

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**November 11, 2024**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Planning Commission: Daniel Potvin, Chair, Alden Finney, Kurt Gamari (ex officio member), Peter Greenbush, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Lawrence, Marta Miller, Jim Stimpson, and David Tatro.

David Saldo was not present.

Visitors: Jedidiah Gramlin, Beth Phelps, Debra Righi, and James Righi.

Peter Greenbush called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

HEARING OF VISITORS: None.

**MINUTES:**

MOTION by Peter Greenbush to accept the regular meeting minutes of October 7, 2024 as written with the following changes: adjust to reflect the proper date (10/7/24). Jim Stimpson would like to amend the statement that it is a state regulation that septic tanks must be pumped every three years to “recommended”. Marta Miller made a MOTION to accept minutes with changes. SECONDED by Jim Stimpson. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**DISCUSSION:**

**1. SIGN BYLAWS**

It was noted that a member of the Select Board came before the Planning Commission to request the rewriting of the sign bylaws. Peter Greenbush thought that the town bylaws could not supersede the state bylaws; Lisa Gramlin felt that, while the town needed to follow the state bylaws, it could impose stricter bylaws restricting signage. For example, while the state allows for a 64 sq. ft sign the town has a 12 sq. ft restriction and this is why the municipal bylaw needs to be rewritten. Jim Stimpson pointed out that in our bylaws signs are mentioned as “residential” and “other” and that, although commercial is not directly addressed, any business or special use would need to come before the Planning Commission for a site plan review which is when constraints would be put on signage. He felt we should keep the same language under “signs” in the bylaws as written but include “exempt municipal signs”. Pete warned us to be careful of what kind of signs are allowed (ex. no digital, flashing, etc.) and to be careful with blanket exemptions. Kurt Gamari agreed that municipalities should be exempt. Jim suggested that we keep the verbiage the same for residential signs and just drop the rest, leaving the state bylaws as our guidelines (Chapter 10, vsa 494). Kurt suggested that we simply include that the municipality is exempt per the state statute. Marta Miller was in agreement. Pete would like to add an amendment that states that the municipality should follow the state bylaw. Discussion ensued about signs that fall under neither residential nor municipal. Jim made a MOTION that Lisa, and Marta, and he draft up new bylaw language for consideration

for the next PC meeting. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. 7 in favor, 1 opposed (Sheila Lawrence). Motion APPROVED.

2. OVERSHADOWING Kurt Gamari stated that there is nothing we can do at a bylaw level regarding overshadowing and isolation zones as the state has jurisdiction over all waste water. Some ways to tackle this from a planning perspective would be road frontage requirements and right of ways/private roads. Acreage may or may not provide a safeguard. The board discussed at length the pros and cons of private roads, cost/benefits and responsibilities. Alden Finney asked about the difference between a driveway and a private road. Dave Tatro expressed concern about how much use private roads could handle with further development. Kurt feels that while we do have to have some level of growth it must be handled strategically.

## 2. PERMIT APPLICATION FORM REVIEW

The board revisited the "Application for a Building or Conditional Use Permit", specifically about the "instructions for filing a zoning permit application" #5. The board feels that in the future the entire form needs to be filled out including for subdivisions of more than two. Dan advised that we keep in mind that emergency vehicles must be able to turn around. Dave T. stated that this would mean a 100ft. cul de sac in our highway ordinance and that private roads should be built to code and standards.

## NEW BUSINESS:

### 1. ZBA MEETING

Jim Stimpson felt that we should send a message to the ZBA supporting the approval of the sign permit. Discussion was had as to the relevance of doing this. MOTION by Jim Stimpson that the Planning Commission go on record supporting the ZBA in its approval of the sign. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. 4 in favor (Jim Stimpson, Dave Tatro, Dan Potvin, and Marta Miller); 4 abstained (Peter Greenbush, Alden Finney, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Lawrence). Motion FAILS.

### 2. BCRC REGIONAL PLAN

The BCRC is rewriting the Regional Plan. They are meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> in Manchester. Rules regarding wind turbines are being reconsidered to change the 1km residential buffer to half (.5)km. Additionally, the new plan includes the following language: "The northern edge of the Hoosac Mountain ridge that runs into southern Stamford may be a prime location for wind development, and there are already several commercial-scale turbines on the same ridge across the border in Massachusetts". The primary issue is that the new plan could potentially be passed through at the November meeting. Lisa feels we need to confront this language and ask that the 1km buffer be retained and that the language regarding Stamford be removed. Kurt suggested we make sure that the town plan still receives "substantial deference" in the new BCRC plan.

MOTION by Peter Greenbush to adjourn. SECONDED by Lisa Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:55p.m.

Lisa Gramlin  
Planning Commission Clerk