

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission
Public Meeting Notes
August 21, 2025

Call to order at 6:33pm

Planning Commission Chair Dennis Casey made opening remarks. Member Dan Kuzio outlined the changes made between the February public meeting and present, and a brief rationale as to why the changes were made. The floor was opened for comment. An overview of comments follows:

- Were there any changes to the zoning maps?
 - No. The maps remain the same
- Will the flood hazard district change the current maps?
 - Not until FEMA updates their maps, which is still a few years out.
- Can the PC go line by line and point out changes to the by-laws?
- How do these changes make it easier to build in town?
- Removing sections like noise and traffic will remove the ability to regulate development
 - Discussion of the noise standard and why it was re-written. The Town doesn't have capacity to monitor and enforce, and noise is still considered when applying for conditional use permits. Same with traffic.
- What are we doing to promote town centers?
 - Starksboro applied for and received town center designation from ACCD last year. Densities in those areas is being reduced to incentivize development, however infrastructure needs expanding and residents in those areas do not appear willing to develop.
- What is the story about airstrips?
 - Explanation of the Town of Lincoln's experience and feedback received from the first public meeting.
- General concern about greenhouse gases and pollution associated with aircraft.
- Lengthy discussion of airstrips and landing areas
 - Suggestion was made to ban helipads due to noise concern.
 - Once 500 feet off the ground all regulations are taken over by FAA. Less for drones. Any aircraft can still fly relatively low overhead.
 - Discussion of setbacks
- Question about ROD, uses, and intent.
 - Intent is certainly not to have large scale commercial operations. The word "restaurant" is not intended to have a large dining facility, but a small snack shack or similar.
- Why remove the traffic standard?
 - Traffic is still considered when applying for a conditional use with the DRB. The way the current standard is written it is impossible to determine the base traffic load for each road in town and readjust it each time development takes place. Suggestions for better language were asked for at the February meeting and no comments came in.
- If standards like noise and traffic are removed, you can't even consider them when reviewing a project.
 - The review criteria when presenting a project to the DRB has not changed. Even without specific standard for noise and traffic the board considers those factors, as well as the general suitability of the proposed project.

- What kind of bike trail? Pedal, motor, otherwise?
 - All trail uses would be considered.
- What can we do with the land that gets bought during a FEMA buyout?
 - Nothing. It would belong to the town but almost all development would be restricted.

D. Schmidt moves to adjourn. D. Kuzio seconds.

All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:05

DRAFT