

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
2/25/2021

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; Ben Kilham, Select Board Representative; Eric Furstenberg, Member; David Van Wie, Alternate; Rich Brown, Alternate; Richard Menge, Alternate; David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Vicki Smith, Member;

Members of the Public Present: Laurie Wadsworth, Jennifer Boylston, Marion Cass, Steven Doig, Paul Merck, Phil Pochoda, Paul Mayo, John Biglow, Karen and John Sanders, Leigh Prince, Simon Carr, Hoyt and Maryanne Alverson Walter Swift, Harry Glass.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the Board met on-line via Zoom.

John opened the meeting by reading the Right to Know Checklist and taking a roll call attendance.

Item 1: Question and answer session on the proposed Senior Housing Zoning Amendment.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions there will be no Little Town Meeting this year for Lyme residents to ask questions about the proposed Senior Housing Zoning Amendment. The Board decided to set aside the time at the beginning of the meeting for people to ask questions.

John read a prepared summary highlighting the major points of the Senior Housing Amendment.

There were questions about the extent of the Lyme Common Zoning District. The Planning and Zoning Administrator described the extent of the district.

A question was asked about the possibility of increased traffic. The Board acknowledged that there could be a small increase in traffic. They hoped that the majority of units would be used by existing residents of Lyme who are downsizing.

There were several questions related to how the Board would ensure that there was adequate water, sewer and parking. The Board noted that all Senior Housing Developments would be required to have a Site Plan Review and those items are reviewed by the Board.

Several people asked about the addition of sidewalks. The Board noted that they only have jurisdiction over the site of the Senior Housing development but would require that proper walkways were installed on-site.

The age restriction of 62 and older was questioned. The Board noted that the ADA would allow for live-in care givers who were younger. It was also noted that the Board was trying to address the unique issues for seniors in this age group. The Board was concerned that if they used the HOPA 55 group, it may limit the availability of units for people in the higher age bracket.

Someone asked if any interest in building Senior Housing had been expressed. It was also noted that a proposed project was waiting to see if the article would pass so that the developer could take advantage of the relaxed dimensional controls.

Rich Brown expressed his belief that the article would not provide enough incentive to create senior housing as the Lyme Common zoning district's property values were too high to make a project economically feasible.

Item 2: Informal Site Plan Review- LymeFiber's proposal to provide free Wi-Fi access around the Common.

LymeFiber has proposed to provide free Wi-Fi access around the Lyme Common. Walt Swift wished to discuss with the Board what Site Plan Review requirements would need to be met and which requirements waivers could be requested.

Walt gave the Board an overview of the proposed plan. He noted that there will be three antennas, one at the east end of the common, one on the west and one to the north near the midpoint of the common. The antennas are approximately the size of a book and would-be mounted flush with the buildings.

Rich Brown, noting his association with LymeFiber, stated he would recuse himself. The Board had some concerns about people parking around the common or using the common for extended periods of time to avail themselves of this free service. They would like input from the Police Chief and the public to see if they have any issues and they would also like to see the coverage area for the WIFI at the library. They also felt that the plan submitted for this meeting would be adequate for a formal site plan review. The Board recommended that Walt work with the Zoning Administrator to work out the details so he could schedule a site Plan Review for March 25th, 2021.

Acceptance of minutes from 2/11/2021

John asked if there were any corrections or omissions to the minutes, Tim Cook and Rich Brown offered several minor corrections.

John moved to approve the minutes as amended By Tim and Rich.

Tim seconded the motion.

John called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

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

