

Town of Newbury, MA

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Planning Board/BOS Meeting Minutes 2013-03-20

Minutes Approved
Joint Board of Selectmen/Planning Board Workshop
Re. Proposed Zoning Amendments
 Wednesday, March 20, 2013
 Newbury Town Hall

Selectmen Present: Joseph Story II, Chair; Mike Bulgaris; Geoffrey Walker; Chuck Bear; David Mountain
Planning Board Members Present: Kathleen Pearson, Chair; Linda McCamic; John O'Connell; David Powell; John Weis; George Morse (Associate Member)
Staff Present: Kathy Sirois, Selectmen's Administrative Assistant; Martha Taylor, Town Planner

Kathleen Pearson, Planning Board Chair, opened the workshop at 6:30 p.m. and explained that the purpose of the joint meeting was for the two Boards to discuss the proposed zoning amendments for the May 2013 Annual Town Meeting and address any concerns or questions that the Selectmen might have.

- **Proposed Boundary Changes:**

K. Pearson explained that the boundary changes being proposed are intended to eliminate zoning district boundaries that go through parcels and, in some districts, to increase the area available for economic development. She noted that the Planning Board had contacted all property owners whose parcels would be affected by the proposed boundary changes and held a public workshop regarding the changes on March 2, 2013.

- **Business & Light Industrial District:**

K. Pearson noted that there had been no negative feedback on the proposed changes at the Workshop, just a concern raised by one property owner which was addressed by a change in the Table of Use Regulations. One property owner is still undecided about whether he wants a portion of his property to remain in the Agricultural-Residential District or to be changed to Business & Light Industrial.

- **Byfield Village Business District:**

K. Pearson explained that the purpose of the proposed changes is to redefine the boundaries of the Village and reinforce the Village character, not necessarily encourage economic development in this area.

- **Commercial Highway District at Pearson Plaza:**

K. Pearson said that this area is the most likely part of Town to get developed if no water is brought to Route 1. In addition a lot of the commercial activity that is happening in this district now is actually taking place outside of the district boundaries; the proposed changes will recognize how the properties are being used. Next year the Board will review the properties on the other side of Central Street, down to the fire station, to see if it would make sense to include them in the expanded district. D. Mountain said that there could be potential wetlands issues affecting many of the properties and recommended investigating this further. J. Story commented that going to commercial will reduce the value of the properties. G. Walker asked if there would be any impact on property taxes. K. Pearson replied that there would be no impact, since Newbury has only one tax rate for all uses.

- **Accessory Apartment By-Law:**

M. Taylor summarized the changes being proposed. There were no comments from the Selectmen.

- **Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations By-Law:**

The Planning Board noted that they were considering increasing the setbacks for arrays ten acres or more to 50 feet and will check with

Town Counsel to determine whether there is any issue in making the setbacks more stringent. There was discussion regarding the appropriate Special Permit Granting Authority for solar installations, but no decision was made.

- **Table of Use Regulations:**

D. Mountain asked for the theory behind Special Permits and what characteristics would require a use to be subject to a Special Permit. The Planning Board replied that Special Permits are appropriate for uses that are determined to have potential for an adverse impact on abutters and/or the district in which they will be located and that the requirement for a Special Permit provides an opportunity for public forum. It was noted that some of the language in Article III of the Zoning might need to be coordinated with the changes that have been made to the Use Table.

It was agreed that the discussion on the Table of Use Regulations will be continued at the Planning Board's next meeting on April 3. The Workshop ended at 7:30 p.m.