

From: Tim Shores <timothylshores@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 12, 2025 at 8:50 PM
Subject: Planning Board minutes February 12, 2025
To: Kimberly VanWagner <kimberlyvanwagner@gmail.com>, Molly Daniell <altermolly@gmail.com>, Swan Keyes <swan.keyes@gmail.com>, Greg Tuzzolo <greg@tuzzolo.com>, Richard Paul Nathhorst <RPNathhorst@leverett.net>
Cc: Greg Tuzzolo <planningbd@leverett.ma.us>

Planning Board minutes February 12, 2025
7:11 pm meeting called to order, zoom only due to weather

Planning board members present: Greg Tuzzolo, Swan Keyes, Richard Nathhorst, Tim
Members absent: Molly Daniell, Kimberly Van Wagner
Members of public present: Carol Heim

- Approval meeting minutes from January 8th; tabled until next time (Of present members, only Greg and Richard were present at January 8th meeting)
- Kittredge Update: No updates since last meeting.
- Zoning Changes Discussion (ground mounted solar, ADUs, Floodplain Bylaw).
 - Deadline for ATM warrant articles is April 1.
 - Removing height restrictions from 4970. GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR ELECTRIC.
 - Discussion to recall the purpose: This will remove any height restriction that requires either site plan review or special permit. The reason for the change is that it has created an unnecessary burden on small-scale solar installations, which typically exceed 9 ft (thus requiring site plan review in typical cases), and which have exceeded 20 ft on some occasions (thus requiring special permit) and which don't seem to come close to the 35 limit height, and likely never will. The original purpose of these height restrictions was out of concern for viewshed; however no small-scale solar installations have been denied or opposed on these grounds in Leverett, and given the popularity of solar installations in Leverett, it does not seem that these burdens on solar installations serve a purpose that fits our community. If it turns out in the future that height of small-scale solar becomes problematic, Planning Board can revisit with evidence of specific cases to guide any changes to zoning bylaw.
 - Greg moved that we begin a public hearing for the proposal to strike the height requirement struck from this paragraph,
 - Small-scale (less than 1,750 square feet of panels) ground or building-mounted solar electric installations which are an accessory structure to an existing residential or nonresidential use do not need to comply with this section but require a building permit and must comply with the other

provisions of Leverett's zoning bylaws such as setback requirements, such small-scale ground-mounted solar electric installations shall be subject to Site Plan Review if in excess of 9 feet in height and not in excess of 20 feet in height and shall require a special permit if greater than 20 feet in height and shall not exceed 35 feet in height.

- So that it now reads,
 - Small-scale (less than 1,750 square feet of panels) ground or building-mounted solar electric installations which are an accessory structure to an existing residential or nonresidential use do not need to comply with this section but require a building permit and must comply with the other provisions of Leverett's zoning bylaws such as setback requirements.
 - Richard seconded the motion. Greg, Richard, Swan and Tim voted yes. Greg will begin the process for the public hearing.
- Floodplain bylaw: Richard can prepare proposed language for next meeting. Per a webinar attended recently by Richard and Tim, we should consider it necessary to propose floodplain bylaw changes at the May 2025 Town Meeting in order to remain in compliance with FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program.
- ADU bylaw: The model bylaw is now available, and Molly has a clear understanding of what existing bylaw needs to be removed. We have a path to proposing the change at May 2025 Town Meeting... it may not be necessary to do so but if we can agree on the changes at the next meeting, we should try.
- Next: Will meet on February 26th to review and discuss Floodplain and ADU zoning changes. Then meet on March 19th to begin the public hearing for Solar, Floodplain, and ADUs zoning changes.
- Housing Production Plan Discussion
 - Nothing to decide tonight, but Tim wants to make sure we're talking about our next project, which he proposes should be a Housing Production Plan. This would be a sensible next step after the Comprehensive Plan (which recommends a HPP), it would give us further insight into our housing stock, recent trends of how it has changed, and information on which to decide whether we want to do anything to influence those trends. It would also be a good platform for continuing the larger discussion about affordability and affordable housing.
 - Greg's experience in Maynard was that it was a \$30K-\$40K project in terms of 3rd party consultant costs.
 - Everyone is generally agreed that the state Community One Stop for Growth grant program will more than likely award Leverett a grant for an HPP. Community One Stop for Growth application deadline is late winter of each year (February or March), so we would apply in Winter 2026 for a FY27 grant.
 - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/community-one-stop-for-growth>

- For the next meeting Greg will review HPPs on the state website.
 - <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/chapter-40b-housing-production-plan>
- Public hearing continued - Kennel Definition
 - Discussed modifications to proposal.
 - Greg moves that we advance these changes as a warrant article to the Annual Town Meeting, proposing these changes:
 - Remove 'personal kennel' addition to primary use table.
 - Add to accessory use section:
 - 2249. Personal kennels are allowable in all districts as an accessory use.
 - Article 6. Definitions
 - Remove current definition:
 - Kennel shall mean one pack or collection of dogs on a single premises, whether maintained for breeding, boarding, sale, training, hunting, or other purposes, and including any shop where dogs are on sale, and also including every pack or collection of more than three (3) dogs, three months old or older, owned or kept by a person on a single premises regardless of the purposes for which they are maintained or kept.
 - Replace with new language that reflects state law:
 - Kennel shall mean a pack or collection of dogs on a single premise, including a commercial boarding or training kennel, commercial breeder kennel, domestic charitable corporation kennel, personal kennel or veterinary kennel.
 - Seconded by Tim; Greg, Swan, Richard and Tim voted in favor. No comments from the public. Greg moved to close public hearing; Tim seconded; All in favor. Greg will send this proposed zoning change to Margie McGinnis for Town Meeting warrant.
- Walk-in Business
 - Tim updated the Board on printing of Comprehensive Plan
 - Tim has ordered the printed copies from Collective Copies in Amherst of the Comprehensive Plan (24 copies each of the 50-page plan and the 100-page appendix A Phase 2 Report). Reminder that this made use of the \$2,100 credit on account at Collective Copies, paid for in June 2024 with the final balance of the state grant for phase 2 of the planning process. Tim plans to give copies to the library (3 copies) and Town Hall (3 copies), and to give a copy to each Planning Board member (6) and Steering Group member (12).
 - The remaining appendices run to nearly 900 pages, so Tim will print a single copy on his own printer, compressing them to 2 pages per sheet (so it will be around 500 pages). This printed copy can remain on hand at Town Hall.

- 8:36pm: Greg moved that we adjourn; Tim seconded; all in favor.