

Planning Commission Minutes - **unapproved**

Monday, December 13, 2021

**Present:** Rick Swanson, Jennifer Hammond, Peter Ludlow, Doug Day (Chair), Don Simonini, Carol Chamberlin (via Zoom), Hanna Neill (ZA).

The meeting was called to Order at 5:33pm.

The minutes of November 8, 2021 were approved.

**Liaison Reports:**

Don gave us an update on the Housing Coalition and the Planning Districts involvement. They have created a subcommittee to put together a thesis to present at the next Planning Commission meeting in January about what their goal is. They are trying to determine the best way to raise money. Carol suggested creating an LOT solely on short term rentals. Don plans to share this idea with the Housing Coalition as it has not been suggested before. He also said that they have been discussing the possibility of a 1% tax on meals/lodging/liquor. Carol thought that since the housing tax was met with such opposition previously that a tax such as that would be met with similar resistance. Don stated that there are multiple sides to this issue and that all three towns need to do research to find out who and where the STRs are, get them on a registry and set a fair yearly fee. That sum would then go directly to the Housing Coalition. The Planning District will run the Housing Coalition STR fee/LOT tax.

**Review of Housing Coalition and Housing Fund presentation from last meeting:**

The consensus was that this topic keeps being discussed and no action has been taken. The PC is becoming concerned that people will become less interested the longer this goes on. Pete stated that there is a grand plan but it needs to be boiled down to a place to start. Don stated that they have invited 10 people (a subcommittee) to the next meeting mid-January to help find solutions to fund the Housing Coalition. Some issues are that builders are too busy and the cost of material is greater than the grant amount. The Housing Coalition realizes that they need someone that understands grants to write and make phone calls to get all the money that is out there. Right now it is being run by volunteers and they are exploring using left over Planning Commission money to hire an employee (with grant experience) to help.

**Review information provided last meeting regarding allowing specialty schools within the Resort District or other Districts. Hanna to provide a draft definition and suggested district that the “Specialty Schools” may or may not be suitable in:**

Specialty school is defined as an educational business for profit. Any examples that were thought of can fit under other conditional uses. State certification constitutes a “school” and not a specialty school.

The PC has decided that there is no reason to add specialty schools to the LURs at this time.

**Continue discussion on Rte. 17 overlay and allowed uses:**

Carol provided a draft of the overlay district Table and a map. She noted that a conditional use to add would be: Office Space. Discussion ensued on current buildings in this district that are/were non-conforming uses. These uses run with the land and can be reinstated within a 12 month period of inactivity. Unless conditional use approval is gained, this approval is only good for two years unless decision lasts longer, permits run with the property. The PC decided to look at the current commercial buildings footprints to help determine max footprint/scale of potential future uses. The scale in the narrow corridor is important to consider. Rural Residential allows neighborhood stores, what size/space would be appropriate? Rural Residential is what is already permitted and the overlay is just what would be added. For now the Flood Hazard overlay must be worked around also.

This Route 17 overlay would stretch from the Fayston Town Line to Harris Hill Road. Proposed overlay is over more residential areas (and geographical limitations) so that having restrictions on the restaurants would respect that area better with hourly limitations.

Suggested hours of operation are good: 7am-9pm. Once refined and parameters are set legal advice should be gained in order to make sure that everything is correct.

Hanna will present data next meeting for current commercial footprints, minimum size of dollar general/convenience store.

**Other Business:**

Don checked in with Hanna about FEMA, all data has been collected and we are awaiting a response.

**January Meeting:**

January meeting continue route 17 overlay district. It was determined there is not a need for two meetings in Jan. Target objective for LUR review should be May/June 2022.

Meeting adjourned 6:55 pm.