

MILTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular**
Date: **Tuesday, February 16, 2016**
Time: **7:00 p.m.**
Place: **Municipal Building Community Room**
Address: **43 Bombardier Road Milton, VT 05468**
Contact: **(802) 893-1186**
Website: **www.miltonvt.org**

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2 The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
3

4 **2. ATTENDANCE**

5 **Members Present:** Lori Donna, Chair (arrived at 7:12 p.m.); Julie Rutz, Vice-Chair; Tony Micklus,
6 Clerk; Henry Bonges.

7 **Members Absent:** John Lindsay.

8 **Staff Present:** Jacob Hemmerick, Planning Director; Brandy Saxton, PlaceSense consultant (via
9 FaceTime).

10 **Public Present:** None.

11
12 **3. AGENDA REVIEW**

- 13 • None.

14
15 **4. PUBLIC FORUM**

- 16 • None.

17
18 **5. STAFF UPDATE**

19 Staff gave a brief update on the proposed Fee Schedule Amendment and noted that a lot of
20 information was distributed via the Planning Department's Monthly Update.

21
22 **6. NEW BUSINESS**

23 **6(A). Joint Meeting with the Selectboard**

24 Staff explained that a date for the joint meeting has not been confirmed, and that they are working
25 with the Town Manager to coordinate one. The Community Workshop that the Planning
26 Commission had planned for March 15, 2016 will likely have to be rescheduled as a result. Saxton
27 recommended a minimum of 2 weeks advertising time prior to the Community Workshop in order
28 to maximize participation.

29
30 *Next Steps:* Staff will coordinate with the Town Manager to schedule the joint meeting, after which
31 the Community Workshop can be re-scheduled and the overall timeline revisited.

32 [This has since been scheduled for the Selectboard's Regular Meeting of March 7, 2016.]
33

34 **6(B). Selectboard Update & Community Workshop Outreach Preparation**

35 The Commissioners agreed that this topic was covered while discussing Item 6(A); no further
36 discussion of public outreach was necessary at this time, since the outreach day is pending.
37

1 **6(C). Walking Tour of Checkerberry M4 Zoning District**

2 After a brief discussion of the pros (ease of use) and cons (outdated information) of utilizing
3 Google Maps to view the area, the Commissioners decided they would conduct a walking tour to
4 observe the current conditions of the area. The group agreed to meet on February 23, 2016 at 4:00
5 p.m. to walk a loop of the area. Saxton suggested looking for transition points and any existing
6 demarcations during the walk, to help determine where breaks should be in the district.
7

8 *Next Steps:* Staff will contact a local business central to the area, to obtain permission to park and
9 meet there, and advise the Commissioners of the location. [The meeting location will be the Town
10 of Milton Utility Building at 414 Route 7 South, next to Sears].
11

12 **6(D). Unified Bylaw: Use Table & Use Definitions**

13 Staff presented a proposed Use Concurrence Table prepared by Saxton and Hemmerick for the
14 Commissioners to review. It shows all existing use definitions, where the uses are identified as
15 permitted and conditional throughout the Town's Zoning Districts, the concurrence between the
16 existing and proposed uses, and where the new uses appear as conditional or approved in the
17 revisions. Saxton gave a brief overview, commenting that the Commissioners will see that some
18 existing uses have been merged in to one, more encompassing use, while other uses are more
19 specifically defined than they previously were. Additionally, some uses are recommended for
20 removal from the regulations, such as the Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development use. . Saxton
21 advised that the draft Use Concurrence Table is based on national standards and an attempt to be
22 as comprehensive as possible while ensuring that nothing is overlooked.
23

24 Staff explained that no action is needed at this time. This was compiled as a tool for the
25 Commissioners to be able to put proposed district language into context. It makes it easier for the
26 Commissioners to compare the existing to the proposed, while simultaneously being able to see
27 where and how any given use applies throughout the Town's Zoning Districts.. Hemmerick said
28 that he will add all existing and proposed definitions to a new sheet in the file, so Commissioners
29 are able to see definitions side by side, and add a placeholder for use definition review at a future
30 meeting.
31

32 *Next Steps:* Commissioners will review the presented materials and relay any suggestions,
33 questions or concerns to Staff. A future meeting will be designated to use definition review.
34

35 **6(E). Unified Bylaw: M4 Commercial/Residential Language**

36 Saxton presented some revised language regarding dimensional and development standards, and
37 suggested picking up where they left off at their last meeting: dimensional standards of the M4
38 District. The following topics were each discussed:
39

40 **Lot Coverage**

41 Saxton advised that 60% lot coverage is the lowest end of the spectrum, while 80% lot coverage
42 poses more of a problem for stormwater management, and anything above 80% means off-site
43 stormwater management. Bonges remarked that some communities are claiming 100% on-site
44 recapturing of stormwater; he would like to contact the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) for

1 more info about that. The discussion focused on stormwater management and Staff advised that
2 the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is monitoring Allen Brook, the
3 watercourse that southern Checkerberry drains in to, for initial stresses. Additionally, the water
4 table in the area is very high. The commissioners and staff noted that these are factors to take into
5 account when considering lot coverage and stormwater.

6
7 Discussion regarding alternative, permeable parking surfaces was held, with Bonges wondering if
8 these alternative surfaces could be used in an overflow parking area, for example. Donna
9 supported that idea, as it provides for parking in case it's needed, but doesn't add to the over-
10 abundance of impervious parking spaces. The commission discussed applicability to existing
11 residential dwelling units, and potential conflicts between green stormwater infrastructure and
12 on-site septic systems, both of which factor in for lot coverage needs.

