

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission meeting
October 4, 2018
Unapproved

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Jeff Keeney, Norm Cota, Dan Nugent

Unable to attend: Denny Barnard, Dan Harris

Others present: Rebecca Elder (ZA), Hugh Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chair Dennis Casey.

Hugh Johnson submitted his resignation to the Planning Commission. He was pleased to see through the completion of the Town Plan. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve the community for many years. The Board expressed its gratitude for Hugh's service and wished him well in his next endeavors.

Minutes of 9/20/18

Motion: Jeff Kenney made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/20/18. Dan Nugent seconded.

Vote: All in favor

Discussion of Bylaws and revisions continued

Rebecca and Dan brought up a zoning issue related to a new driveway being created off Shaker Hill Road. The board discussed various aspects of safety and access to properties on steep slopes. Current zoning bylaws specify that new home construction on steep slopes must be reviewed by the DRB prior to the issuing of a zoning permit. However, there is no specific language about the maximum distance from the approved driveway to the main structure on the lot.

- **Insert NEW 311.B and renumber from there:**
"A driveway must extend to within 100' of the main structure of the building lot."

EV language (electric vehicle charging stations)

The Board reviewed guidelines and suggested language from the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce/Dept. of Housing and Community Development regarding the placement and installation of electric vehicle charging stations.

- Page 5-7: Fueling station: Add the word electric
- Electric vehicle charging station: Public charging stations
- Insert definition from p.11:
"EVCH means the public parking spaces served by electric vehicle supply equipment, including all signs, information, pavement, surfaces, surface markings, fee collections systems, and protective equipment in which a vehicle is recharged."
- ADD to Table of Uses - Add EV charging station – It will be a conditional use in all districts Not permitted in flood zone. Should they be allowed in the FC district? Needs further discussion.
- Parking standards?
 - ADD Sec. 313.G using the sample language from the State *except* for the first bullet and use "may" for all.
 - ADD the sample language in 6 about signage to the SIGNAGE section of the bylaws.
 - Any commercial biz should be allowed to install an EV station as a permitted use. However a site plan review or conditional use approval will be required.
Issues to consider: Municipal lot and school lot – what regulations are needed?

Setback Requirements:

Jeff asked why the town currently has such large setbacks. What is the purpose? Is it about safety? He has seen a variety of issues come up in other towns due to setback requirements conflicting with what is needed to create a proper wastewater system or other site improvements. Current Starksboro zoning requires 50-ft setback from centerline of road in HDRC and 75 ft in all others districts except ASRR.

Fire and Rescue recommend larger setback for safety purposes to prevent fire from spreading from one structure to another. In addition there are other safety concerns such as: snow/ice build-up on roofs that may create problems on a neighboring property if setbacks are too small. The board noted that when you are in the HDRC district, you have the expectation that activity will be close to you, which is different from other districts.

Denny said that the waiver language in the bylaws addressed the issue if someone wants to request consideration.

Side setbacks are set at 20 feet – this allows for a little more space between structures and lots in other districts. There is a fundamental conflict in creating this language: some places it is best to place houses close to the road but in other areas it is more appropriate to place houses away from the road. Thus the districts have different requirements both for safety as well as aesthetic reasons.

Dan suggested the possibility of adding language about accessory structures and define further there. Perhaps more specific language such as: structures should be >10 ft from each other; >5 ft from the property line. Norm pointed out that people need to have room to maintain structures for safety. Should there be a height limit? Overhang limit? More specifics are needed.

Note: For a PUD all the requirements are different; this language needs to be reviewed carefully.

Motion to adjourn: Norm Cota made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Dan Nugent second.

Vote: All in favor

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder

Zoning Administrator