

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**January 13, 2025**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Planning Commission: Alden Finney, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Lawrence, Marta Miller, David Saldo, and Jim Stimpson.

Peter Greenbush, Daniel Potvin, and David Tatro were not present.

Visitors: Jedidiah Gramlin, Debra Righi, James Righi, Diane Saldo, and Lori Shepard.

Lisa Gramlin called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**HEARING OF VISITORS:**

None.

**MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Jim Stimpson to accept the regular meeting minutes of December 9, 2024 as written.

**SECONDED** by Marta Miller. All in favor. Motion **APPROVED**.

**DISCUSSION:**

**SIGN BYLAWS**

Jim, Lisa, and Marta were tasked by the Commission with revising the town's sign bylaw. Over the past few months they have followed a process of gathering bylaws from many other like-minded communities in Vermont, drawing from those resources and crafting a set of guidelines that best suits Stamford. Lisa explained the new bylaw is designed as to stand alone as it seemed redundant to list it under each subsection (residential, rural, and forest). It is intended to continue under Section 7 of the current bylaws, "General Regulations". The numbering thus follows the format already set forth. Marta stated that the language is meant to be as clear and simple as possible with no grey areas, which may have led to issues in the past. For example, confusion over the word "permitted", which can mean either "allowed" or "requiring a permit", was eliminated as much as possible. Jim utilized his background in law enforcement and reiterated that rules and language must have language which must be succinct.

Input was solicited from the group. Lori Shepard asked for clarification on 16.1.a. re: "on premise use". Sheila Lawrence questioned signs that could be put up without a permit, which is different from how things are done currently. Aldey asked what would keep someone from putting up, for example, four 16 square ft. signs and pointed out that this is not specified in the new bylaw. Dave didn't see how the new bylaw dealt with the state/scenic highway. He expressed concern about getting it right for funding purposes. Diane Saldo mentioned that while the new bylaw states, "no flashing signs" we already have flashing signs for the school and could possibly if the town votes to install speeding signs. Sheila felt that decisions made by the Zoning Board regarding signs in the past could not be undone by a new bylaw.

These questions will be taken under consideration by the board in a follow up meeting. Dave will bring more information regarding possible scenic highway limitations.

While the group had questions about the 64 square foot maximum for a municipal sign, it was explained that this size was taken from the state Title 10 statute and could be modified to a lower figure at our discretion.

Dave advocated for putting the issue before the town as a warrant article for Town Meeting. Lori informed the board that she would need to receive any petitions for warrant articles for Town Meeting by January 27th. There was a question as to whether this could be accomplished in time yet with due diligence. Discussion ensued as to the process; a town meeting is different from a warned Planning Commission public hearing for input. In the latter case, after any changes, the bylaw will be submitted to the Select Board, which also must hold a public hearing on the matter. The Select Board can then either send it back to the Planning Commission for revision or choose to accept it. It then becomes effective but the public still has the ability to create a petition to argue it. Sheila suggested providing a draft copy of the bylaw to townspeople at Town Meeting which would include the date of the public hearing. The board concluded that they will meet next Monday for further revisions to the bylaw and discussion on which process to follow going forward.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

##### 1. BCRC

Lisa informed the board that the next BCRC meeting is being held on January 16th both in person and via Zoom. These meetings are open to the public. It is unclear if anyone besides Debra Burchard is representing the town at this time. This needs to be clarified with the Select Board to ensure Stamford has proper representation and a vote.

On a second matter concerning the BCRC, the Conservation Commission has drafted a letter refuting the naming of Stamford and the Hoosac Range as a prime location for new wind turbines in the new Regional Plan passed in November. The Conservation Commission would like the Planning Commission, as well as the Select Board, to sign on to the letter so it carries the power of multiple town boards. Dave is concerned that the new plan, which ignores our current Energy Plan, is now in writing and wants to officially register our disagreement. Marta pointed out that the letter does not mention the reduction in the distance from homes, from 1km to half a km, and would like to see that added. MOTION by Lisa Gramlin to amend the Conservation Commission's letter to address of the buffer zone. SECONDED by Marta Miller.

2. Dave located a booklet which has been forwarded to members of both the Conservation Commission and the Planning Commission that addresses the cycle of groundwater and management of our resources.

3. Jim asked about the situation of septic lines running directly into the river. Discussion was had about how this should be addressed. It was determined that the Health Officer should be alerted.

MOTION by Lisa Gramlin to adjourn. SECONDED by Marta Miller. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:24p.m.

Lisa Gramlin  
Planning Commission Clerk