

**TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**  
**Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 19, 2023**

**Members Present:** Kevin Anderson, Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** JB Weir, Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Others Present:** Alex Belenz (SE Group), Julia Randall (SE Group)

**II. Regular Business.**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Alice. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

**2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items.**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**3. Public Forum.**

Nobody requested an opportunity to address the PC.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of September 5, 2023 were amended and approved.

**5. Draft Zoning Bylaws**

The draft Bylaws were reviewed in preparation for their being presented to the Selectboard and DRB and feedback sought from those groups. First, the changes being proposed which are outside the scope of the work with SE Group were outlined by JB. He noted the following:

- Addition/revision of definitions for
  - Junk
  - Junk Motor Vehicle
  - Salvage Yard (These first three will be more fully cited to VSA)
  - Lot – to include that a road ROW creates a natural subdivision
- PUD/PRD adjustments
- PRD standards had been removed through Irasville/Village proposed updates, JB added back in the standards which should still be applied to PUDs
- Cannabis definitions have not been addressed, as that will be part of the larger scope regarding these uses
- Tiny home/camper/&c definitions have not been addressed, as these will also be discussed further when considering accessory dwellings and related matters

JB also noted that issues related to camping and the potential for inclusion of a ‘campground’ definition will likely be necessary at some point, but not for this iteration of the Bylaws revisions.

Next, Alex Belenz reviewed some of the proposed language which still required some feedback from the PC. He covered the following:

- Slow Road frontage considerations – the consensus of the Steering Committee was that Route 100 is to be considered the primary frontage for properties along the Slow Road; this will be an interim solution, to be worked through in more detail in upcoming Master Planning work. It was agreed to adjust the road-facing façade language accordingly.
- The maximum building footprint for Irasville was clarified: nothing is allowed to be greater than 15,000 square feet; the existing 7500 square foot maximum currently in place will be maintained for hotel, office, and light industrial use.
- Village Business District – will include the same delineation of Cottage Court development as in the other two areas – four or fewer units as a permitted use, and five or more requiring Conditional Use review.

Points noted by PC members included:

- Kevin offered a reminder to include language indicating that the area needed for driveway access is allowable in a front yard.
- Alice raised the matter of potentially prohibiting parking on a front lawn; it was agreed that the Bylaws cannot be more prescriptive than already proposed.
- Kevin proposed that a word other than ‘dense’ be included in the Purpose section of the Village Business District. The use of ‘livable’ as a descriptor for this area was also discussed. It was decided:
  - ‘Compact’ will replace ‘dense’
  - ‘walkable, livable’ will be included for both Village Districts
- Kevin asked about including a depiction of a cottage court where it is defined. Alex pointed out that it is difficult to provide a general example when there are multiple possible configurations. It was agreed to have some type of visual available for presentations of the proposed Bylaws.
- Kevin offered a reminder that it had been agreed to remove the reference to ‘legal counsel’ in the language related to shared parking arrangements.

There was some discussion of the timeline to be followed for the adoption process; it was agreed that Alice and Kevin will attend the upcoming Selectboard and DRB meetings and request that feedback be provided from those groups within a week of their respective meetings in order to adhere to the necessary timeline. SE Group will provide accompanying information regarding the process followed, public input received, and so forth.

## **6. Town Plan Chapter 13 Edits**

Alice reviewed the introductory section to the Plan that was finalized by the Selectboard, and reported that their Public Hearing for adoption of the Plan is scheduled for October 9.

## **7. Wastewater Project Update**

JB reported that the team met with DEC staff on September 6, where there was a thorough review of the multiple pieces of feedback received from the Department. The PER will be amended in accordance with what was agreed upon, and should be ready shortly for final review. A topic subject to discussion was that of determining strategies to be used in order to compile the income level of the service area, with some promising options proposed by DEC. JB will be meeting with USDA Rural Development representatives in October to discuss these options as well as the potential salary survey planned for the area.

JB also expressed optimism for obtaining funding for the project in 2024, and noted that the public outreach efforts related to the project will begin shortly.

### **8. Other Business**

Municipal Planning Grant – Alice explained that money is available through this program for work on Master Plan development, and that Joshua Schwartz has suggested that applying for a consortium grant with Fayston as a ‘silent partner’ would provide a higher level of funding potential. Alice also noted that this program could be applied to for two consecutive years, but that the work would need to be broken out into two segments which each have separate deliverables. There is a match requirement of 10%; enough funds are currently in the PC budget to cover this. AnnMarie has offered to put the grant application materials together with JB’s assistance; it was outlined that these will need to be ready for review at the October 3 meeting in order to meet deadlines. Alice indicated that she would share this information with the Selectboard at their upcoming meeting, as well as provide them with information regarding Master Planning and NDA designation work.

Alice also noted that she is working on an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan, and will be meeting with Ned Swanberg regarding updating the Town’s River Corridor regulations, as well as addressing changes to floodplain and flood hazard area considerations.

### **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary