

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
10/10/2019

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; David Van Wie, Alternate; Rich Brown, Alternate; David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Kevin Sahr, Select Board Representative; Vicki Smith, Member; Eric Furstenberg, Member; Amber Boland Alternate; David Roby, Jr., Alternate;

Members of the Public Present: Bret Ryan, Ray Clark, Lynore Bolton, Rusty Keith.

Item 1: Acceptance of minutes from 9/26/2019.

John moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Tim seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 2: Senior Housing.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator had put together a document that reflected ideas on Senior Housing expressed by the Board and the public from previous meetings. He had sent this to the Board as the start of a working document.

John noting the members of the public present, stated that the Board had not had a chance to discuss the document and would take questions and comment from the Board members first then ask for public comment.

John stated that he did not believe that it would be legal to limit the type of ownership to a single owner and prohibit condo ownership. If the Board felt this requirement was needed then Town Counsel should be asked for a legal opinion.

The Board discussed size of the individual units and John noted that Kendal had units that ranged from single bedroom units at 550 square feet to double bedroom units at 1,200 square feet and one category that was 1,350 square feet. The Greens had 28 units and two available one bedroom units were listed at 590 square feet.

David Van Wie believed that if resident needed a live-in caregiver who was under 62 years old the ordinance should address the issue. He also believed that there should be provisions for storage and garage space. In addition he stated that it is better to pass a more restrictive ordinance and loosen the restrictions as needed then to make a less restrictive ordinance and have to deal with unintended consequences.

John noted that it is not possible to account for every eventuality. He believed that the intent of the amendment is to make senior housing development more attractive. There is always the ability in the future to amend the Senior Housing section if needed.

Rich believed that it should be opened up to beyond just the Lyme Common. He also had issues with the statement "Senior housing should be consistent with the present character of the village." He asked what objective criteria would the Board use to determine whether the proposal met the requirement. David Van Wie stated that he felt it was not difficult to look at the neighboring buildings and design a building to fit in. He also stated that this language was found in many ordinances and did feel it was appropriate.

John stated that he believes that it should start in the Lyme Common and if there is still a need then to look at other areas such as the Commercial District.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator passed out an email he had received with comment from Virginia and Mike Beahan and John read an Email and a response he had made to Ellen Thompson.

John opened the discussion to the public.

Lynore Bolton was concerned that the maximum of 10 units was for the entire district. John pointed out that the intent was a maximum of 10 per lot.

Ray Clark in general felt that there were too many restrictions and did not believe that the residences should be limited to the ground floor. He noted that many Senior Housing projects in the Upper Valley were on multiple floors. He believed that the Board should be looking for ways to encourage the first development and to remove impediments.

He asked about disabled persons living in a senior housing development. John noted under federal guidelines that a non-senior disabled person of any age qualified for senior housing.

Rusty said that the proposed language was too restrictive and required a developer to make an application with a Board that is historically difficult to work with. This in itself would be a hindrance to any Senior Housing development. He believed it should be allowed by right in all districts.

Bret stated that he has looked at the numbers and feels that there are properties in the Lyme Common District that could be economically converted to Senior Housing. He also believed that it may take time for a Senior Housing development to be created if the ordinance is changed. He noted that properties within the Lyme Common District have a very slow turnover rate and it may take several years for an appropriate property to come on the market.

Bret also felt that the proposal was not restrictive but very flexible.

John thanked the members of the public for attending and providing input.

Item 3) New Business

The Planning and Zoning Administrator passed around a picture of some propane tanks on the side of one of the buildings at the Dartmouth Skiway. The Skiway would like to construct a roof structure over the tanks.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm

Respectfully Submitted,
David A. Robbins
Lyme Planning and Zoning Administrator.