- 16) Funeral and crematory services - only allowed in sewer areas
- 17) Veterinary or Animal Hospitals - need conditions
- 18) Fuel Oil dealers - no storage of significant oil on site; brokers or dealers or retailers would be allowed; no onsite storage (in definition)
- 19) Trailer, Farm & Heavy Equipment Sales - same as 15
- 20) Wholesale and Outdoor Storage - performance standards - where, how, what, how you contain. No hazardous materials - the commission was confused about the definition. Permitted with conditions but needs a better definition. No outdoor storage as a primary use, only as an accessory use, with performance standards for an accessory use.
- 21) Airport - no airports in WRPD
- 22) Bus Garage - not permitted
- 23) Motor Freight Terminal/Railroad Freight Station - not permitted

INDUSTRIAL:

- 24) Textiles - only in sewer areas
- 25) Chemicals, Drugs, Plastics - pretreatment systems, allowed in sewer areas
- 26) Electrical equipment - permitted with conditions
- 27) Fabricated metal products - permitted with conditions
- 28) Jewelry manufacturing or plating - permitted with conditions
- 29) Lumber and Wood Products - permitted with conditions sewer and non-sewer areas
- 30) Professional, Scientific and Controlling Instruments - clear definition of action or process - manufacturing, selling, assembling, etc.
- 31) Textile mill products - conditions in sewer areas
- 32) Pest control services - conditions in sewer areas
- 33) Greenhouses and Nurseries - allowed with performance standards

2. Consolidation of Zones

Mr. Kelly gave a PowerPoint presentation showing various examples of two family homes, and discussed design guidelines using scale, mass, symmetry, balance, and form based code.

Sayer said she would like to allow more duplexes in the new zones.

Mr. Davis discussed the combining of existing zones.

1) R-12 and RS-12 - Most of these zones are already developed. Discussion ensued on allowing duplexes, and possibly using design standards to address their concerns, such as density. Mr. Davis noted that the commission needed to consider their comfort level with dictating materials, design, etc.; what they want retrofitted communities to look like; increased traffic; regulating density and form with conditions. The R-12 zone currently allows duplexes. Groton needs to expand the variety of housing types in Groton. The commission discussed limiting lot size where duplexes could be built; consideration of coastal zones; accessory dwelling units vs duplexes. Mobile home parks could be redeveloped as two-family homes. Staff said the market analysis said there may be too much single family housing in Groton, there is not a variety of housing stock.

2) RS-20 and RU-20 – HW does not recommend allowing two-family homes in this district. A lot of open space is currently zoned residential. If they subtract the protected areas, there is very little left. There are potential areas for conservation where wetlands overlay large undeveloped parcels.

3) RU-40 and RU-80 – The commission was asked to consider if there are places that they might want to down-zone; more density in smaller areas to offset the larger parcels. The commission considered the addition of an institutional zone – for schools, etc., so it is obvious that there would be no development potential; also the addition of an open space zone to include open space, park areas, etc. or two open space zones – one more active, the other more passive to include conservation, trails. Conservation easements on the map would be helpful.

The commission discussed possible expansion of R-80, downsizing in the north, allowing two-family in RS-12 and if so, what the major design standards should be; coding development open space; notification of allowing duplexes in those smaller areas – maybe by special permit, which would have to be noticed, so that neighbors would know.

Kelly said that currently, 15,000 s.f. is required for a duplex, but 20,000 s.f. is the more likely area to allow duplexes. The commission would like to see an analysis of duplexes in the R-20 zone. Staff said they could allow duplexes, but it doesn't have to be by-right, but maybe by special permit.

The commission had concerns with architectural standards and preferred non-binding design guidelines.

The commission discussed allowing duplexes for the R-12 zones and leaving the R-20 zones as they are. The consultant will present possibilities for combining the R-20 zones but with no duplexes; the commission does not want to create a lot of non-conforming lots.

3. Definitions: Table of Permitted Uses – The commissioners will email any concerns, comments, questions, etc. to staff. Deadline for comments on definitions: before the next meeting.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. made by Hudecek, seconded by Sayer, so voted unanimously.

Susan Marquardt, Secretary
Zoning Commission

Prepared by Debra Gilot
Office Assistant III