

**Planning Commission
Preliminary Minutes
January 17, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Theresa Carter, Chair, Ted Stryhas, Ryan Silvestri, Andrea Goldman, Judith Pullinen

STAFF PRESENT:

Ian Bard, Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT:

Eric Alden, Steve Meyers, Martha Harrison, MARC, Allison Hopkins, MARC, Sarah Bennett, Okemo Valley TV, Jean Strong, Patrick Cody, Okemo Valley TV, Alan Couch

- I. Call to Order**
 - A. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Theresa Carter
- II. Roll Call**
 - A. All board members were present.
- III. Opening statement by chair**
 - A. Chair Theresa Carter welcomed everyone at the meeting, said that comments are welcome at any time except work agenda items 7 and 8.
- IV. Consideration of any changes, additions, or removals to the agenda**
 - A. None
- V. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. November 15, 2022**
 1. Board voted unanimously to accept the November 15, 2022 minutes.
 - B. December 20, 2022**
 1. Board voted to accept the December 20, 2022 minutes. Judith Pullinen abstained as she was not present at that meeting. Everyone else was in favor,].
- VI. Comments from Citizens (5 minutes)**
 - A. Eric Alden asked if there was any progress on hybrid meetings.
 1. Patrick Cody said the upstairs of the town hall recently got hard wired internet and is capable of hybrid meetings.
 2. Theresa mentioned the commission is allowed to have consultants Zoom in

3. Eric emphasized the importance of the Planning Commission and encouraged the board to get hybrid meetings up and push for involvement from the community.
- B. Jean Strong thanked Ian Bard for taking the minutes.
- C. Doing meetings upstairs to access hybrid meetings was mentioned. Theresa said they only need to reserve the room.

VII. Municipal Planning Grant

A. Review Parking Discussion (definitions and shared parking)

1. Review section 530.1
 - a) Martha Harrison and Allison Hopkins from MARC shared the modified document on their screen over Zoom.
 - b) A modification combining Section 530.1 #1 and #3 so “studio and 1 bedroom apartments require 1 parking space for each unit, units with 2 or more bedrooms require 2 parking spaces for each unit.” is read.
 - (1) Theresa asks if the board agrees with the wording.
Andrea Goldman asks what happens with 4 bedrooms.
 - (2) Martha restates that for 2 or more bedrooms 2 spaces are required.
 - (3) Steve Meyer asked if there are 8 bedrooms in a unit, is it only required to have 2 spaces. Says spaces should be based on bedrooms not units.
 - (4) Martha says it is based on bedrooms not units.
 - (5) Ryan Silvestri says parking and housing are separate problems that cannot both be solved at once
 - (6) Andrea suggests that for every 2 bedrooms over the first 2 another parking space is added.
 - (a) Martha alerts the board that requiring more parking can slow housing development.
 - (i) Ryan states again that they are trying to solve two problems, and need to decide which is more important.
 - (ii) Eric follows this up stating that housing is the more important issue and requiring more parking can stifle development.

(iii) Theresa mentions that what is being set now can be changed later as the board's goals change.

(7) Theresa asks the board members their thoughts on when to require more than 2 parking spaces

(a) Ryan suggests that 5 bedrooms requires 3 parking spaces.

(b) The board discussed further and decided to amend 530.1 1. to "Studio and one, one space. Two, three or four bedrooms, two spaces. Five or more bedrooms, three spaces."

2. Definitions of dormitory and hotel.

a) Theresa read the definition of Dormitory as it was stated in the meeting packet, there was little discussion, and the board agreed on it

(1) **Dormitory:** A building operated by a school that contains semiprivate or private rooms along with bathroom facilities for students. Kitchen and recreation facilities may also be included.

b) Theresa read the definition of Hotel as it was stated in the meeting packet.

(1) **Hotel:** A building or part of a building in which (a) living or sleeping accommodations are used primarily for transient occupancy on a daily basis, (b) one of more common entrances serve all such living or sleeping units, and (c) 24-hour desk service is provided, in addition to one or more of the following services: housekeeping, bellhop service, or laundry or dry cleaning service. Allowable accessory uses are restaurants or other public dining facilities, bars or lounges, public banquet halls, ballrooms, meeting rooms, swimming pools, and spa and fitness centers.

