

TOWN OF BEDFORD
September 18, 2023
PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP
MINUTES

A meeting of the Bedford Planning Board was held on Monday, September 18, 2023, at the Town Meeting Room at BCTV, 10 Meeting House Road, Bedford, NH.

Present: Charlie Fairman (Chair), Hal Newberry (Vice Chair), Steve Clough, Matt Nichols (Secretary), Logan Johnson (Alternate), John Nelson (Alternate), Becky Hebert (Planning Director).

Absent: Chris Swiniarski (Alternate), Priscilla Malcolm, Matt Sullivan, Michael Strand (Town Council Alternate), Phil Greazzo (Town Council).

I. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Chairman Fairman called the workshop meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. New Business:

Ms. Hebert explained that tonight's meeting is an informal workshop to discuss general community planning issues. The following topics were discussed:

Review of Conditional Use Permit Process for Detached Accessory Apartments:

Ms. Hebert reviewed the zoning criteria for the granting of conditional use permits for detached accessory apartments. She explained that since the zoning was initially adopted in 2022, the Board has received seven applications, and staff wanted to review the criteria with the Board members to see if any changes were needed. The Board agreed that most of the permits were approved with little conflict of discussion.

The group discussed the lot sizing criteria and agreed to modify this to remove the soils based lot sizing calculation. The group also discussed basements, garage spaces, decks and three season porches and whether these areas should be exempt from the overall area of the apartment. The size of the apartment is limited to 1,000 sq. ft. It was agreed that basements, garages and other unfinished space should be excluded from the area calculation, but that three season porches should be included in the gross floor area. The Board suggested adding a definition for "living space" to the ordinance. Mr. Fairman suggested allowing two ADU's on large lots. Ms. Johnson asked about the parking space and suggested that the designated parking space for the apartment be more clearly shown on plans, to ensure the tenant can park easily if they are not related to the occupants of the main house. Mr. Fairman also suggested keeping this topic on the Board's workshop agendas for the next few years, the Board may decide to remove the conditional use permit process and

allow the detached accessory apartment to be permitted with a staff review of the building permit, similar to the attached accessory apartments.

Floodplain Development Ordinance updates:

Ms. Hebert explained that the Office of Planning and Development has recently audited the Town's Floodplain Development Ordinance as part of a county-wide effort to update the FEMA maps. The maps are in the processing of being reviewed and updated and the Town has been advised of minor edits that are needed to the Zoning Ordinance in order to remain in compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. The Board reviewed the redlined document highlighting the proposed changes. Ms. Hebert said the amendments would need to be placed on the 2024 Town Ballot for adoption. Mr. Nelson asked what would happen if the amendment did not pass at town vote. The Board talked about needing to carefully phrase the message to the voters on the town ballot.

Other Amendments:

Ms. Hebert said that the housing study may identify possible zoning amendments, but the project is just beginning and these amendments have not yet been determined. Staff would not be recommending any changes that would affect housing until the results of the housing study are known.

Review of changes to Planning and Zoning laws in 2023:

Ms. Hebert reviewed recent changes to the New Hampshire's planning and zoning laws. She explained that the only new law that will require amendments to Bedford's Land Development Control Regulations is SB 78, which changes how municipalities administer and accept performance bonds for securing compliance with approved site and subdivision plans. She said that staff will be working with the Town Attorney and DPW Director to amend the Land Development Control Regulations and will be bringing this back to the Board for review.

Mr. Fairman said he reviewed the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and had a comment about the Fire Department cistern project. He asked if the cistern locations have been prioritized by the Fire Department. He said that this is an important project in the Town's R&A zone and would be voicing his support to the Town Manager and Council during the budget review process. He encouraged all of the Board members to review the CIP.

III. Adjournment:

Mr. Fairman adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Becky Hebert, Planning Director