13
14 Hemmerick summarized the two key questions:

- 15 ○ How to define lot coverage: what's included or exempted; and
- 16 ○ Should there be different classifications or definitions of parking (for example: low intensity
17 parking, overflow parking, employee parking)?

18
19 Saxton reminded the Commissioners of the various competing factors when determining lot
20 coverage, acknowledging that it's a tough balancing act. Saxton recommended keeping the
21 following thoughts in mind while considering this number:

- 22 ○ what's developable?
- 23 ○ what is the lay of the land?
- 24 ○ what is the form of development currently?
- 25 ○ how compact/walk-able do you want it to be?
- 26 ○ how much green space is there?
- 27 ○ scale is crucial: on a large commercial site, 60% might be too low

28
29
30 The group asked what they had landed on for lot coverage in the DB1 district; Staff replied it was
31 kept at 80%. For the M4 district, Rutz and Micklus favored 70%, Bonges leaned toward a higher
32 unspecified number, and Donna expressed support of 80%.

33
34 The group agreed to put a place holder on parking, and to loop back to lot coverage definition at a
35 later time, to allow time to think about the ideas just discussed.

36 37 **Front Setbacks**

38 Saxton noted that front setbacks are directly tied to parking, and the discussion transitioned to
39 front setbacks. Saxton recommended a minimum of 20' and a maximum of 100' front building
40 setback. While side and back parking are certainly desirable, a policy that does not allow for any
41 front parking is often met with strong resistance. Establishing a setback requirement manages -
42 but does not prohibit - the amount of parking that can occur in front of a building.

1 Bonges asked if setbacks can be established by road; meaning: can a different setback be applied to
2 Route 7 than the rest of the district? Saxton said yes, but she recommends a bare minimum of 10'.
3 Donna inquired about the right-of-way; Staff advised that the front setback is calculated from the
4 end of the right-of-way and beginning of the property line. Given that the Route 7 right-of-way
5 can get up to 60 feet in some places, Donna wondered if the front setback should be lower than one
6 might expect. Staff noted, as a visual aide, that sidewalks are - generally speaking - along the edge
7 of the right of way. This info may be helpful to envision where the right of way ends, particularly
8 when the Commission is on its walking tour of the area.

9
10 **Side & Rear Setbacks:**

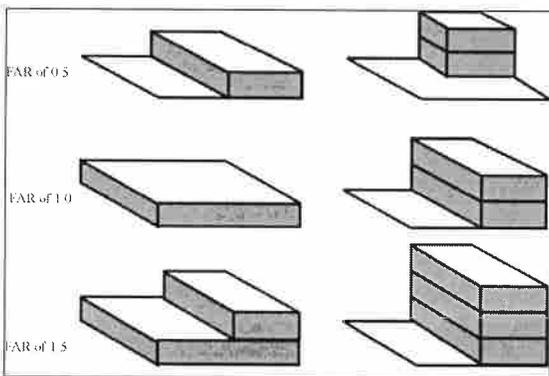
11 The Commission moved quickly through this and the remaining topics. Saxton stated she added a
12 bit of a buffer if the parcel abuts another zoning district, but kept the side and rear setbacks around
13 30 feet.

14
15 Donna expressed concern over the compatibility of the proposed side and rear setbacks and
16 existing residential buildings.

17 After brief discussion about existing and proposed setback requirements for properties adjoining
18 another zoning district, Staff recommended taking the side and rear setbacks down to 20 feet for
19 now, and revisiting that figure at the next meeting.

20
21 **Floor Area Ratio, Building Footprint, Building Height:**

22 Saxton advised that to increase density and create more opportunity for multi-story buildings, the
23 floor area ratio would need to go higher.



[F.A.R. examples]

25
26
27 In terms of the building footprint, Donna felt that the proposed 12,000 square feet is too small and
28 needs to be increased.

29
30 Saxton recommended a minimum building height in order to achieve better building quality;
31 preferably 24 feet but a minimum of 20 feet. This helps to avoid cookie-cutter, pre-fabricated
32 buildings, as those are typically a maximum of 18 feet tall. Saxton added that building height
33 requirements could be applied to a portion of the building only, not the entire structure. The
34 Commissioners were interested in that approach. Some questions were posed about existing
35 regulations and potential resulting scenarios.

1
2 *Next Steps:* Saxton asked the Commissioners to provide specific examples of what they'd like to see
3 (photos or nearby addresses, for example) so she can fine-tune the numbers discussed above, to
4 reflect what the Commission desires.
5

6 **7. MINUTES**

7 **7(A). Minutes of February 2, 2016**

8 MOTION by Bonges to APPROVE the Minutes as written; SECOND by Rutz. Discussion: None.
9 Unanimously APPROVED.
10

11 **9. ADJOURNED**

12 MOTION by Bonges to adjourn at 8:27 p.m.; SECOND by Micklus. Unanimously APPROVED.
13 **Minutes approved by the Commission this _____ day of _____, 2016.**
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15
16

17

Lori Donna, Chair

/kt

18
19 **Draft filed with the Town Clerk this _____ day of _____, 2016.**

20
21 **Filed with the Town Clerk this 19th day of February, 2016.**
22