

Shaftsbury Planning Commission  
May 8, 2018

1. Call to Order.

The meeting came to order at 7:05 pm. Present were commissioners Mike Foley, Mike Cichanowski, and Chris Williams. Also present was zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

2. Report on BCRC Housing Forum.

Mr. Williams reported on some of the more interesting things he learned there.

- A private developer reported that he renovated two structures at Orchard Rd. and 7A in Bennington into apartments. He said there is a profit to be made.
- Bennington Housing Authority described its 4 apartment complex, containing about 200 units. It has not been modernized for energy conservation.
- The BCRC presented on the need for affordable housing in the region. ("Affordable" is defined at no more than 30% of a family's income.)
- In an aside, Mr. Williams reported that Applegate's energy bill was so high it could no longer charge an affordable rent. So they replaced the oil boilers with a central wood fired boiler with two back-ups, and replaced the insulation.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Mr. Williams said Shires Housing seeks tenants via the web and newspaper ads. Maximum rents are tied to income. Target audiences are working lower middle class people, and families receiving disability benefits. He said people at the bottom of the economy are too poor to live in a Shires project.

Mr. Williams reported that the proposed short term rental by law language hadn't been placed on the Select Board's May 7 agenda. He will follow up.

3. Approval of outstanding minutes

Mr. Foley moved to approve the March 27 minutes as corrected. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Cichanowski moved to approve the 4/10 minutes. Mr. Foley seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-0.

4. Tiny house" tourism as it relates to zoning bylaws.

Mr. Cichanowski presented the following language:

1. Each parcel is permitted a dwelling unit and accessory dwelling unit.
2. Two-plus-two home occupation: Each parcel will be permitted 2 additional rental units as a home occupation business and permitted only after conditional use review by the DRB. These rental units may or may not have wheels and will observe 200 foot setbacks from property lines and each other. Rental home occupations will be permitted only on parcels where a primary residence is also present.
3. Anything over 4 units is considered a Hotel/Motel as defined in the current bylaw and subject to current zoning.

The commission discussed in which zones these uses would be permitted. Any zone in which a primary residence is located, even if pre-existing non-conforming. Commissioners agreed that the concept as presented by Mr. Cichanowski is what is desired. Mr. Williams will try to work it into the bylaw language. The final step will be attorney review. (The attorney will also be asked to comment on whether the commissioner can simply delete the Table of Uses from the bylaw.)

5. Other business as required.

- Everyone will work on getting new members.
- Next meetings will be spent dividing up the work on the Town Plan and on rewriting it.
- Mr. Williams said that, without objection, he doesn't think the town needs to apply for a grant to rewrite the plan.
- He noted that goals are the focus of each chapter.
- In response to a message regarding helipads, Mr. Cichanowski said he thought Shaftsbury could require that any helicopter activity take place at the Bennington airport.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Notes by ZA Stiles.