

**Town of Woodstock
Select Board Special Meeting
April 22, 2022
9:30 am
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Joe Swanson, Ray Bourgeois, Mary Riley, Keri Cole, Susan Ford, Fire Chief David Green, Nikki Nourse, Todd Ulman, Steven Bauer, Tom Ayres, Kathy Avellino, Annie Abbott, Mark McElroy, Angela Ulman, Ethan Weinstein, Erica Ennis, Bill Corson, Sally Miller, Howard Krum, Mary Margaret Sloan, Todd Heyman, Holly Gaspar, Zoie Parent, Jenna Barker, PJ Eames, Sam DiNatale, Chuck Searle, Jeremy Freyer, Tom Meyerhoff, Tim McCarthy, Charlie Degener, Beth Finlayson, Donna Lombard

A. Call to order

1. Char Swanson called the Select Board Special Meeting of April 22, 2022, to order at 9:30 am.

B. Continuation of Public Hearing for On Farm Restaurant Amendment

1. Mr. Bauer stated that agricultural products mean any raw agricultural commodity, as defined in 6 VSA section 21(6), that is principally produced on the farm and includes products prepared from the raw agricultural commodities principally produced on the farm. Accessory on farm businesses include the storage, preparation, and sale of qualifying products, provided that more than half of the sales are from qualifying agricultural products principally produced on the farm.
2. Ms. Ford stated that the fear in the community is that the R5 district is one of Woodstock's biggest districts. Maybe they should increase the number of acres an on farm restaurant must have.
3. Chair Swanson stated that if someone is going to be able to produce enough of their own supply on their farm, they are probably going to need more than five acres to do it. It might be self-regulating.
4. Ms. Sloan stated that the Planning Commission had two hearings. This is a significant change. They need to take the time to do it right. This is not about one farm. This is about changing their zoning regulations for any farm. They do not want to drag it out, but it needs to be done right.
5. Ms. Miller stated that if anybody has a small farm and wants to put up a farm stand to sell their produce, they can do that. This is under the AOFB. She did some research and talked to Cloudland Farm, and they do meet the requirements of AOFB by producing what they serve on their farm. They have to produce a certain amount to be able to serve a certain number of times a week. Therefore, it is possible to have a restaurant currently on a farm without this amendment.

6. Ms. Ford stated that the Select Board is not as well equipped as the Planning Commission to be going through this. She understands people's frustration that the Planning Commission seems to take a really long time. It is hard work.
7. Ms. Miller stated that they could get something back to the Select Board in 90 days.
8. Ms. Lombard stated that the Planning Commission is all volunteers. Anybody can be on it. It feels like they are biased.
9. Mr. Bauer stated that when opening a restaurant, you have to get permits from the Vermont Department of Health as well.
10. Mr. Heyman stated that 5% of Woodstock voters signed this petition. The Select Board can vote it down. Nothing is stopping the Planning Commission from drafting their own version of it. The Planning Commission was provided detailed information with how it was supported by the Town Plan, specifically goals three and four.
11. Ms. Barker stated that she grew up in Woodstock and has a long history here. She is concerned with the idea of sending this back to the Planning Commission. She was present for the meeting on January 11th. The meeting was run in a biased fashion. People were allowed to speak in opposition with incorrect facts. Anyone who spoke up to support it was immediately shut down.
12. Mr. Alessi stated that he thinks they should take the time and not rush it.
13. Mr. Bauer stated that he could discuss his contract with the Town in order to work on this amendment.
14. Ms. Riley stated that she does not feel comfortable passing the amendment as is.
15. Chair Swanson stated that he does not feel comfortable sending it back to the Planning Commission.
16. Ms. Lombard stated that this petition is written very well. If the Select Board passes this petition restaurants are not going to pop up everywhere in R5 areas. There is a process to open a restaurant. There are permits through the State and Town and it is very expensive. It is a great opportunity for farmers.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to reject the wording in the petition and to ask Mr. Bauer to assist in redrafting an on farm restaurant amendment consistent with the hearing discussion had today.

Seconded: by Mr. Bourgeois.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

C. Other business – none.

~~D. Executive session – deleted~~

E. Adjournment

Motion: by Mr. Bourgeois to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 am.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse*