

Town of Winchester
Planning Board
Minutes
11-15-21

Meeting opened: 7:00pm.

Members present: Rich Pratt, Gus Ruth, Jenny Rhodes, Dean Beaman (Chair), Christy Davis, Jordan Sharra and Lindseigh Picard (SR). Margaret Sharra is the Land Use Administrator.

Public: Bill Hutwelker

First order of business: The board reviews the minutes of 11/1/21 for approval. **G. Ruth moves to approve, J. Sharra seconds. The vote is 6 yes and 1 abstain (LP).**

Second order of business: The board is discussing possible zoning amendments. R. Pratt why the person with the storage pods on Rt.10 is not here tonight? He says the LUA said that application would be tonight. The LUA does not have an application yet from her so she did not say there would be a hearing tonight. He wants to know why then this is being discussed when there is a problem with the pods on Rt. 10. The LUA says there appears to be some confusion. The definition and regulation have to do with private use of storage containers not a commercial venture as in Rt. 10.

The Chairman has asked the LUA to see if she could find a developer or realtor to come and speak with the board on multifamily housing. Bill Hutwelker is here to speak with the board.

He introduces himself and gives a short bio on his experience which includes real estate, working for developers and being a Swanze Selectman and ZBA member. He has read the PRD. He suggests the board discuss height restrictions. He could not find heights discussed in the zoning ordinance. He tells the board of a project in Chesterfield in 2016 where 26 units of 13 duplexes were created on 75 acres. This was a cluster development. Once the steep slopes and wetlands were eliminated the homes were clustered on a small part of the parcel. This project only brought in two children, both teenagers. They developed 19 acres and preserved the balance. A higher density of housing leaves open space. He also shares information on a development in Walpole and two new ones in Swanze, in which one is under appeal.

There are three levels of housing: low income, workforce and market rate. Workforce is medium income which is \$12-\$22 per hour around here. Those numbers represent laborers, beginning management. They are our neighbors working in town and for our municipalities. Rents are looked at yearly based on income to confirm renters are still meeting the income requirements. If the income increases above what is set, then they are asked to move on in a reasonable amount of time. The workforce rental rates in Swanze is \$850 to \$1000. New Hampshire Housing is the organization that oversees this. He then describes a new development in Walpole. These apartments are super energy efficient. They are modular construction and took less than 6 months to build. The LUA asks about management? She knows many folks have concerns that buildings will become in disrepair and the tenants can be unruly. Mr. Hutwelker explains the developers he has worked with have onsite management. He completely understands the towns concerns, all towns have certain properties that are rundown and are troublesome.

He speaks of the impact to schools. School enrollment in this area is down. Schools need more students. D. Beaman asks if he is saying that we need more kids? Mr. Hutwelker explains infrastructure is already in place for a certain quantity of kids. There will always be that fixed cost. Lower enrollment can actually increase costs. The state also needs the younger generation. The state has been pushing to keep young people in the state. Our population is aging.

A theory is that persons who move into these units will eventually move out into bigger homes to raise a family. These older homes are then renovated. These homes become available when older folks who move into units because they no longer can stay in these homes.

D. Beaman lists peoples fears; more kids, crime, & poor maintenance.

Mr. Hutwelker says these projects do not require town water & sewer. Chesterfield does not have public facilities. He clarifies for G. Ruth, the ownership of the Chesterfield project is condominium. The owners own ten ft around the building. The new project approved by Gomarlo's is on town sewer and public/private water. West Swanze is home to a private public water system. G. Ruth also asks is the housing limits based on income? Yes, it is adjustable

and verified. R. Pratt how are the projects funded? Mr. Hutwelker explains many times tax credits are obtained to make the project viable.

The LUA asks about real estate tax payments. Do they pay full value? PILOT? Mr. Hutwelker says the new project by Gomarlos that has rents based on medium income will pay about \$75,000 per year. That is not full value taxation. The Princeton Properties across the street just recently sold for 11 million. They pay full taxes because the rents are market rate. The assessment is 7.5 million x tax rate of \$26 per thousand. Basically market rate is full taxation and workforce housing is taxed less.

D. Beaman feels housing grows the towns assets in many ways.

L. Picard ask how old is the oldest workforce housing in this area? Mr. Hutwelker says it in Walpole only about 5 years old. L. Picard describes cyclable housing. The board thanks Mr. Hutwelker for his information.

The board discuss regulating storage containers. The LUA presents a definition and requirements. R. Pratt asks if their use is a problem. The LUA explained she has received some complaints and brought the information to the board. It is up to the board to decide if they should be regulated. J. Rhodes asks how will it be enforced? It will be enforced like other problems. An owner would be notified of requirements and corrective measures. Any new information is put on the town website, newsletters and word of mouth. L. Picard thinks the use of storage containers is growing and we should think of regulating them. The Chair confirms the members are satisfied with the definition and description of use.

The board reviews the proposed change to Article II, J, 1: Permit duplex units by right in the residential district with a lot 15,000sqft or more with town water and sewer. The Chair confirms the board members are satisfied.


The board reviews the expanded definition of (J) Multifamily to include multiple buildings on one lot is also multifamily. J. Rhodes points out that (G) Conversion Apartment has part of it lined out. The LUA said that was an error and that conversion apartment definition will stay the same.

The board reviews the suggested PRD changes. D. Beaman explains the need for workforce housing and how changes to the PRD will help that. The Purpose section: clarifies the need of medium income housing and to preserve open space appears ok. Standards & Criteria: #1- add in radius/distance of downtown the proposed changes could occur. #2- adjust lot size, #3 agreed with architectural design, #4 number of units at 2 bdrs is ok, #7 seems ok with land density and occupancy density, #10 add deed restriction, #11 buffer to 25ft, and deed restriction on 25% open space, #11 decrease buffer to 25ft, #12 remove verbiage on public use and conservation trust. D Procedure, 2(b) add style, design and materials. Based on suggestion from R. Pratt the radius of area was included. J. Rhodes would like the w/s super, chief of pd and fire chief to come to the next meeting so the board can hear their input. Members will work on verbiage of #1 & 2. D. Beaman informs the board of his experience with deed restrictions.

R. Pratt ask about the info we received from ARLAC. It will be discussed at the next meeting on 12/6.

J. Sharra moves to adjourn, L. Picard seconds. The vote is 7 yes. 8:45pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Margaret Sharra, LUA 

Minutes approved on: 12/6/21

Minutes signed by:


Dean Beaman, Chairman