



TOWN OF WILLISTON
Planning Commission Minutes
August 19, 2014 - 7:00 P.M.

Williston Planning Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jake Mathon, Kevin Batson, Paul Laska, Tom Walsh, Meghan Cope, Planning Commission Members; Ken Belliveau and Matt Boulanger planning staff, Chris Conant, Jackie Washburn, Peter Mumford, Bill Bickford, Mindy Hinsdale, Susan Donnis, Henri De Marne, Lake Iroquois residents.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Jake Mathon called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

2) PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER CHANGES TO THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS OF THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAW:

Jake Mathon called the public hearing on the Bylaw changes to WDB 11 to order at 7:45 PM.

a) CHAPTER 11 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

No public testimony was given. Ken Belliveau gave a brief synopsis of the proposed changes. The new system would run through FY 2025 and would allow for 80 dwelling units per year. However, dwelling units are defined differently than they are in the current version. Under the draft changes, a one-bedroom or studio unit is counted as .5 of a dwelling unit. The growth target remains at 80 dwelling units per year, but 25% of the dwelling units in each allocation area are set aside for perpetually affordable housing.

Paul Laska asked if there were any changes to the recommendations about affordable housing made by the Selectboard since the Task Force completed their work. Belliveau said that there was not.

Given the shortages experienced by the town over the last five years, the draft includes provisions to “hold back” allocation units so that there are always units available for projects throughout the 10-year allocation cycle.

The validity of each allocation will be extended from four years to five years, with the ability to extend allocations for up to five years in projects that have made “substantial progress.”

The scoring for projects providing affordable housing has also been changed to mimic the recommended targets that were provided by the affordable housing task force.

The public hearing was closed at 7:58

On a motion made by Meghan Cope and seconded by Paul Laska the commission voted 5-0 to pass on the changes to WDB 11 to the selectboard for a public hearing.

b) CHAPTER 24 OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Jake Mathon called the public hearing on the changes to WDB 24 to order at 8:00pm.

Ken Belliveau explained the proposed changes, which would prohibit “bands of light” around buildings and would limit the time when outdoor lights can be turned on, and would limit the height of outdoor lighting on buildings to 15 feet.

Meghan Cope suggested a change in 24.6.2.- to replace the period with a comma after “finished grade.” and adding “which” before “may” in the subsequent sentence.

Belliveau said that the changes would also require shielding on building façade lighting and states that the purpose of façade lighting will be to illuminate architectural features of buildings.

The public hearing closed at 8:08pm.

On a motion made by Paul Laska and seconded by Meghan Cope the commission voted 5-0 to move the proposed changes to WDB 24 forward to the Selectboard for a public hearing.

c) CHAPTER 25 SIGNS

Jake Mathon called the hearing to order at 8:15

Matt Boulanger explained the draft changes.

Paul Laska asked about the “51% damage” rule for nonconforming signs that must be removed. Boulanger explained that it would be a judgment call by the Zoning Administrator but the interpretation could be appealed to the DRB.

Kevin Batson described several signs he had seen around town recently that are out of compliance with the Bylaws. Ken Belliveau described some of the enforcement actions he had taken recently on some of those signs.

The public hearing was closed at 8:40.

On a motion made by Kevin Batson and seconded by Tom Walsh the commission voted 5-0 to move the proposed changes to WDB 25 forward to the Selectboard for a public hearing.

Jake Mathon called the public hearing on the Bylaw changes to WDB 29 and 31 to order at 7:12 PM.

d) CHAPTER 29 WATERSHED HEALTH

Ken Belliveau explained the changes to the chapter related to Lake Iroquois, which would reduce the 150-foot setback to 100 feet and create the Lake Iroquois Shoreland Protection Area (LISPA) around the lake.

e) CHAPTER 31 AGRICULTURAL RURAL RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICT

Ken Belliveau explained the changes to the area around Lake Iroquois (the LISPA), which mirror the state standards but also set additional limits on building height and allow for some flexibility for changes to nonconforming structures.

Chris Conant asked about requirements to underground utilities. Belliveau said that new utilities are generally required to be undergrounded by the town. Conant said that there had been efforts in the community to get utilities underground as much for storm damage protection as for aesthetics. Conant asked if the footprint change rules allow for changes in the side yards as well as the rear yards of properties. Belliveau said that the footprint of the structure would have to move away from the lake. Structures could be made deeper but not wider within the setback.

Meghan Cope asked if the intent was to have a one-time or other time limitation on changes to building footprint. Kevin Batson said that he recalled there was consensus to place a limitation to prevent repeated changes resulting in a cumulative change to the structure far in excess of 20% of the original structure.

Belliveau said that the expansion of structures would continue to be restricted by setbacks from roads and side property lines.

It was the consensus of the group that expansions allowed within the 20% rule would be limited to once every 5 years for each parcel within the LISPA.

Kevin Batson said that Chapter 29 and the edits for the LISPA do not reference Chapter 31. Batson suggested adding a citation to 31.3.4 after the “limited circumstances” language in WDB 29.9.2.2.

Paul Laska asked what feedback had been received from other residents. Chris Conant said that he felt the board had done significant work within an efficient timeframe and extended the appreciation of the residents on the lake. In general, owners around the lake are in favor of the changes. Conant said that many of the properties have upgraded septic systems around the lake and that the changes will encourage landowners to upgrade their properties. Susan Donniss said that she was jarred by the proposal for a five bedroom house adjacent to her lot. Donniss said that what has now been proposed on the lot by Jackie Washburn is a relief by comparison.

Jackie Washburn thanked the commission for their work. Washburn apologized for the errors on her property and said that the proposed changes would be of great help to her as well.

Jake Mathon said that he had enjoyed the collaborative process with the landowners on the lake and the commission.

Chris Conant said that relations with the town over the public beach have improved greatly as well.

Chair Jake Mathon closed the public hearing for the changes to WDB 31 and WDB 29 related to the Lake Iroquois area.

On a motion made by Tom Walsh and seconded by Kevin Batson the commission voted 5-0 to pass on the changes to WDB 31.3.1 and 31.3.4 and 29 to the selectboard for a public hearing with the following changes to the hearing draft:

1. Add a reference to WDB 29 in WDB 31
2. Limit changes under the 20% expansion rule to no more than one per 5 years.
3. Replace “floor area” with “footprint” wherever it is used, with the exception of 31.3.4.5, where floor area is meant to define the total floor area on all floors of the structure.

3) AUGUST 6, 2014 MINUTES

On a motion made by XXX and seconded by XXX, the commission members voted XXX to approve the minutes of August 6, 2014 with the following changes:

- Add Meghan Cope to the list of attendees
- Change “residential” to “commercial” in the discussion on “high intensity residential” uses.
- Correct the names of the participants for consistency.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.