(2) Steve asked why the board was discussing a commercial use while rezoning a residential area.

(3) Ryan clarified the definitions being worked on are for the whole town.

(4) The board accepts the definition of hotel.

B. Review 520.14 The conversions and changes of Use

1. The board looked at the proposed wording for section 520.14 - Conversions and Changes of Use
 - a) There was discussion on the need to streamline permitting.
 - b) The board accepted the changes as put in the meeting packet.

C. Zoning Map Discussion

1. Theresa asks why one side of Pleasant Street is zoned residential and the other is commercial.
 - a) There was discussion about reasons for this. Ryan explained it can open opportunities for abutting properties on Main Street.
 - b) Theresa makes the point that the board should ask residents of Pleasant Street their thoughts.
 - c) Theresa asked Martha and Allison if they had any thoughts on the map. Martha and Allison stated that they wanted to hear the board's thoughts.
2. Theresa asked the board if they would like to discuss the renaming of the village center as the business district.
 - a) Ryan talked about more districts allowing more specificity of what the town wants being built.
3. No official changes made

VIII. Next Month's Agenda Planning

A. Public Outreach and Survey Discussion: What is working, what is not working?

1. Theresa asked the board how they would like to proceed with the public outreach part of the Municipal Planning Grant, by a survey or open house? She made the point that any survey must be brought before the Village Trustees.
 - a) Andrea expressed a want for a survey and in person workshops. She stated surveys shouldn't be sent with a tax bill so the board can hear from the people who can't afford homes in the town. Stated survey should be allowed for anyone who lives or works in Ludlow.
 - b) Judith expressed the importance of making a survey balanced. Asked if there is someone the commission can consult when formulating the survey.
 - c) Theresa asked Martha and Allison their thoughts.

- (1) Stated there are many options for proceeding, but the commission must first decide what it is they want in the big picture.
 - (2) Members of the board discussed different combinations of hybrid meetings and surveys.
- d) Eric stated that this was all already done in 2018 by the commission during the creation of the town plan.
- (1) Andrea says the survey should be more specific and focused rather than general questions. Ryan follows this up by agreeing. Being more specific, how do we want to see things done.
 - (2) Steve states that he can't help but feel the town is advocating for the mountain as the biggest sufferer of the housing crisis. Mentions affordable housing being available in towns 30 minutes outside of Ludlow.
 - (3) Theresa mentions the town plan again and recommends the board members read it. Mentions its focus on bringing families back to Ludlow.
 - (4) The board agrees families cannot afford Ludlow.
 - (5) Steve says the family will not be fixed with small unit workforce housing.
 - (6) Andrea draws attention to the Airbnb's that take most houses off the market.
 - (7) Theresa talks about the lack of Inns around Ludlow.
 - (8) Jean Strong states the importance of both housing and jobs that afford benefits and growth, and the need to have both, not one. She also mentioned the importance of sidewalks, and that the Village Trustees recently had meetings on the topic. She stated the need for a leader among the commission, selectboard, DRB and other boards, someone to steer committees together.
 - (9) Theresa again asked the board to look through the 2019 town plan before the next meeting.

B. Streamlining the permitting process

1. Theresa mentioned this was briefly covered during the conversation on conversions of use. She stated Rose's interest in being at this discussion, and her town interest in inviting the DRB to the

discussion as well. Also stated Scott Murphy and the Selectboard wanted this to be discussed.

2. Andrea and Theresa agree that the survey discussion will take most of the next meeting.

IX. Other Business

A. Board member comments (5 minutes)

1. None

B. Citizen Comments (5 minutes)

1. Eric states the need to get residents more involved in the town board meetings. He also states the need to have inter board meetings, once or twice a year have the Selectboard, Planning Commission, DRB and any other boards meet and get in the same direction.

X. Adjourn

- A. Theresa Carter entertained a motion to adjourn at 7:29 p.m. Andrea Goldman seconded. All accepted.