

MEETING MINUTES
MUNICIPALITY OF WOODSTOCK, VERMONT
WOODSTOCK PLANNING COMMISSION
31 The Green
Woodstock, VT 05091

The Woodstock Planning Commission held a public meeting on Wednesday August 7th, 2024,
to discuss the following:

Members present: Mary Margaret Sloan, Ben Pauly, Brad Lawrence, Alex Mulley
Ex-Officio Members present: Laura Powell
Public present: Chris Boyle, Al Alessi
Staff present: Stephanie Appelfeller

Administrative Tasks

1. Call to Order – Ben Pauly called the meeting to order at 7:13pm
2. Adjustments to Agenda
3. Approve Minutes
 - (a) 7/29/24 – Ben Pauly motioned to approve as printed.
Brad Lawrence seconded.
Vote. 4-0. Approved.

Public Hearing On-Farm Restaurants Amendments– TZR §536(B)

The Planning Commission meeting focused on amendments to on-farm restaurant regulations. The board discussed removing the 2800 square foot size limit from 530.6b, emphasizing that conditional use approval should consider size and scale. They reviewed existing farm structures, noting that many exceed 2800 square feet. Concerns were raised about potential commercial expansion if the size limit is removed. The board agreed to consult with the Town Development Review Board and consider explicit language on size in conditional use approval. They also discussed the need for a future planner to focus on housing, conservation, and sustainability, aligning with the town's goals.

Discussion on On-Farm Restaurant Amendments

- Ben Pauly recapped the Select Board's request to review on-farm restaurant regulations.
- The goal is to finalize language and ensure compliance with formalities.
- Stephanie sent out a packet with new information, and the link has been updated.
- Ben Pauly reviewed the two steps required for an on-farm restaurant application: conditional use approval and site plan approval.

Conditional Use Approval and Site Plan Approval Requirements

- Ben Pauly read through the specific requirements for conditional use approval, including safety, landscaping, and municipal services.
- The Town Development Review Board must conform to Section 416 and impose appropriate conditions and safeguards.
- Conditional use approval requires the proposed use or structure to conform to general standards and not cause an undue adverse effect.
- Site plan approval includes specific standards for minimum lot size, distance from adjacent uses, and off-street parking.

Farm Structures in Woodstock

- Ben Pauly presented a study of existing farm structures in Woodstock, measuring their sizes on Google Maps and in person.
- The study aimed to show that farm structures can be appropriately scaled for their use and location.
- Ben Pauley argued that a size limitation on buildings does not serve the conditional use approval process well.

Public Comment and Further Discussion on Size Limitations

- Al Alessi raised concerns about the appropriateness of comparing new structures to historical agricultural buildings.
- Laura Powell clarified the Select Board's intent.
- Chris Boyle suggests that removing the 2800 square foot limitation could lead to unintended consequences.
- Brad Lawrence and Chris Boyle discussed the importance of size in the context of conditional use approval and the need for explicit language.

Next Steps

- Ben Pauly proposed striking the size requirement from 530 6b and changing letter C to letter B.
- The Commission agreed to consider the size of structures in the conditional use approval process.
- Ben Pauly suggested reaching out to the Town Development Review Board for their input on the changes.

- The Commission decided to take more time to consider the implications of the changes and gather public input.

Planning and Zoning Office Restructuring

- Ben Pauly discussed the restructuring of the Planning and Zoning office and the need for a planner focused on planning.
- The Planning Commission emphasized the importance of housing, conservation, and sustainability in the town's future.
- Ben Pauley suggests aligning the goals with the Select Board's goals.
- The board agrees to continue the discussion in the next meeting and gather more input from the community.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm

DRAFT