

**TOWN OF BOWDOINHAM
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Town Office – Kendall Rm
December 16, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

APPROVED January 27, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nate Drummond (Chair)
Reeve Wood
Richard Joyce
Tracy Krueger (Vice Chair)
Allen Acker

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Shippen
Justin Schlawin

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer Curtis, Town Planner and Economic Development
Coordinator

1. REGULAR MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chair Drummond called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. DETERMINE QUORUM AND VOTING MEMBERS

It was determined that a quorum was present.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 16, 2021

Chair Drummond made the decision to wait for members that may be attending late to vote on the minutes.

Edits: Chair Drummond did not call the meeting to order

Ms. Krueger made a motion to approve the minutes as amended

Mr. Acker 2nd the motion

All in favor (AIF)

4. DISCUSSION of Comprehensive Planning Committee recommended revisions to Land Use Ordinance

Mr. David Asmussen, Vice Chair of the Comprehensive Planning Committee presented recommendations.

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There was a discussion of the reasoning behind the recommendation for to include particular water critical businesses under the wellhead protection zone for public drinking water wells. It was noted that prohibiting all of the uses from the Residential Agricultural District would accomplish that same goal, and then some.

The reticence among some of the Comprehensive Planning Committee members to prohibit all of those businesses from the R/A was around automobile sales, service, and repair uses.

It was noted that nearby communities with commercial districts don't allow those types of automobile uses in the residential districts.

Mr. Acker stated that he felt there was adequate regulatory infrastructure in place to manage the potential conflicts of use.

There was a discussion about the comprehensive planning recommendation for prohibiting industrial uses from the residential/agricultural area.

It was brought up that if the residential homes nearby contaminated areas could hook up to public water, it would create extra protection.

Chair Drummond noted that farm-type operations, not proposed to be regulated as such, pose similar types of risks in the same category due to equipment storage, etc. He stated that his preference was to carve out auto sales, service, and repair from the proposed list of uses to prohibit. He suggested those uses might be proposed separately for prohibition.

Mr. Asmussen said the strength of the list is that it mirrors the state list.

Ms. Krueger said that she felt like prohibiting the uses didn't reflect the character of Bowdoinham.

Mr. Wood joined the meeting.

Chair Drummond said he was comfortable moving proposals to be voted on at the public meeting, even if the Planning Board was conflicted about decisions, with the understanding they are neither explicitly for or against.

It was discussed that these competing concerns seem to indicate that there is a need for a residential/business district.

There was a discussion about the defining characteristics of areas that would drive locations of districts, including public water, and the need to allow higher density in some locations so that other places can remain lower density.

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The inevitability of more development around the interstate and value of incentivizing the type of development that is preferred was brought up by Ms. Krueger and Mr. Wood.

Chair Drummond said he agreed with the justification of expanding the village districts to coincide with public water.

Post Road was suggested by Mr. Acker as an already densely developed road where additional density might be appropriate. He also stated that the top of Bowdoinham is much closer to the Richmond exit and high density housing in that area may also make sense.

Mr. Wood suggested that the lower part of Fisher Road where it meets Topsham is starting to get fairly densely developed already and it might be an appropriate area to extend higher density to.

Chair Drummond said he was hesitant to engage in rezoning and creating new districts because of the controversy it's likely to stir up.

Mr. Joyce said he wanted to see the high value agricultural lands preserved.

Ms. Krueger said it made sense for the Planning Board to wait for the Comprehensive Planning Visioning process to finish up. She said the Board needs to have a different type of workschedule to work on districts.

Mr. Asmussen noted that the Comp planning committee would be doing a lot of that type of work and it might not be necessary for the Planning Board to take it on.

The Board decided expanding the village would be an ongoing discussion and should not go to Town Meeting this year.

The Board decided to have a public hearing on the recommendations 1-3 forward from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The Board was not interested in moving #4 forward. Allen brought up the suggestion to increase the setback from all wells to double the state standard, 600 feet. The additional use-specific standards were discussed and that they were targeting the same concerns.

There was a discussion about finding a middle ground between 4 and 5.

Mr. Wood made a motion that the Planning Board propose edits to the land use ordinance as proposed by the Comp Planning Committee, specifically as listed in bullet points 1, 2, 3

Ms. Krueger 2nd

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AIF, Mr. Joyce abstained

Mr. Wood made a motion to amend the land use ordinance to prohibit dry cleaning, metal plating, aboveground oil storage facilities from the RA District.

Mr. Acker 2nd

AIF

Solar Energy Discussion:

The Board discussed the minimum size that should be reviewed and felt like systems less than 3,000sf of panel space should be considered a small system that doesn't require site plan review.

The board thought that roof mounted solar should be allowed by right.

The board discussed language for avoiding impacts to agricultural soils.

Mr. Wood Made a motion to recommend edits to the land use ordinance to address solar energy systems, as set forth in the memo from town staff and as amended at the December 16, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Krueger 2nd

AIF

Chair Drummond recommended tabling the other three memos and vote on the November meeting minutes. (See Item 3 above).

ADJOURN MEETING

Motion was made, seconded, and it was unanimously

VOTED

To adjourn the meeting at 10:06 p.m.