

Starksboro Planning Commission

December 8, 2022

Unapproved

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Dan Nugent, David Schmidt, Jeff Keeney, Brad Boss, Lexy Thompson (on zoom), Denny Barnard

Others present: Rebecca Elder

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:35 p.m. in person and on Zoom.

No changes to the agenda.

Bylaws Discussion

Discussion of site plan review and its definition by statute:

- Site plan review gives the town and neighbors the opportunity to review and have input on the proposed project but the use is allowed.
- A conditional use review is for uses that may only be approved with consideration of additional impacts and with conditions. If the project doesn't meet the criteria, it cannot go forward.
- In the past, before the DRB was established, the Planning Commission reviewed site plans and subdivisions while the Zoning board would review conditional uses and other requests. Conditional use reviews are more often needed in the less densely populated districts where uses are not automatically permitted.
- Statutory references: § 4416. Site plan review; § 4414. Zoning; permissible types of regulations (including conditional use) [Vermont Laws](#) 24 VSA 117

Other bylaw discussions:

FEMA flood plain and overlay district zoning regs: The current FEMA flood maps are under review and will be finished in a few years. ACRPC is working with the State and FEMA to provide municipalities with sample language and guidance to anticipate changes that will be needed. Starksboro already has a flood hazard overlay section in our bylaws, so changes will be made there as required.

Co-housing: Alexsys raised the topic of co-housing and that it is not addressed in the existing bylaws. This type of housing is becoming more popular with several local communities creating co-housing opportunities (Bristol Co-Housing is the closest). Lexy will collect more information to share with group. Co-housing models have shared land (sometimes shared structures for common space) and separate structures so are different from a traditional subdivision or multi-family structure such as condos.

Discussion returned to the Use Table (Chap. 210) and reviewing all the uses per district.

The group then reread the table line by line and made adjustments to many of the uses that are currently prohibited in the FC district to allow for a conditional use application. This does not mean that the use would be approved but would allow for the request to be made and for approval if the proposed project met conditional use criteria as evaluated and determined by the DRB.

Seasonal camp for personal use: This line generated a long discussion about the placement of camps in the FC district. Points were made that without any review, problems may arise regarding placement, emergency access, and other site related issues. In the end, a vote was called: 4 members (DB, JK, BB, AT) voted to allow all seasonal camps in the FC without requiring a conditional use review. 3 members voted not to allow (DC, DS, DN).

- Add “restricted landing area” to residential uses.
- Add “outdoor recreation trails” to public/civic uses.
- Under commercial uses, change “Retail store” to “Retail business”

Discussion about additional types of businesses that are considered part of the existing categories and if any need to be addressed. Look at the commercial and industrial sections next.

Current business:

ARPA update – meeting next week to review several new proposals including the village water co-op. Final proposals are due by 12/31/22.

Review of minutes

Motion: Jeff Keeney moved to approve the minutes of 11/3/22 as presented. David Schmidt seconded.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Next meeting:

- Continue review of Use Table
- Continue review of use standards related to noise, smoke, etc.
- Discuss co-housing and what is needed in bylaws – Lexy to call other towns to research
- Invite guests re: recreational trails development (David has a contact at Velomont – a trail system running the length of VT like the Long Trail for hiking)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder