

Pelham Planning Board
October 22, 2018
6:30 pm, Library History Room
Minutes

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

Others present: Becky Basch and Corrin Meise-Munns, PVPC; Linda Hanscom, Kristin DeBoer

Minutes: approval of October 1st minutes delayed until next meeting.

Consultation: Becky Basch and Corrin Meise-Munns of PVPC were present to discuss the local technical assistance project for a conceptual plan for walkways, bikeways and sidewalk plan for the Village Center. Topics covered included using road shoulders or bike lanes on existing roads; bike share program; traffic lights, traffic calming measures, timelines, funding and feasibility. Basch noted that any road with cars traveling above 35 mph is high stress for a bike rider; bike lanes might be tough to get installed given traffic patterns and road configuration. The Board decided to hold a public meeting on November 28 at 7 pm to seek comments on Town Center Traffic, Bike and Walkways plans.

Other Business: The agenda was re-ordered to give Kristin DeBoer an opportunity to explain her intention, if the Planning Board will not do so, to seek a special town meeting through a petition to the Select Board. Her aim is to force a change in the new zoning bylaw to eliminate a use, i.e., restaurant/bar/entertainment under 2500 square feet in the Village Center Neighborhood (VCN) District. She believes these activities are inappropriate for her neighborhood.

Board members explained that the calling of the question at spring Town Meeting did not give an opportunity for discussion of this item before the vote to approve the zoning. Also, while there had been earlier discussion of her concern, the timing of the Attorney General's approval of the new zoning along with confusion and miscommunication between Eiseman and DeBoer resulted in this proposed change not being brought to the Board in the way she had hoped. The Board had decided at the time that warrant articles were due for fall town meeting that only the small corrections that had been prevented by the early vote at town meeting would be addressed. DeBoer and her husband brought an amendment to make said changes to fall town meeting which was ruled by the moderator to be out of order.

Board members indicated that at this point we are reluctant to make this change for a variety of reasons and Jenks encouraged her to trust the special permit/site plan approval process to ensure an appropriate use of the area. Eiseman noted that the seemingly "simple solution" of eliminating these uses actually dismantles what we are trying to achieve over the long term in the Village Center. She emphasized that each project that is brought before the Board will be carefully evaluated, neighbors' concerns and opinions heard, and a decision made on the merits with respect to traffic, safety, noise,

and other criteria including whether the specific permit request is detrimental to or incompatible with the surrounding uses, etc.

The Board acknowledges that professional uses may be better suited to some portions of the VCN district, but that circumstances could arise making restaurant/bar/entertainment under 2500 sq. feet viable and neighborhood-enhancing, particularly in the VCN area just south of or adjacent to the main Village Center. The Board shares the view that simply eliminating the use altogether doesn't get at the complexity involved in making changes to the new bylaw and that a more nuanced approach is needed to retain the potential for a lively and workable Village Center. The Board agreed that other options could be explored, but that with careful attention to and implementation of the special permit and site plan review standards, and with conditions tailored to the specific project along with the potential for denial available, DeBoer's concerns may be overblown.

Further discussion was put off until December 10 when DeBoer and her husband, Tom Hartman, were invited by Jenks to attend to express their concern and discuss the details of their request.

Stormwater Management Bylaw (non-zoning): Although the discussion on developing a process for using the proposed bylaw was to be the main focus of the meeting, given the late hour it was determined that the Board's general concerns with the length and complicated nature of the bylaw would be communicated to our consultant (Patty Gambarini) by the Chair (Jenks) and we would await the next draft before resuming the discussion. Jenks will also ask if Gambarini will incorporate a document sent to her by the Chair, as a template for the process of implementing a storm water management plan.

Next meetings and agenda topics were scheduled as follows:

November 5: Patty Gambarini from PVPC will attend to discuss the next version of the storm water bylaw

November 15 (Thursday): Board will meet to discuss maps and materials provided by Corrin by the 14th. We are to provide feedback on them asap in preparation for a public meeting after Thanksgiving.

November 28 (Thursday): Public Conversation with special invitation to townspeople and other boards to discuss issues related to Town Center Traffic, bike and walkways

December 10: Regular Planning Board meeting. Tom Hartman and Kristin DeBoer are invited by Jenks to discuss their concern about concerns they have about some uses permitted by special permit and Site Plan Approval in the Village Center Neighborhood.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm