

TOWN OF SUTTON
Planning Board
Pillsbury Memorial Hall
Meeting Minutes
December 22, 2015

Present: Planning Board Members: Carrie Thomas, Chairperson; Peter Blakeman, Roger Wells and Carole O'Connell, Members; Jim Lowe, Alternate; (Bob DeFelice, Member; Dan Sundquist, Ex-Officio; and Lisa Hogarty, Alternate; were absent); and Laurie Hayward, Land Use Coordinator (LUC).

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM, by Carrie Thomas, Chairperson.

Administrative:

Minutes of previous meetings: Minutes of the Meeting December 8, 2015, a work session, were tabled.

Correspondence: The Chair asked if there was any correspondence. The LUC told members that Brad Osgood called. He had received a letter regarding a trailer on his property on North Road. He says it is not really occupied, no one lives there-they just visit. The letter gives 14 days to remove the trailer; but, it is muddy now and winter is coming soon. Osgood would like to just keep the trailer where it is until spring. The LUC read the relevant language from the Zoning Ordinance and suggested that Osgood write a letter to the Select Board and suggest that he would like to discuss this with them. The LUC stated further that it is her understanding that, after the conversation, Osgood wrote to the Select Board as discussed and Town Administrator has sent a response. He will likely meet with the Select Board to request additional time.

Old Business: O'Connell asked about the status of the Feins mylar. The LUC told members that the language was approved by town counsel and the mylar has been recorded.

Reports:

Select Board. There was no report.

Open conditions. LUC requests that a discussion about the Open Conditions Report be tabled until the Public Hearings on the Ordinances are completed. Members agreed.

Work session:

The LUC addressed members regarding the response from the ZBA at their last meeting, especially on three areas of concern to ZBA members.

- **Manufactured Houses, Manufactured homes parks and Manufactured homes subdivisions.** The ZBA is strongly in favor of Manufactured homes parks and Manufactured homes subdivisions and against the Planning Board approved language allowing Manufactured homes on single conforming lots. There was a brief discussion about Manufactured homes and whether the intent was that they be approved for all districts (the LUC pointed out that they couldn't be limited to the Residential District, because the Residential District does not encompass a large enough percent of town land). The LUC pointed out that the draft she used says "in the Rural-agricultural District",

not “all districts” – so that would have to be amended. The LUC also explained that, within the recommendations is language for Manufactured homes parks and Manufactured homes subdivisions in the Article, Definitions, which will only remain in the Ordinances if the Planning Board version is not approved at town vote.

- Driveways, including what level of steepness (% grade) will require Planning Board approval. There was discussion about the intent of the proposed language, including whether it is intended to be used only in context of Subdivisions or to apply to any and all driveway permits. Wells said it is to apply to anyone in the Steep Slope Overlay District. There were also brief discussions about the driveway permit process and three types of permits: Access Permit (curb-cut permit), Driveway Permit, and Conditional Use Permit.
- The Steep Slope Ordinance. Wells pointed out that it should be kept in mind that the Steep Slope Overlay District is defined as anywhere that there is a 20% grade over 20 feet or more, pointing out that it is a 20% or more grade, not the “average slope” that was used in earlier versions and as appeared in the Notice for the Public Hearing on January 5th.

Various members expressed that the point is not to deny driveways or structures on property with slopes; but, to seek the best way possible, where appropriate, to design driveway access. The concern is not just for getting safety equipment up, for example, a steep driveway. It is also for the safety of vehicles descending a steep slope and vehicles on a cross road where icy slopes could result in accidents where a town road is at the intersection with a very steep driveway.

- Minimum Lot area, clarify that it is for subdivisions not “families” and how to calculate it. There was a discussion about whether the Notice for the January 5, 2016 correctly identified the language as belonging to Articles IV and V, Sections on Minimum Lot Area and not as part of the Article on the Steep Slopes Overlay District as it was at one point in the revision process. Wells asked about the “calculation part” and offered new language to replace *“Any portion of a lot that is in the Steep Slope Overlay District shall not include more than 80% of that area within the minimum lot area requirement”* with *“Upon subdivision, any portion of a lot that is in the Steep Slope Overlay District, no more than 33 1/3% of any buildable 2 acre lot shall be in the combined wetlands and steep slope overlay districts. Lots larger than 2 acres shall have at least 60,000 square feet of buildable land. This buildable land shall not include any areas within the wetland and steep slope overlay districts.”* Wells explained that he had asked Blakeman for some information on septic system requirements and done some research and feels this is a simplified method for determining minimum lot requirements where there are steep slopes and/or wetlands. Blakeman pointed out that current zoning excludes all wetlands. The LUC asked if this language doesn’t make the Ordinance inconsistent internally. Members discussed this new language. Blakeman expressed some concern about the newly proposed language and whether the calculation makes sense. Blakeman and Wells did not agree whether this was more restrictive or, as Wells stated, less restrictive. Blakeman also suggested to Wells that he look at the New London Ordinance for tables that better express minimum lot area.

There was a brief discussion about whether the language could be changed now that notices for January 5th were out. The LUC stated that it could not be changed for a January 5, 2016 Public Hearing; although it could be offered in context of the hearing as an alternative. It was agreed that they could just keep the language as it is and not use the newly suggested calculation.

The Chair asked members whether they had reviewed the information that the LUC had sent to them on the step-by-step process for the Public Hearing. The Chair gave a brief run-down on the steps suggested,

the order of the amendments, and who should present what amendments. Members discussed all of the detail on how the Public Hearing should be conducted. Wells asked if there would be a second hearing if amendments are made. The LUC stated that any changes to the language that are contemplated at the end of the Public Hearing would require a second public hearing just on those changes and that could be held on January 26th.

Next meeting is scheduled to be held on January 5, 2015 at 7:00 PM and will include Public Hearings on the Eversource request for tree trimming and the Public Hearing regarding the Zoning Ordinance changes.

There being no further business, Wells moved, it was seconded and unanimously voted that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Hayward
Land Use Coordinator

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