

Zoning By-Law Review Committee
Minutes
July 16, 2014

Present: Patrick Doherty, Ted King, Shirley Smith

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. Patrick made a motion to accept the minutes from May 14, 2014. Shirley stepped down and seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. Ted made a motion to accept the minutes from June 4, 2014. Shirley stepped down and seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Village Center Overlay District

The By-Law had been revised once again to reflect the comments made at the June 23rd Planning Board meeting.

1. The first change was designating the overlay district as a district. Shirley explained that the Smart Growth literature had said that overlay districts were less threatening to voters and are politically more acceptable. However, the Planning Board and Patrick disagreed with that assessment so the change was made.
2. The committee reviewed an addition to Design Standards and it was decided that it was not necessary to add it to our list.
3. All references to Nitrogen Credit Land had been removed from the By-Law and it was decided that any additional references to sections of 310 CMR 15:00 were superfluous. Should the question of allowing more compact development without public water arise on Town Meeting floor, Patrick could explain how Title 5 allows for this. The change resulted in a less complicated By-Law.
4. As for open space, since each situation would be different, it was agreed that more flexibility would be allowed by leaving it at a 30% requirement for developments. Shirley pointed out that some developers would not want to pay taxes on land they did not intend to use and would volunteer to turn such open space over to the Conservation Commission or a land trust.
5. It was agreed to add a clause that would exempt commercial or industrial structures and uses allowed under Section 3.01 from this By-Law as long as they were not visible from a public way.
6. It was agreed to set a time limit of 18 months for special permits.
7. The Planning Board had been somewhat hesitant about allowing apartments. Shirley presented an argument that many of these already existed in grandfathered situations. The rents were within the DHCD guidelines for affordable units. An important factor was that if 25% of units in a building were affordable, all could be counted toward our state mandated Subsidized Housing Inventory. At the June 25th Town Meeting, voters have already approved affordable apartments for the 70 acre Paddock property.

Patrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ted seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Smith