

Shaftsbury Planning Commission  
Teleconference held June 9, 2020

Present via the GoToMeeting platform were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Mike Foley, and Mike Cichanowski. Guests Tom Huncharek and Joan Race joined the conversation. Zoning administrator Shelly Stiles arrived on line about 6:15 p.m.

The meeting came to order at around 6:05 p.m.

Mr. Foley moved to approve the May 26 minutes. Mr. Cichanowski seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

The group discussed possible rezoning to RC of the business cluster at Hidden Valley Road and 7A. Mr. Williams summarized the content of the June 1 Select Board discussion of the matter: the selectmen wish to legitimize the existing commercial character of the cluster. The SB indicated it could order the PC to make the change. Mr. Williams noted that many have expressed concern about the speed of traffic coming down (going north) on Bottum's Hill. He recommended starting the new RC zone at the existing business highest on the hill, and extending it in a 500' roadside corridor on a parcel line basis to Birch Hill on the west and Buxbaum on the east. Mr. Huncharek asked that the speed limit at the intersection be further investigated.

Mr. Cichanowski moved to create a new RC zone from the approximate location of the Herzfeld property on the south, on both sides of 7A, to Birch Hill Road on the west and incorporating the Buxbaum property on the east. Mr. Foley seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

It was agreed that Mr. Williams will craft a memo to the Select Board containing that recommendation, the earlier recommendation to rezone from the VC boundary south to the Bennington Town line, and a note that RC zoning may also be appropriate beginning at Whitman's and running northward on 67E to Lamb Road. He will recommend that the Town intervene with Vtrans regarding lowering the speed limit at Bottum's Hill. It was agreed that because promoting commercial development is the highest priority of the Town Plan, the rezoning would not require an amendment to the Plan.

The group discussed kennels. Mr. Cichanowski wondered if maybe there should be two "levels" – home occupations on a minimum of a certain number of acres, and something else in the C or I zones. Mr. Williams was uncomfortable with that two-tier arrangement. Mr. Foley suggested dealing with grooming first as it is the easiest to handle. Mr. Cichanowski said even a 10-acre lot might not protect neighbors from barking. Mr. Williams suggested the noise ordinance might protect neighbors in such situations. The group will look into state statutes regarding animal welfare in case they offer guidance as to how many square feet are needed per animal. Mr. Cichanowski suggested that dog boarding could simply be considered a commercial activity. The discussion will continue at later meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Notes by ZA Stiles