



TOWN OF WINCHESTER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – ZONING REGULATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Town of Winchester Town Hall 338 Main Street - 2nd Floor – Lee Ann LaClair Room
October 6, 2022 – 5:00PM
Special Meeting Minutes

1. ROLL CALL:

Peter Marchand, Willard Platt, John Cooney, and Troy LaMere (5:06PM) convened for the Zoning Regulations subcommittee meeting at 5:00PM. Town Planner and Director of Land Use Lance Hansen staffed the meeting.

Also attending was David LaPointe of 11 Hillside Avenue.

2. DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL ZONING REGULATION CHANGES – PARKING AS PRINCIPAL USE, PARKING FOR MARIJUANA FACILITIES, DEVELOPMENT ON 25% SLOPES, AND DRIVEWAY APPROVALS:

Mr. Marchand reminded the subcommittee that while the marijuana facilities had been approved, requirements on parking had not yet been considered and approved. Additionally, the charge of the subcommittee from the full commission was that the regulation on development on slopes in excess of 25% be reviewed. Currently, driveways are reviewed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) Director and sometimes go before the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Marchand explained. He provided Mr. Hansen with a copy of the Driveway Ordinance. Mr. Marchand explained that if the Planning and Zoning Commission were to take on the review and approvals of driveways, it would require an ordinance change by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. LaPointe advised the commission that there is a petition intended to be circulated to force a referendum on recreational marijuana, explaining that he is opposed to its legalization. Mr. Marchand explained that this committee would bring any recommendations coming from these discussions to the full commission.

As he was new to his position, Mr. Hansen indicated that he would be researching regulations on these matters. Mr. Marchand noted that he had printed out sample driveway ordinances from Tolland and Manchester. Additionally, Mr. Marchand noted that he had forwarded to Chairman George Closson the *Model Zoning Regulations for Parking that was prepared for the Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments*.

Mr. Marchand was unsure whether Mr. Closson had yet received a sense from the selectmen whether they wanted to be relieved from reviewing the driveways. The consensus of the subcommittee was that the DPW should continue a role in issuing the permits and doing the inspections. Mr. Lamere later suggested that Mr. Hansen review this at a Board of Selectmen meeting to determine whether it should instead be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Platt noted that there were also violations by people in the Highland Lake Zone parking on an undeveloped parcel opposite their homes, properties with no principal structures. Mr. Marchand agreed that this ought to be addressed as part of this process, noting that the Zoning Regulations do not allow parking as a principal use. He noted the one on Meadow Street. Mr. Platt noted one on Shore Drive, too.

With respect to slopes in excess of 25%, the subcommittee weighed whether there should be changes to the zoning regulations so that type of proposed development is reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission or whether a variance should be sought by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Platt opined that decisions should be more consistent and not dependent on the trends seen with board members. Mr. Lamere preferred to see how other towns handle it. Other subcommittee members agreed, noting that New Hartford, Barkhamsted, and Norfolk should be referenced on how they handle it. Mr. Platt pointed to Burlington as an obvious example of a community that does not have any regulation as new houses were being built into steep slopes as can be observed by a drive through that town. Other hilly towns worthy of referring to were noted as Harwinton, Cornwall, and Goshen. Mr. Platt questioned whether gravel permits are affected by steep slope regulations.

Mr. Hansen agreed to try to get copies of the steep slope regulations that were mentioned. The subcommittee agreed to meet again on Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 5:00PM.

3. ADJOURNMENT:

The Commission adjourned at 5:27PM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk**