

Dummerston Planning Commission
Dummerston Town Offices
JAN 5th, 2010 Convened 5:00pm

Present: Commission members Steve Mindel, Elizabeth Catlin, Reg Rockefeller, Corin Nelsen, Bob Wainright, Cindy Wilcox, and David Ryan. In absentia: None.

Guests: Charlotte Annis ZA, Andrew MacFarland, Tom Bodett and Zeke Goodband, Selectboard, Lew Sorenson DRB, Matthew Hoffman, Conservation Commission, and Steve Meggiolaro.

****NOTE:** It was agreed upon by the Commission that the revised draft of the Town Plan will NOT contain ANY parcel size limitations (ie the controversial 27 acre minimum) for the Land Use Districts.

-Review of minutes of November- approved as submitted.

-Zoning Subcommittee- met on the 22nd

Setbacks were discussed in the first 2 meetings and HomeBusiness / occupation were discussed. There is a long way to go on these issues before a solid presentation will be made to the Commission for more formal discussion, as well as public input. The Subcommittee will meet on 1/12.

-Vacancies on the Planning Commission- Tom and Zeke from the SB would interview candidates (currently Matthew and Deb Forrett). There are 9 members of the commission allowed by state law, (Thank you Lew!) There are currently 7 members. Steve and David were approved by the Commission to make the decision with Tom and Zeke after interviewing candidates on the 13th at 6:45 before the Selectboard meeting.

On the issue of whether there is a formal "Liaison" from the Conservation Commission to the PC: It was decided that the term Liaison should be used for someone who is only on one board, and who represents the interests of that board to the PC. We will not have a Liaison at this time..

-Town Plan:

This meeting is about HOW the PC will address issues and will go through and create a rough draft of the Land Use Section so that there can be public feedback before submitting it back to the Selectboard....

On page one, line one checking the exact number of acres in town- Reg will check with the listers on the total acreage..

On the 3rd page (Future Land Use) under a) Conservation: would want to insert "large tracts of " in the last sentence (getting rid of Parcels is good, so it will read "...maintain large tracts of undeveloped land as well as...)

On the 3rd page (Future Land Use) under c) Rural: The issue of whether to modify the Future Land Use Map to shift the areas off Miller Rd and Bunker Rd to be Resource instead of Rural.. we are going to wait and see what changes occur to the two proposed zones before deciding on this.

On the 4th page (Future Land Use) e) Mixed Density. Cindy felt that the whole section might want to be eliminated... or get rid of the term Mixed Density- The term was originally arrived at by trying to get away from the village/hamlet areas and move towards a broader area and (hopefully)easier zoning. But what we have created is not working for everyone and the townspeople like the terms Village and Hamlet.... What about creating 3 historic settlement areas (the 3 Hamlets in town)? Then treat the other areas in Mixed Density with a better name. After much discussion it was decided to CHANGE THE Mixed Density district to “Residential” district and to describe it as:

“Residential areas are areas with existing development. The goal is to encourage more intensive use of land with a wide variety of housing types. Future development is meant to be compatible with the existing character of each residential area. More intense use of land within these areas may require shared water supply sewage disposal and driveway access solutions.”

It was discussed that Overlays be avoided if possible to avoid confusion...but

On the 4th page (future Land Use) f) Critical Conservation Corridor overlay District- it was noted that these areas were not randomly assigned. BUT the word “District” was inadvertently added...creating confusion. What sort of zoning limitations will be applied in this area? It is mostly about trying to really inform people about “making an effort to preserve the value of the corridor” and to site their homes with minimal impact on the corridors... The only regulatory item noted for these corridors was that any development should trigger some sort of site-specific review...

CHANGE TO “Connecting Habitats Overlay” was suggested as replacement title. The Ecological Landscapes Map (on page 38 of the draft) should be referenced- the arrows are great at explaining why those corridors are important... The language can be fleshed out using Page 38 as well...

On the 4th page (future Land Use) g) Dummerston Center Historic Overlay District... LIKELY this overlay will be eliminated entirely in favor of designated Hamlet/Village areas...and this paragraph could define these areas instead (Slab Hollow, Center and West Dummerston).... Or we could start with the Selectboards proposed additions of Village and Hamlet designations...?

There will now only be 2 overlays on the map... Connecting Habitats and Commercial/ Light Industrial. Overlays are useful because they give the town more flexibility to shift them if underlying conditions, such as wildlife patterns, change.

-Due to the time, it was decided that the Commission needed one more working meeting to continue the proposed re-write of the Land Use Section- We will create a new draft with our current changes tracked on it (from the Selectboard’s Proposed Changes). Once complete, THEN we request the public feedback... so likely that Feb 2 will be the Public feedback time for that.

- The 19th will be a continuation of tonight’s meeting...

- Feb 2 in the Church basement at 6pm will be the Next meeting.

Meeting adjourned shortly before 8pm.
Respectfully submitted,
Corin Nelsen