

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

Cole Hall and remotely via the Zoom platform

May 10, 2022

Call to order

The meeting came to order at 6:04 p.m. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Naomi Miller, Martha Cornwell, and remotely, Erin Cross. Also present was zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

Minutes

Ms. Miller moved to approve April 26 minutes. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Tiny houses

The commission discussed an email from Chris Ponessi from Mance Engineering Partners regarding wastewater and spring systems for residences with composting toilets. Questions remain. Ms. Cornwell said she wants to change the bylaw to let people know that tiny houses are a possibility. She and Ms. Cross said that young people are especially looking for these kinds of affordable housing opportunities.

Ms. Cornwell moved to change the bylaw as follows (changes are shown using Word's "track changes" function): Manufactured Home (or Mobile Home or Tiny House or Home): A structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and is designed for use with or without a permanent foundation when attached to the required utilities. The term "Manufactured Home" does not include a "Recreational Vehicle". Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Conflicting planning priorities

Ms. Miller suggested the commission discuss how to approach balancing the priorities of affordable housing, conserving forests and wildlife corridors, and conserving farmland. Mr. Williams suggested the solution is in where each is located; for example, there is still room for more housing in the VC and VR zones. Ms. Cross pointed out Stanley Tools and the Dailey building. Mr. Williams said single family development is likely to nibble around the edges of the R zones. He acknowledged that Shaftsbury has "suburban zoning," and that upzoning makes sense. However, it would be resisted.

The commission agreed to continue to think about how to increase the availability of housing without decreasing the availability of open spaces.

Mr. Williams will bring his suggestions as to how to improve housing opportunities to the next meeting.

Other business

Ms. Cornwell suggested we review the language of bylaw section 3.3.2.

Ms. Cornwell suggested all have a look at the zoning/planning section of the website. ZA Stiles said she hopes to adapt Londonderry's "Frequently Asked Zoning Questions" for the website. (Their ZA has given permission to do so.)

We need to keep in mind a late summer deadline for kicking of the hearing process for bylaw changes.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 7:15 p.m.