

TOWN OF STOW  
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the May 16, 2023 Planning Board meeting

Planning Board members present: Lori Clark, Karen Kelleher, John Colonna-Romano, Margaret Costello, Nancy Arsenault, Mark Jones (voting associate), Deb Woods (non-voting associate)

Lori Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

**Discussion of Meeting Minutes**

*Karen Kelleher moved to approve the Executive Session minutes of May 2, 2023 and May 9, 2023 as written.*

*John Colonna-Romano Seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote:** Lori Clark – **Yea**; Karen Kelleher- **Yea**; John Colonna-Romano- **Yea**; Margaret Costello- **Yea**; Nancy Arsenault- **Yea**.

**Correspondence**

The Planning Board reviewed a letter from the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the handling of preexisting nonconforming lots and associated requests for variances and Special Permits. Karen Kelleher stated she feels the Building Inspector's interpretations are aligned with Town Counsels' opinions as well as recent case law. Karen Kelleher said the ZBA's concerns could be partly addressed through further clarification with Town Counsel and through the creation of an overlay district for the Lake Boon neighborhood, as there are numerous undersized parcels along the Lake.

**Public Input**

Katie Fisher asked whether all lots with the Lower Village Business District are non-conforming and would go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for any Special Permits. The Planning Board clarified that the majority of the parcels in Lower Village are governed by their own Special Permits. The parcels are not non-conforming as the new bylaw eases dimensional requirements. Any new construction or modification would go through the Planning Board.

**Planner's Report**

*Comprehensive Plan Update*

The Planning Department published a Request for Proposals for consulting services for the Comprehensive Plan update. A pre-proposal conference for prospective proposers was held on May 15, with three firms represented. Proposals are due by June 1, 2023 at 1pm.

**Public Hearing**

The Cottages at Wandering Pond Active Adult Neighborhood Special Permit, Athens Street

*Karen Kelleher moved to continue the public hearing on the Cottages at Wandering Pond Active Adult Neighborhood Special Permit to June 27, 2023 at 7:30pm without testimony.*

*John Colonna-Romano Seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote:** Lori Clark – **Yea**; Karen Kelleher- **Yea**; John Colonna-Romano- **Yea**; Margaret Costello- **Yea**; Nancy Arsenault- **Yea**.

### **Review Town Center Streetscape Improvements Request for Proposals (RFP)**

The Planning Board reviewed a draft RFP for Town Center Streetscape Improvements. Comments focused on the definition of 'Town Center' and the deliverables associated with each task. The Board agreed the geographic scope should not be narrowed down at this early stage. The Board reviewed the number of public meetings and the number of staff level meetings. The Board agreed language should be included to state that the chosen engineering firm could look at whether Common Road would be functional as a one-way, as that provide more information for a determination to be made. Before publishing, the RFP will also be reviewed by the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee and the Complete Streets Committee.

### **Planning Board Work Plan**

The Planning Board reviewed the work plan as last revised from January 25, 2023. Items were updated because of Annual Town Meeting's approval of zoning amendments. Review of Lower Village Rules and Regulations and creation of Design Guidelines were added to the list. At the request of the Building Inspector, a review of the lighting bylaw was added to the list. The Planning Board discussed the need to review open Special Permits on a regular basis. The Board agreed that the need to revise the Sign Bylaw should be reviewed prior to further work on amending it, in order to solidify the purpose of the changes.

Margaret Costello moved to adjourn.

John Colonna-Romano seconded.

**Roll Call Vote:** Lori Clark – **Yea**; Karen Kelleher- **Yea**; John Colonna-Romano- **Yea**; Margaret Costello- **Yea**; Nancy Arsenault- **Yea**.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Valerie Oorthuys