



## **TOWN OF STOWE PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes February 20, 2023**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a special meeting on **Monday February 20, 2023**, starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation available via Zoom. The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

Members present included Mila Lonetto, Brian Hamor, Hope Sullivan, Bob Davison, Chuck Ebel, and Neil Percy. Staff Sarah McShane. Also present was Graham Mink.

The meeting began at 5:34 p.m.

### **Review Prior Meeting Minutes [02/06/2023]**

On a motion by H.Sullivan, seconded by B.Hamor, the meeting minutes from the prior meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously with N.Percy abstaining.

### **Adjustments to the Agenda & Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

None

### **Follow-Up Discussion- State Planning Designation Programs**

Members discussed the presentation from the last meeting involving state planning designation programs and potential eligible areas. Members felt portions of Maple Street, River Road, the VC-10 portions of Mountain Road might be eligible and benefit from the program. Members discussed areas that might be suitable for housing opportunities. B.Davison shared his concerns with the quality of development, increasing density, and how that may impact the character of the area. Members discussed the intent of the housing grant program to modernize the town's zoning regulations, look for areas to provide more housing diversity, and evaluate the planning designation programs. Members discussed with G.Mink the housing bill currently being considered by the State legislature and the density requirements for areas served by municipal water and sewer. The bill would also reduce parking requirements and require a minimum density. Following discussion members agreed that the appropriate next step would be to compare existing zoning regulations with the state planning designation requirements and identify areas where the zoning might need to be updated. At a future meeting staff can provide maps/visual assessment of potential eligible areas.

### **Split Lots**

Members reviewed the existing zoning regulations pertaining to split lots (i.e. lots containing lands in more than one zoning district). Overall, the Commission felt the existing language was well written. B.Hamor suggested to develop language that would provide flexibility and/or allow the higher density when providing year round housing. Members agreed there should be a list of circumstances in which the DRB could grant the flexibility to use the higher density/dimensional requirements, such as if the project involves covered or below ground parking, connected sidewalks, year-round housing, etc. G.Mink suggested to clearly define what is meant by adverse and undue. Members agreed they were okay with increasing the allowed by right extension of 100'; staff noted that it would be easier to administer, especially in cases where a lot is split and the adjoining zoning district area is a small. Staff will continue to refine the language to be included as part of the overall zoning updates the Commission is working on.

### **Updates/Correspondence**

Members discussed short term rentals and information shared to the Commission from Michael Krancer. Members agreed it is important to incentivize and promote long term housing rather than have an anti-short term rental stance. Members noted that there is a wide spectrum of short-term rental owners and each have their own reasons why they operate them (ex. high cost of living). Members are interested in speaking with Mr. Krancer at a future meeting. S.McShane provided a brief status of the proposed AT & T antenna following the prior Selectboard meeting. B.Davison felt the meeting with A T & T and the Selectboard was helpful and productive. B.Hamor noted that he will not be able to attend the March meeting. Staff noted the next meeting will involve continued discussion on possible amendments to the dimensional requirements in the designated downtown and lower village center. Members asked for the Planning Consultant to provide a summary of the building height discussions and compare the dimensional requirements by zoning district.

### **Review Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

The next Planning Commission meeting will be held on Monday March 6th.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director