



**TOWN OF STOWE  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Meeting Minutes  
September 18, 2023**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a meeting on **Monday September 18, 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, Bob Davison, Chuck Ebel, Jill Anne, Heather Snyder, Brian Hamor, Neil Percy, and John Muldoon. Also present was Sarah McShane (staff), Ken Belliveau (planning consultant), Christopher Muroch, Graham Mink, Barbara Baraw, Drew Clymer, Mary Black, Elise McKenna, Patricia Gabel, Barbara Puddicomb, Jo Sabel Courtney, Rebecca Chase, Mary Skelton, Jed Lipsky, Sandi Kuhl, Michael Diender, Rob Foregger, Aaron Calvin, Bruce Nourjian, Catherine Crawley, Chris Walton, Damon Lee, Tyler Mumley, Billy Adams, Valerie LaMonda, Susan Romans, and others who may not have signed in.

The meeting was called to order by Chair M.Lonetto at 5:30 pm.

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

none

**Review Prior Meeting Minutes [08/07/2023]**

On a motion by B.Hamor, seconded by B.Davison, the meeting minutes from the prior meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

**2023 Proposed Zoning Amendments- Public Hearing**

Chair M.Lonetto opened the public hearing, provided an overview of the proposed zoning amendments, and reviewed the Commission's discussions over the past year.

Planning Consultant Ken Belliveau and Planning & Zoning Director S.McShane provided a presentation outlining the proposed amendments.

The following is a summary of public comments received during the public hearing.

Valerie Lamonda, 509 Randolph Road. V.LaMonda requested the Commission consider modifications to the cannabis establishment provisions to allow Tier 1 indoor cannabis cultivation within single-family dwellings in the RR2 zoning district. She explained that she has passed all of her state inspections for indoor cultivation, however, does not conform to the zoning regulations as currently written.

Chris Muroch explained that he and Hannah Sterns own a business called Cannabis Collective. He asked the Commission to consider allowing Tier 2 cannabis manufacturing in additional districts. He explained they are interested in moving their business to a location on South Main Street in Stowe however the regulations as currently written do not allow for cannabis manufacturing at that location. He provided an overview of the manufacturing process and storage of cannabis.

Bruce Nourjian spoke in support of Valerie Lamonda's request.

Barbara Baraw inquired whether Act 47 considered floodplain areas. K.Belliveau responded that as currently proposed in areas which meet the new definition of 'served by municipal water and sewer infrastructure' density would subtract lands within the floodplain from the total property area. Graham Mink inquired whether the State requires density to be calculated in that manner and whether the amendments would further restrict the development of housing. S.McShane explained that as written, the proposed density calculation would only apply to areas that meet the definition of 'served by municipal water and sewer infrastructure' and within RR district; it would not apply to designated growth areas. She noted the RR districts have never been envisioned to support higher residential densities.

Elise McKenna inquired about proposed amendments related to building height. K.Belliveau heighted the areas within the amendments which relate to building height.

*\*\*\*The remote portion of the meeting lost communication and had to be restarted\*\*\**

Billy Adams inquired about the proposed amendment related to calculating density within floodplain areas. S.McShane referred him to Section 4.23. He shared comments related to Act 47 and an "explosion" of growth potential. He noted that the State is also looking for growth in town grand lists.

Catherine Crawley inquired about the definition of the term junk yard. S.McShane will send her the current definition of junk yard. No changes are currently proposed to this definition.

Tyler Mumley raised concerns regarding restricting density to exclude slopes of 15% or more and asked the Commission to consider it further. He shared concerns that future proposed amendments could include a similar provision across the board, like other municipalities he is familiar with.

Mary Black reported that she is on the DRB but speaking as resident. She spoke in support of allowing drive through facilities for pharmacies. She shared her concerns of it being a health and safety issue and felt the Commission should restrict the types of products dispensed through the window. Barbara Baraw commented that she is opposed to drive through facilities because of potential traffic queuing. Neil Percy commented that he felt it was a yes/no question and wondered why it should only be limited to pharmacies.

Jed Lipsky spoke and asked whether areas served by municipal water and sewer infrastructure take into consideration capacity limitations. S.McShane reported that portions of Act 47 do not apply to areas that have identified capacity constraints; she reported the Planning & Zoning and Public Works Departments are working on understanding where those identified capacity constraints are located. Mr. Lipsky also inquired about septic permitting for ADUs. B.Hamor explained that the State of Vermont regulates on-site wastewater systems based on the number of bedrooms.

Mary Skeleton Altadonna spoke of her childhood home within the village and her ADU she built above the historic carriage house. She explained that she allows veterans and active-duty military to stay in the ADU and rents it on a short-term basis other time during the year. The main dwelling is also rented in mid-term increments; neither are owner occupied or rented on a yearly basis. She inquired about the proposed ADU amendments and asked how they may impact her property. M.Lonetto answered as currently drafted there would be a fifteen-year phase-in and afterwards Ms. Skeleton would not be able to operate as she presently does.

Drew Clymer noted that he is on the DRB but speaking as resident. He cautioned with a potential explosion in development that one does not outpace the other, i.e., infrastructure, utilities, roadways, etc.

Billy Adams spoke in support of drive through pharmacies. He inquired about the proposed ADU provision and the required length of rental. He asked the Commission to consider eliminating the nine-month restriction since it cannot be easily monitored/enforced and noted that the State considers a person to be a resident if they stay in Vermont for 183 or more days each year. He also shared concerns regarding the one-year lease term and asked the Commission to consider reducing it to thirty days and to consider the impacts of the fifteen-year phase occupancy requirements.

Jo Sabel Courtney noted that she is on the Selectboard but speaking for herself. She spoke in support of allowing drive through windows for pharmacies.

Graham Mink inquired about the legality of the proposed ADU occupancy requirements and felt the Commission could not retroactively apply new requirements to previously permitted projects. K.Belliveau responded that state statute contains allowances to amortize nonconforming uses and noted an example from Williston. Graham Mink added that the Commission should consider ways to encourage housing development and not punish those who develop housing. He suggested for the Commission to consider raising the AMI for rentals.

Jed Lipsky shared comments from the last Selectboard meeting. He was concerned that short-term rentals are the scapegoat for the larger housing issues. He noted many folks depend on them.

Barbara Baraw inquired about guarantees that housing would remain affordable. M.Lonetto responded that deed restrictions are a mechanism to ensure they remain affordable in perpetuity.

Graham Mink noted that there is a housing supply problem, and the development of any new housing will help alleviate the supply problem. He asked the Commission to incentivize housing development in certain areas.

Billy Adams asked the Commission to consider modifications to the ADU language and justify the owner occupancy and amortization requirements.

With no further comments, M.Lonetto closed the public hearing at 7:28 pm.

### **Updates/Correspondence/Other Business**

S.McShane noted that she will prepare a list of public comments received for the Commission to review and discuss during the next meeting. She will also prepare additional information regarding 'areas served by municipal water and sewer infrastructure' and will have comments from the Town Attorney.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director