

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
August/25/2016

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; C Jay Smith, Select Board Representative; Vicki Smith, Member; Eric Furstenberg, Member; David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Amber Boland Alternate; Freda Swan, Alternate

Members of the Public Present: Earl Strout, Lyn Cushman, Tracy Flickenger, Liz Ryan Cole, Rich Brown

Item 1: Pinnacle Project- Changes to the Zoning Ordinance

The Pinnacle Project submitted the following language to change section 4.46- Conversions to allow conversion of any building of any age and to allow buildings to be connected as long as one third of the units are single bedroom and the building is on a state highway/Rt 10.

4.46 Conversions. If a use is permitted in Table 4.1, then a conversion of all or part of a single building to that use may be allowed. Any conversion requiring a Site Plan Review as noted in Table 4.1 must meet all of the criteria of section 12.10 as well as all of the following criteria:

A. Structures less than five years old or structures which were not served by wiring, heating, and plumbing (including sanitary facilities) during the previous five years shall not be converted to any use other than a single dwelling except that a building of any age, with frontage on a state highway/ Route 10 may be converted to multi-unit use if at least one third of the units are limited to one bedroom.

G. No more than 6 units shall be permitted in any building, except that more than one building(s) may be connected if one third of the units are restricted to having only one bedroom.

Liz explained their belief that this change would allow the creation of more moderately priced homes that would be accessible to seniors and lower income families.

Tim asked Rich for a clarification on their proposed language. It read “a state highway / Route 10”. Tim noted that Lyme has many roads that are classified as state highways including the East Thetford Rd, North Thetford Rd, and the Dorchester Rd. Rich replied that for his purposes he would be happy if the changes applied only to Route 10.

Vicki stated that she believed single bedroom units would not guarantee interest from seniors insofar as this configuration would make it difficult to have overnight guests and /or an office/workspace. John agreed and felt that if they want to encourage senior housing, specifically dedicated units should be restricted to those 62 or over.

John was concerned that these changes would open the entire length of Route 10 to many apartment building complexes. John noted that in their cover letter they stated that these changes would benefit the entire town, but there was no data to support their claim. He said it was clear that these changes would benefit the Pinnacle Project. He suggested that the Pinnacle Project conduct buildout analysis done to determine the impact of the proposed changes on both the Town and the land owned directly by Pinnacle and also by the Browns.

Rich noted, the Board had been working on several zoning amendments. He asked several questions. He wondered why the Board changed the definition of Dwelling Unit. Jay responded that there are two different definitions, one in the Zoning Ordinance and another in the Subdivision Regulations. The Board's intent is to establish consistency by only having one definition. The next question was about what was the thinking behind the conversion bonus for senior housing. John stated that this was an idea that the Board was discussing to encourage senior housing, but had not yet determined it's practicality or if it would actually aid seniors. Rich then asked about the newly added language regarding the intent for conversions. John responded that the Zoning Board had requested the addition of an intent as it will aid them in any future decisions for relief.

Liz asked what the Board had learned about the economic feasibility of the conversion clause John answered that to this point, the feedback was that it is feasible.

Rich and Liz thanked the Board and stated that they planned on speaking with the Board again in the near future.

Item 2: Earl Strout- Informal Site Plan Review.

Mr. Strout is proposing to convert a portion of his building at 4 Britton Lane to public storage units. He proposed to convert existing floor space with no changes to the outside of the building. He wanted to discuss any possible issues the Board might have with his plan. Vicki noted that storage units were not listed as a use in Table 4.1. After some discussion with the Planning and Zoning Administrator, the Board felt the use could fall under "service use". The Board decided that if he wished to proceed that they would require a Site Plan Review because there should be input from both the Fire and Police Departments and abutters should have a chance to comment on the proposal.

Vicki suggested that his location was ideal for senior or affordable housing and that he may want to consider creating housing instead of storage units. Mr. Strout stated that he had looked into this option but believed it was too costly. Vicki recommended that he contact the Twin Pines Housing Trust as a resource that may be able to help.

Item 3: Acceptance of minutes from August/11/2016

John moved to accept the minutes as amended by Tim

Tim seconded the motion

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 4: Zoning Ordinance changes.

John asked the Planning and Zoning Administrator to send the conversion intent language, changes to the sign regulations and the new dwelling unit definition to Town counsel for legal review.

Item 5: Changes to state law affecting the Planning Board.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator gave to the Board several RSA changes that affected the Board. The first dealt with agritourism, the second was a change to the laws governing the abandonment of Agricultural uses and the final one was a change in the time frame for submitting applications to the Planning Board. It was changed from 15 days to 21 days.

Vicki recommended that the Board add the change in application submission time to the list of changes for both the subdivision regulations and the Site Plan Review Regulations.

The meeting Adjourned at 9:00pm

Respectfully Submitted

David A. Robbins

Lyme Planning and Zoning Administrator.