

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes for May 9, 2019 at 6:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting of the Barre City Planning Commission was called to order by Commission Vice Chair Michael Hellein at 6:30 pm at City Hall. In attendance were Commissioners David Sichel, Jim Hart and Rick Badem. Also in attendance was Planning Director Janet Shatney. Chair Calder determined that there was a quorum was present.

Absent: Jackie Calder, Rachel Rudi.

Adjustments to the Agenda: None.

Visitors and Communications for anything not on the agenda: Michael Buzzi came and listened.

Old Business: The April 25, 2019 minutes were approved with a grammatical correction by a motion by Commissioner Sichel, seconded by Commissioner Hart. **Motion carried.**

Unified Development Ordinance (UDO): Alison Friedkin of Downstreet Housing was in attendance to talk with the Commission about her letter sent dated May 2, 2019 regarding outdoor space and bulk storage (p. 100, 3201.B., 3201.C.).

The outdoor space requirement, 3201.B seemed restrictive to Downstreet Housing. It was clarified that the rule applies to new buildings that are 5 or more units. Talk occurred of the ½ mile requirement from a park, as well as the ability to have the Development Review Board have the ability to reduce or waive these requirements, as stated in section 3201.A(3). That satisfied Downstreet Housing's question.

The other item they were concerned with was the Bulk Storage requirements in section 3201.C on page 100. Ms. Friedkin stated that she understand that with new construction, being able to design for something like 60 square feet of bulk storage is understandable, but not for rehabilitating buildings, and most especially any historic buildings.

Ms. Friedkin outlined that their past practice is to start with an existing building that didn't have any housing in it at all. She gave the example of the French Block in Montpelier. This size for bulk storage is much too high, and would appreciate even the ability to have a waiver from the Development Review Board that would allow for reduction or elimination of such a requirement. She understand the need, but this makes it too difficult to work into a building rehab. And, when Federal Historic Tax Credits are used, it ultimately comes down to someone else saying what walls go, what stays, etc.

Vice Chair Hellein said his reasoning for wanting storage is to help reduce the storage use of front yards, balconies, etc. for people's things, and feels it's a good reason to have it, and agrees this might tie someone's hands to a degree.

It was suggested to have an overall storage requirement size if no waiver; and also suggested the ability to have both. Further discussion over reducing the 60 sf to something less, like 30 sf; and even 24 sf with a 4' dimensional requirement be written.

Commissioner Badem stated he was not opposed to waiver language, and Commissioner Sichel agreed that he is not either, but would like to restrict the waiver to certain areas of the city.

Further discussion as to whether or not an oversized closet would fit the description of bulk storage occurred. Ultimately the general consensus was that 60 sf was too large, and to come up with some number if that is what was desired. Ms. Friedkin stated that that was fine, but is still a proponent of the waiver ability if it just cannot be found.

Lastly, Vice Chair Hellein talked about his desire to take the Conservation District back to what is defined currently (single family homes, duplexes, min. 5 acre dwelling unit size) from what it is now; that the expedient thing to do is to continue to keep the Valsangiacomo and Sleeper lands as is in R-4 as was voted, but feels this isn't the right thing to do. So, do we create a new district? Did we consider all the elements when we put the proposed Conservation District into play?

Director Shatney stated that at this time she hasn't received any written comments from Barre Area Development Corp. Director Schwartz, or Mr. Lauzon. She did converse with Mr. Schwartz and that he has been ill, and would still like the ability to comment, and will try and get something in prior to the May 23rd meeting.

The few things that appear to be on the agenda for May 23rd will be to finalize any change in the bulk storage requirements; review any comments presented by Mr. Schwartz, and any clarifying email regarding comments made by Council Boutin regarding an area of the city he would like to see revised.

New Business: none.

Adjourn: The Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm on a motion from Commissioner Hart, seconded by Commissioner Sichel. **Motion** carried.

There is no audio recording of this meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Shatney, Planning Director