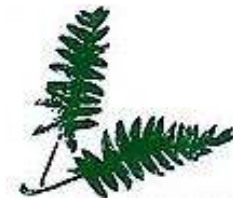


Town of Dorset, Vermont



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Chartered 1761

Town of Dorset Planning Commission July 6, 2021

Present: Gay Squire (Chairperson), Kit Wallace, Scott Thompson, Scott Ross, Scott Durgin, Natalie Quigley, David Berard, Will Clarke, Conor Welch

Also Present: Tyler Yandow (Zoning Administrator), John Cueman, Lisa Cueman, Liz & David Capen, Allan Sullivan, John Facey, Arnie Gottlieb, Steve Bryant, Patti Campbell, Jim Clubb, Bruce O'Brien, Brandy Saxton (part time), Rod Francis (part time)

Absent: Kit Wallace

Gay Squire opened the meeting at 7:05p.m.

Chair to Note Any Changes in Agenda

The chair moved the public hearing for a 3 lot subdivision to be after the Zoning Administrator's report.

Disclosure of Any Conflicts of Interest

None

Board Members Introduced Themselves.

Recording of Meeting

No one other than the Zoning Administrator recorded the meeting.

Approval of meeting minutes of June 1, 2021

Motion to approve minutes made by S. Thompson and seconded by N. Quigley. Approved 9 – 0.

Report from the Zoning Administrator

T. Yandow noted a significant increase in the number of permits issued during June.

3 lot subdivision, 652 Danforth Dr.

The purpose of this hearing was to ratify the approval of the application by the Planning Commission on March 10, 2020. This was required because the final mylar plat was not filed within the time period specified by State statute. The board voted 9 – 0 to ratify the approval of the permit.

Report from the Design Review Board

A. Gottlieb presented the following applications for the Design Review Board:

- 442 Church St. – Replace existing fence to match neighbor’s except it will have only the top two boards, the absence of the lowest one allowing for plantings.
- 173 Church St. – Add A/C units at 3rd floor. Units to be mounted on roof in such a way as to screen as much as possible from view. The Design Review Board recommended approval of the above two applications as submitted.
- 8 Church St (Dorset Inn), 3156 Route 30 (Barrows House), and 3239 Route 30 (Dorset Bakery). Application to pave gravel parking lots at each location. A. Gottlieb noted the issue for the DRB was the scale of proposed paving, i.e. parking lots vs. driveways. He cited sections in the bylaw which require the preservation of historic character and the preference for gravel over asphalt. A. Sullivan said this work should be considered maintenance. S. Bryant noted none of the lots were visible from the street, and objected to the DRB recommendation the paving be chip sealed. S. Thompson said chip sealing is generally not used in our climate because it does not last. J. Clubb noted some driveways have been required to be chip sealed. These include T. Hathaway’s house, H. Raspe’s house, and his former house at 40 Cheney Rd. B. O’Brien of O’Brien Paving said his experience is that about half his clients like chip seal and half don’t. He also said chip sealing is used in the northeast to extend the life of worn pavement at a reduced cost, but that this only lasts about 5 years and costs about half of what a new paving job would cost. Therefore, adding chip seal to new paving increases the cost by 50%.
- A motion was made by S. Thompson and seconded by D. Berard to approve the 3 applications as submitted, and not require chip sealing for the paving project. Motion approved 9 – 0.

Bylaw Discussion presented by B. Saxton and R. Francis, planning consultants

- Section 3008, driveways. There was discussion about what should be the maximum allowable grade. B. Saxton and R. Francis noted steep driveways are difficult for emergency vehicles (police, fire, rescue) to negotiate and turning around on steep slopes is particularly difficult for larger vehicles. They also noted the liability issue, should an emergency vehicle be damaged while turning around on steep, slippery surfaces. Managing storm run off was also mentioned. R. Francis noted there is a trade off between allowing a steep driveway and requiring a longer, less steep road which could impact the environment more. He suggested allowing more dwelling units to use the same driveway was environmentally preferable, and has the added benefit of reducing maintenance costs for individual owners because this cost would be shared by a larger number of homeowners. This reduced cost can contribute to making housing more affordable.

- Section 3009, drive throughs. R. Francis said our culture is moving away from these and suggested leaving the existing prohibition in place.
- Section 3010, energy generation facilities. This section refers to installations which are stand alone only and not net metered or tied in any way to a utility company.
- Section 3011, erosion control. B. Saxton presented the proposed tiered regulations.
- Section 3012, fences, walls, and berms. R. Francis said this would be a new bylaw section, as they are not part of the existing regulations. He recommended this section be coordinated with the requirements of the Design overlay district.
- Section 3013, grading, excavation, fill, and storage of earth materials. No comments
- Section 3014, personal storage. B. Saxton said this does not apply to commercial storage facilities. It is intended to regulate on site storage of individual property owners.
- Section 3015, ponds. R. Francis noted there are state regulations regarding ponds but these only apply to large bodies of water.
- Section 3016, portable structures. This is not covered in the existing bylaw and will be a new section.
- Section 3017, riparian buffers. At a previous meeting the Planning Commission decided not to include regulations for Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zones as defined by the Agency of Natural Resources and therefore, this section needs to be revised.
- Section 3018, steep slopes. B. Saxton presented a map of steep slopes in Dorset. This topic will be discussed at the August PC meeting.

Public Comments Taken

None

Other Business:

T. Yandow said in person board meetings will resume in August. The bylaw discussion will begin at section 3018, steep slopes.

Adjournment

S. Ross moved and S. Durgin seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:00PM. Carried 9 – 0.

An audio and video recording of this meeting was made and is kept at the Dorset town office.

Respectfully submitted,
Tyler Yandow A.I.A.
Zoning Administrator