

Minutes Rochester Planning Commission
June 6, 2023
Rochester Town Office and via Zoom

Present: Vice-Chair Sandy Haas; Julie Martin; Christine Meagher; Greg White (by Zoom); Dave Curtis; Doon Hinderyckx, Zoning Administrator; Maya Newroot, Recording Clerk

Guest: Sarah Wraight, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission

Call to Order Sandy called the meeting to order at 6:05

Approval of Minutes from meetings on 5/9/23 and 5/23/23 Both Minutes approved as written with a motion by Julie, passed unanimously

Administrative Officer Report

The following permit applications were presented by Doon Hinderyckx:

Mary Beth Craydon, 100 Great Hawk, construction of outbuilding; does not need new septic or driveway and meets setback requirements. Approved

Ray and Cheryl Harvey, 1640 Middle Hollow Rd, addition to existing structure; does not need new septic or driveway and meets setback requirements. Approved

Brian Carbone of Andover, MA, building new house at 216 Access Rd. in Great Hawk. Still needs driveway permit, state septic permit and specifications re size and height of structure. Not yet signed..

Doon Hinderyckx for The Stable Inn, 147 North Main, request for a sign permit. Doon could not sign his own permit. Submitted application; Sandy will review.

Continuing discussion of Draft Proposed Amendments to Zoning Bylaw

Updates will be presented at a public hearing later this summer, then submitted to Select Board for formal adoption.

Sarah Wraight, TRORC, again led the board in a review of proposed amendments beginning with Use Lists.

Sandy's suggestion to revisit the discussion about Short Term Rentals was taken up. Sandy believes that STRs should be removed from the permitted use list in the conservation-res and ag-res districts (making them conditional use in these districts). Greg believes that this would add undue burden to PC in future and does not address the lack of affordable housing. It was agreed to table the discussion again to maximize effective use of Sarah's time.

Private air strips: Same jurisdiction to regulate as helicopter landing pads; will be removed from permitted/prohibited uses for all districts (making them conditional use).

Accessory Dwelling Units: Must be owner-occupied, either in the ADU or in the principal residence. New ADU can be as large as 1200 sq ft or 50% of size of principal residence, whichever is greater; If ADU is not part of a structure already on the property, the new structure must be within 300' of principal residence.

Any ADU created within the footprint of a principal residence shall be exempt from the general parking requirement in all districts.

Cabins/Camps/Chalets—leave as is

Multiple principal residences on one lot: Decision is that a subdivision is required in this case, therefore, there can be only one principal residence per lot. Additional residences must meet ADU rule.

Using town trails as access to private property: Sarah proposed a 15,000 lb weight limit for motorized vehicles on town trails, with an exemption for emergency vehicles; accepted by PC.

Definitions

Trail: updated by Sarah to match statutory language; accepted by PC. Definition will be clarified to apply to “Town Trails” (not those on U.S. Forest Service lands)

Home Occupations: Discussion of standards. PC agreed to remove language concerning “nuisance” as too vague. Home occupations that meet the standards will not require a permit and will be exempt from signage standards.

Home Industry: No standards associated with that, Sarah found. Are there development impacts that should be addressed in the bylaws? Also not in Use Lists. PC agreed that home industry should remain conditional use throughout bylaws, as that has been the process before now and has worked well.

Sarah highlighted a possible contradiction, in which light industry is permitted in the village, but home industry is conditional use. Sandy proposed making both conditional use, so that questions around noise, odor, traffic, and other potential intrusions can be addressed at a hearing.

After lengthy discussion on differences, if any, between Home Industry, Light Industry, and Home Occupation, Sandy suggested we table the discussion in the interest of using Sarah’s time effectively.

Screening for solar: No current language in bylaws. Sarah informed PC that the state has established that solar arrays must have the same standards for screening as any commercial development of a similar size. PC agreed that screening for solar is therefore impossible.

Planned Unit Development: In general, according to Sarah, any concerns are addressed elsewhere. PC agreed to delete PUD section.

Campgrounds: Julie suggested that the PC work on its own to come up with definitions and relevant language, and then present finished product to Sarah.

Travel Trailers: It should read “without a permit for a period not to exceed 90 days **per year**”

July meeting: Because of the holiday, July meeting will happen on Monday, July 3.

Review correspondence: PC rec'd notice from Rochester Brandon Mtn Solar LLC that they have filed with Public Utility Commission for a solar facility at the former Severy Farm.

Adjourn: 8:29

Next meeting on June 20, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maya Newroot

Recording Clerk