

Barre City Planning Commission

December 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Present: David Sichel (Chair), Joe Reil (Secretary), Rosemary Averill, Caitlin Corkins, Raylene Meunier

Absent: Becky Wigg (Vice Chair)

Staff: Janet Shatney (Director of Planning, Permitting & Assessing)

Visitors: None

1. Call to Order.

5:30pm.

2. Adjustments to the Agenda.

None.

3. Approval of Minutes.

a. November 9, 2023.

Shatney reports a few tyographical errors, ordnance instead of ordinance.

Meunier moves to approve, pending corrections, Corkins seconds, Sichel, Reil, Corkins, Meunier in favor, Averill abstaining.

4. Public comment (for something not on the agenda).

None.

5. Old Business.

a. Interim Zoning Changes Discussion

Shatney gave a review of the original changes she put together based on feedback and discussion from the previous meeting. There was discussion around the following topics:

Demolition:

Discussion around advantages and disadvantages of increasing the Design Review Overlay District area as opposed to simply adding additional hurdles to demolition approval. Consensus of discussion was that there are more

ramifications to these changes and to defer them until the upcoming permanent Zoning changes discussion.

Density and Lot Sizes:

Discussion around changes needed for Vermont's HOME Act and whether reducing density requirements further is appropriate.

This link, providing some information about the HOME Act's changes was reviewed:

https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/CD/CPR/Resources-and-Rules/CPR-Act47-FAQ-8-4-2023-Provisional.pdf

Consensus was to reduce density requirements for existing structures and to defer changes for new construction.

Setbacks:

Discussion around reducing setback requirements. There some concern about keeping neighborhood setback settings consistent. New builds would need to follow requirements but could request exceptions if they match the existing character of the neighborhood.

Density Requirements in Mixed Use neighborhoods:

An example of a building on 67 Prospect Street was mentioned. There was some discussion around whether this would impact the intended usage of Mixed Use districts. Consensus is that we could adjust MU-2 and MU-3 districts while leaving MU-1 districts as they are.

Setbacks for Commercial Properties:

Stone's Service Station was discussed, the owners expressed an interest in adding a canopy over their gas pumps. The possibility of changing the zoning or allowing variances to request these changes was discussed but there were concerns about this having unintended consequences so consensus was to defer these changes for future discussion.

Parking:

Consensus was to include changes to become consistent with the HOME Act but to defer future discussion until the Winter Parking Ban regulations are updated.

Shatney will draft these changes for final review in the next Planning Commission meeting.

b. Neighborhood Development Area Request Discussion

Discussion about applying for this Program. Shatney is unclear if Barre City will qualify but will look into it further and we will discuss more in the February 2024 meeting.

6. New Business.

None.

7. Confirm Date of Next Meeting.

a. January, 11, 2023.

8. Staff Updates.

a. New assessor was hired, Martin Appraisal Services, will dedicate 20 hours a week to working with Barre City, beginning with updating values for housing damaged in the flooding.

9. Round Table.

Sichel wishes everyone a Happy Holiday season.

10. Adjourn.

7:05 pm, **Corkins moves to adjourn, Reil seconds, unanimous in favor.**