

**WOODSTOCK PLANNING COMMISSION  
WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL  
31 THE GREEN  
June 22, 2020**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Sally Miller, Sam Segal, Ben Jervey, Susan Boston, Eric Goldberg, Sara Stadler

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** One Vacancy

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bill Kerbin, Susan Silberberger, Neal Leitner, Jill Davies, Mary Riley

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of May 6, 2020 were approved as submitted.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. To Amend Town/Village Plan – To Include Rewritten Education Chapter**

Chair Miller introduced the item. She pointed out that between the last Planning Commission meeting and this meeting, U.S. News Report produced 2020 rankings, which ranked Woodstock Unified significantly higher than it was ranked in 2019. She suggested that they could choose not to turn this Education Chapter over to the Select Board and the Trustees for their approval if they would like to make changes to the chapter to reflect some of the new statistics from the U.S. News Report. She opened the discussion up. Susan Boston discussed the rankings and how Woodstock rose from 17<sup>th</sup> in the state to 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2020. Eric Goldberg mention that he's not sure if the Commission can come up with something at this meeting to address the new statistics. Sara Stadler thought the data should be mentioned, perhaps in a footnote. Ben Jervey also thought the data should be referenced in some way. Sally Miller mentioned to the Commission that they could just call out the 2019 data versus the 2020 data. Eric Goldberg responded that then the school district could cite the data as proof that they corrected any academic problems they had. They discussed Hanover rankings versus Woodstock rankings, and noted that Hanover math and science rankings remained the same at 238. Susan mentioned that one reason Woodstock's rankings could change is due to their small numbers, a slight change can move a statistic substantially. Chair Miller asked the Commission if they would like to

move the Education chapter onto the Select Board and the Trustees, or if they would like to formulate new wording for the academic section. A discussion led to asking the school about their data. Timing was considered, and some mentioned that waiting for accurate data could be worth waiting until the August meeting to reword the section. Sam Segal brought up school data that is publicly available could be used, rather than U.S. News scores. Susan Boston mentioned that they could compare the state test scores and Hanover scores with Woodstock's scores. She reviewed the data on the Woodstock High School website. Sally thought they should wait on voting until they gather and review more data about Woodstock and Hanover, since they are the major competition. Sally asked the town planner to send the proposed Education chapter as-is for their comment. Sam Segal thought that it should be sent out to them while mentioning the 2020 data and ask for their opinion on the discrepancies. Sally asked the Commission to investigate the topic further with a goal of adopting the chapter at the August Planning Commission meeting.

**B. To Amend Town Zoning Regulations – To Amend §110 Definitions; §301 Forest Reserve; §302 Residential 5-Acre; and Add §535 Rural Retreat.**

Chair Miller opened the item to discussion and summarized the proposed amendment for adoption. She asked for comments from the Commissioners. No comments were received. She asked the public for comments on the item. No comments were received. She asked for a motion to pass the amendment on to the Select Board for their approval. Sam Segal motioned to approve the amendment as written. Susan Boston seconded the motion. Sally then asked for a vote for all in favor. All in favor, no opposed. Therefore, no roll call needed.

**Motion passed 6-0.**

**C. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Zoning Regulations During State of Emergency**

Chair Miller opened the item to discussion regarding sign regulations in the zoning bylaws during the current state of emergency. She expressed her understanding that Covid-19 related signage is needed at this time, but also thought it might be good to find some way to recognize this. The Commission discussed ideas about ways to allow for the signage, informally or formally. Chair Miller asked the two Select Board members for their opinions on the legality of looking the other way for the time being. Select Board member Jill Davies said it would be nice to have something in writing, or at least some formal way of informing business that the current signage regulations will not be enforced. Jill Davies would definitely like something in writing. Select Board Chair Mary Riley discussed state of emergency deadlines, and their fluidity. She advised the Commission to set a date for a deadline with the

ability to extend the period depending on what the situation becomes as time goes on, which would allow the Commission to assess the situation at a later time. Chair Miller asked if it should be completely open, or should they apply for a permit. Isabelle Chicoine from the Chamber of Commerce informed the Commission that the Village Trustees have met and come to an agreement for signage, and specifically sandwich board signs on the sidewalks. The trustees had come up with general guidelines and allowed them until October 15<sup>th</sup>, the end of foliage season. Chair Miller discussed window signage. She asked the town planner to look further into precedence set by other towns and to check with the VLCT regarding the legality of temporarily ignoring sign codes. A discussion ensued about the topic among participants in the meeting. After the discussion Chair Miller mentioned that she would be interested in getting feedback from VLCT, and having the Commission look through the sign regulations. The item was continued to the July 1, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

#### **D. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, with a date to be determined according to public hearing notification requirements to properly notice the two agenda items to be voted on at the June meeting.

#### **E. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Neal Leitner  
Town Planner*