

Shaftsbury Planning Commission
February 11, 2020

The meeting came to order at 6:06 p.m. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Naomi Miller, and Mike Cichanowski.

Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the January 28 minutes. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Williams read the very short minutes of the field visit meeting held February 3 at which all commissioners were present. Ms. Miller moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

Kennels

Ms. Miller shared information re how Pownal, Arlington, and Sandgate treat kennels in their bylaws. The information offered little guidance. The group discussed the utility but questionable status of an existing pet boarding facility in an R district.

RC, Route 7A

Mr. Andrew Knafel joined the group. He owns Clearbrook Farm, one of a cluster of businesses at the intersection of Hidden Valley Rd. and Route 7A, which the Commission has been considering zoning RC. Mr. Williams said he'd talked with one of the owners of the Chocolate Barn there, who is concerned about traffic speed, turning movements, and sight distances. Mr. Knafel echoed those concerns and said only a blinking light could help. Mr. Cichanowski said he'd spoken with the brother of the owner of the former inn at Old Depot, who was uncommitted. Mr. Knafel said an RC designation might free him from current VAAFV regulations that require that $\geq 50\%$ of the product sold at his farm stand be grown at the farm. He explained the history of the Act 250 permit process that resulted in the setting aside for ag use the property he eventually purchased. Mr. Knafel wondered if RC at the site was in the best interests of the Town; do we want a used auto lot there?

Mr. Williams explained the Commission's intention to recommend that the frontage from Cleveland Avenue south to Town Line Road become RC.

Mr. Cichanowski wondered if the existing VC at and near Tunic Rd. could be moved to the Hidden Valley cluster instead.

Mr. Williams pointed out that if the PC proposes no change at the cluster, no one at the hub would be affected. Mr. Cichanowski wondered if lack of RC designation would threaten business transferability. Mr. Knafel said the current mix at the intersection is near ideal; would we want any other combination of businesses? Ms. Miller followed up, saying the PC could inadvertently threaten the pastoral feel of the area, which greatly contributes to its appeal to visitors.

Mr. Williams will find out more about the Act 250 requirements for the Knafel property (it might have to stay in ag). He will also reach out to Mr. Becker there.

The PC briefly discussed an RC zone at the Lamb Rd. intersection with 7A and southward.

Kennels

Ms. Miller urged that the bylaw reference the concerns and input of neighbors, rather than trying to put in place, for example, a decibel requirement in a one-size-fits-all attempt to regulate. Mr. Cichanowski wondered whether kennels could be allowed as a home occupation, but with additional regulations. All wondered: are we regulating both dog breeding businesses and boarding facilities, and if so, should each be allowed in both R and C zones? Mr. Cichanowski wondered if C-zone boarding facilities are so rare as to be irrelevant to the task at hand (doesn't someone have to live in a boarding

facility?). Ms. Miler will talk to a local dog boarding facility owner, and get information on how Manchester handles the matter. Mr. Williams will check in with Jim Sullivan at BCRC.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 7:45 p.m.

Notes by ZA Stiles.