



Town of Whitingham
WHITINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION
Tuesday, November 8, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

These Minutes will be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Planning Commission.

Attending

PC

Brad Lackey (Chair)
Keith Thompson
Peter Barus (Clerk)

ZA

Gig Zboray

Public

Austin Crispin
Brian Lemay
Nick Shelton

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:57 p.m.

Additions or Changes to Agenda

Discuss campground (visitors present)

Ms. Zboray discussed two properties with multiple campers in residential areas (non-compliant).

Ms. Zboray has been in touch with Mr. Crispin of Parsons Road about two of the campers on his property, but now that the leaves have fallen several more are visible and it appears that people are living in two or three more trailers (cars are parked at each trailer). Mr. Crispin worked to adjust his wastewater permit, without success. He received approval/determination from the Department of Agriculture to be "farming" on the property; but Ag has not responded to calls about how that affects our Zoning Regulations. There was concern for septic waste. They report they are dumping the trailer waste into the septic system for the house.

Mr. Crispin described two (trailers or campers) using the single septic system, the rest used as storage; residents living quietly.

Mr. Lackey explained permitting, permanent structures, the zoning regulations (one main dwelling and one accessory and their respective proportions); that the current buildings met the definition of "permanent"; and about septic and electric hookup.

Mr. Lackey read the definition of a permanent structure, noting the footprint 120sf, height 8ft, a "large structure," an assembly of materials for occupancy or use including building, mobile home, RV/trailer; the modifications that would make them permanent, such as skirting, attaching stairs, removing wheels; connection to water/wastewater; etc.; or occupying a vehicle not registered or inspected to travel on the road.

Mr. Crispin described temporary skirting, noting that all trailers were registered and could be towed, were not connected to a potable water supply (filling onboard tank from a hose).

Ms. Zboray suggested a site visit, to be followed by a letter addressing any issues, particularly with regard to septic. There was discussion of stream water, for "reasonable use", but not considered potable.

Asked to explain "agricultural exception," Mr. Crispin discussed attempts to find out what was required. Ms. Zboray provided phone numbers for various departments; and noted an approval letter ("*Farm Operation Determination*"), and noted complaints about extra trailers and the appearance of residency.

Mr. Crispin described seven vehicles, two occupied campers, other campers for storage, including one used as a temporary chicken coop.

There was discussion of a portable septic tank, and a plan to maintain the septic system by pumping.

The Commission will call when the site visit can be scheduled.

Discuss Campgrounds (Poverty Row and Parsons Road)

There was discussion of campers parked on Poverty Row.

Discuss conditions across from Riggs-Distler (Rte. 112) floodplain violation

The Commission discussed a burned house on Rt. 112 across from Riggs-Distler; apparent septic discharge via homemade sewer connection to town sewer; resident living in a permitted tool shed; no apparent repair work to the house; residents living in an accessory structure in a flood zone; and an emergency health hearing at which a judge upheld the town health order to vacate if without sewer and heat, by Dec 1, 2022. Living in an accessory structure in a flood plain is not permitted and a zoning violation has been filed with the environmental court.

Ms. Zboray will draft another letter to the Parsons Road residents about wastewater regulations.

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)

(None)

Review and approve prior meeting Minutes

Mr. Barus moved to approve the minutes of May 10, 2022. Second by Mr. Thompson. All in favor

Consider new member recruitment

There was discussion.

Discuss hiking trails and publicity

Mr. Lackey suggested meeting with Matt Cole (Great River Hydro) (Dec 13 meeting) about signage at the dam road.

Discuss Town Plan update (if/when)

Ms. Zboray noted a possible update in 2025, and suggested members start on the next revision by reading from the Vision Statement to the Community Profile.

Discuss potential Municipal Planning Grant application

Mr. Barus moved to authorize Mr. Lackey to sign the Municipal Planning Grant Application where needed. Second by Mr. Thompson. All in favor.

Budget discussion

Mr. Barus moved to accept the Planning budget as amended. Second by Mr. Thompson. All in favor.

Other business

Adjourn

Mr. Barus moved to adjourn. Second by Mr. Thompson All in favor.

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Barus, Clerk

November 13, 2022