



**PLANNING & ZONING BOARD
SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 7, 2011**

This meeting took place at Oliver Ames High School, Simmons Lecture Hall.

Present: Christine Santoro, Chair; Walter Johnson, Clerk; Peter Deschenes; Gregory Strange;
Dan Smith; Wayne Benson, Jr.; Brad Washburn, Planning Director

Christine Santoro called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

ZONING BYLAW DISCUSSION

Tonight the board will review the proposed bylaw changes drafted by Brad Washburn and Greg Strange and finish discussion on all. At the next Planning Board meeting on March 21, 2011 the board will review the final articles which will then be submitted to the Board of Selectmen to go before Town Meeting in May 2011.

Signage

Brad Washburn suggests leaving the bylaw as it currently stands (with ban on internally illuminated signs) and inserting a provision that internally illuminated signs would be allowed at the discretion of the Planning Board. Mr. Washburn is meeting with Town Counsel to decide how to amend the bylaw. This solution is intended to be temporary until design signage guidelines can be properly addressed.

In-law Apartment

The introductory paragraph to the bylaw will describe the intent behind the bylaw. Mr. Washburn reviewed the definitions and procedural requirements as described in the draft. He proposed in-law apartments go through site plan review. The board discussed the merits of site plan review versus special permit. The board collectively decided to go with as-of right without site plan review. The board reviewed the language set forth in the draft. It was requested that ADA compliance refer to "access." Square footage requirements were agreed upon at no more than 25% of primary dwelling area with a maximum of 900-square feet. Brad Washburn will finalize language and run the draft by Town Counsel. Mr. Washburn will invite the Building Inspector to the next Planning Board meeting on March 21, 2011.

Zoning Bylaw Allowing Use of Large Scale Solar Energy Facilities

Brad Washburn based Easton's draft solar energy overlay bylaw on a model from the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs. Mr. Washburn requested input from the board on minimum and maximum size in terms of acreage and megawatts. Dan Smith provided numbers

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on the amount of land needed to produce solar energy: 4.5 acres of land can produce one megawatt of power; currently the maximum output is 6 megawatts on 27.5 acres. Mr. Smith recommended no size requirements, as the potential output has increased each year and it would be difficult to predict the future maximum output.

Mr. Washburn reviewed setbacks; if the solar array is near a residential area then the board should consider greater setbacks. Other towns have not placed restrictions on the size of outbuildings.

The board discussed potential geographic areas in Easton and approaches for solar power overlay districts (SPOD). In terms of creating a solar district, the first logical place is at the closed Prospect Street Landfill. Town owned land was also discussed, excluding Conservation Commission land. It is important that the solar fields be near transmission lines. The board decided to create solar power overlay districts at the Prospect Street landfill and on Town-owned Water Department land.

The Board needs to decide whether to go with site plan review or special permit. Merits of both were discussed. It was suggested to do a site walk at Brockton Brightfields. The site walk was scheduled for Monday, March 14, 2011 at 3:00pm.

Residential Building Height

Greg Strange presented draft language addressing residential building height in the Zoning Bylaw. The language establishes pre-existing grade with a maximum building height of 35-feet, per State Building Code. Building height is graduated per distance from setbacks. Pre-existing non-conforming structures will be able to remain as such. Mr. Strange will have Building Inspector Mark Trivett review the language.

ADJOURN SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2011. The board will vote on submitting the warrant articles at that meeting. Brad Washburn will go before the Board of Selectmen on March 28, 2011 to get a referral for a public hearing.

Walter Johnson motioned to adjourn the subcommittee meeting at 9:20pm. Peter Deschenes seconded. Motion passes 5-0-0.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Randi L. Graham, Recording Secretary.