

Planning Board Minutes  
January 14, 2019, Ramsdell Room 7:00 PM

Members Present: Jenks, Wilson, Laurie, Dewey (recording)

Others Present: Michael Hussein, Cyd Reiman, John Hondrogen, Annemarie Foley, John Reiff, Kristin DeBoer, Francine Ozereko

Minutes of 1/7/19 were approved unanimously.

Planning Board members discussion included:

- Whether or not we should amend the boundaries of the 3 zones in West Pelham Village Center and/or the zoning districts (Village Center Mixed Use, Village Center Neighborhood and Village Center Rural Edge). Planning Board members are in favor of leaving this as is.
- The need for more detailed and descriptive language and examples for Retail/Office/Professional and Restaurant/Bar/Entertainment.
- Wilson-we don't want to dictate completely what can be done. Possible options for consideration: food (lunch/dinner), local entertainment. Traffic issues on Amherst Rd. are a concern and not changing anytime soon. A traffic study/presentation in December showed various options to consider, in particular, how to slow down the traffic and make it safe to cross Amherst Road.
- Jenks- this is the neighborhood district so we need to consider that when coming up with examples of potential development. How do we change the language to better describe appropriate uses? Dillon can help with the specific language. We're looking into the future with much of our language because we don't have any projects yet, other than a possible affordable housing unit at 22 Amherst Rd. In addition, there are parking limitations and financial feasibility issues for new businesses. There may be other possibilities for development near the Community Building, such as an addition to the library as a cafe. Or use the town owned property by the school and Community Center. It was noted that there is not an ideal site at this point. A pavilion is currently being discussed/in the works for the town owned land by the Community Center.
- Laurie-possibly time-limited entertainment like the Black Sheep. Cushman is another example of a café/restaurant that closes at 6:00 PM. Wild Roots in Sunderland serves food and is also not open at night.
- Members noted the challenges of the boundary with Amherst and/or moving up the hill.
- It was decided to strike the language as currently stated-"Restaurant/Bar/Entertainment and work with Dillon to redefine the language to more accurately describe appropriate uses for VC Mixed Use and VC Neighborhood.
- Jenks-John Trickey mentioned the need to kick-start business development in town. He suggested getting an economic development consultant to help. This will be discussed at Town Meeting. Example-Colrain Art Walk
- Wilson-update on Cory Shumway's property. Let's not tie our hands by removing "Retail".

- Jenks-more virtual/online presence concerning retail now. Discussion of different business models: pop-up stores & food. We decided to add language for things we know we don't want like strip clubs, chain stores etc. Drive-through businesses are already not allowed in town. Amherst, at this point, is where people go to for shopping, eating and drinking.
- Laurie-Sees cannabis as a helpful industry. Not viable for Pelham at this point.
- Wilson-Suggested more detail regarding special permits which make clear our requirements in each zoning area. A manual would be helpful as a guide for prospective development, to make it more public and understandable.
- Jenks-We should have a pre-meeting before any development happens so the process/intent is clear and acceptable before anything moves forward. Jenks read the definition of institutional uses which is wide-ranging and potentially useful. What don't we like in that definition? If we remove commercial and institutional, what options do we knock out? We have the tools to guide these types of options. All members agreed to keep it in.
- Home occupation discussion-how many are in Pelham?
- The new state policy re:AirBNB was mentioned. We discussed if it is the jurisdiction of Select Board or another board? A possible future discussion.

Next steps-Jenks will talk with Dillon regarding new language for Restaurant/Bar/Entertainment and retail development.

### **Meeting opened up to public**

- DeBoer-not really addressing the concerns of the neighborhood. Please focus on the Mixed Use area for Restaurant/Bar/Entertainment and Retail in the Village Center Neighborhood. Keep development tight in the center. She advocates for no retail in Village Neighborhood or Rural Edge. Remove commercial and institutional uses and only use professional offices.
- Foley-She likes the neighborhood the way it is.
- Reiman-She looks forward to a place to gather with music available. (like the Wendell coffee house) Possibly a holiday opportunity option. Expressed concern that if it's too limiting, no one will be interested. Concerned about the financial longevity of the town.
- Reiffe-He experiences his area as residential (Village Center Neighborhood). Would like to remove Restaurant/Bar/Entertainment from his zone.
- Hondrogen-He appreciates the Planning Board's future vision. Leave the zoning as is and tweak the details.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM

