

Buckland, MA Planning Board Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2023

Buckland Town Hall, 17 State St., Buckland & via Zoom

Meeting Agenda

1. Continued work on zoning bylaw changes related to short term residential rentals, with Peggy Sloan (FRCOG)
2. Set date for public information session on bylaw
3. Review and approve minutes from previous meeting
4. Other topics unanticipated by Chair(s) 48 hours in advance
5. Adjourn meeting

Attendees - Town Hall

John Gould, co-chair
Andrea Donlon, member
Jon Wyman, member
Mariel Olcoz, member
Adriana Isaza-Geary, member
Brad Walker, 49 Conway St., public
Heather Butler, Town Administrator
Janice Sorensen, 19 Depot St., public

Attendees - Zoom

Michael Hoberman, co-chair (attended meeting as noted below)
Peggy Sloan, FRCOG (attended meeting as noted below)
Stephane Ferioli, public

Co-chair John Gould opened the meeting at 6:06 pm

Items

1. Continued work on zoning bylaw changes related to short term residential rentals, with Peggy Sloan (FRCOG)

Ms. Peggy Sloan reviewed the most recent draft, highlighting changes from the previous draft:

- Use table, special permit added to the categories of "village commercial, commercial, and historic industrial." Co-chair Gould noted that the special

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permit process allows for public comment, and that the town should revisit the zones in the community, but not as part of this particular bylaw proposal.

- Bed and breakfast use line was deleted.
- In response to a PB question concerning apartment buildings: Ms. Sloan responded an apartment is a dwelling, so numbers of rooms are per dwelling.
- In discussion about special events, questions were raised about the difference between the added impact of events connected to STRRs and events in a more general sense. As amended, the PB concurred the language was helpful to bring to the public information session.
- Concerning "grandfathering" existing STRRs, Stephane Ferioli requested a specific time when more clarity will be available. Co-chair Gould responded the question is with town counsel, and that a number of people are interested in counsel's response. Ms. Sloan confirmed this cannot be addressed directly with the proposed language for the zoning bylaw, but the PB should follow the lead of counsel.
- Concerning categories of owner-occupied and non-owner-occupied STRRs, Janice Sorensen expressed a hope that non-owner-occupied STRRs not be allowed. Member Adriana Isaza-Geary noted the proposed special permit process is intended to help control the number of units used in this way.

(Member Mariel Olcoz joined the meeting midway through the above discussion)

Ms. Sloan will send the revised draft of the STRR bylaw to PB members, with the following revisions:

- Updated Use Table to address non-owner occupied dwellings in the VC, C, and HI districts
- Added Lodging House definition
- Updated Use Table to add Lodging Houses
- Revised Short Term Residential Rental definition to allow non-owner occupied dwellings
- Updated Existing B&B and Inn definitions to add owner-occupied
- Updated #6 in Section 4-9 Performance Standard to address commercial events

Prior to Ms. Sloan's departure from the meeting, co-chair Gould expressed gratitude for the extensive assistance received over the years by the town, and wished her well in retirement.

(Ms. Sloan departed the meeting; co-chair Michael Hoberman joined the meeting via Zoom)

2. Floodplain bylaw revisions

Ms. Sloan has made the edits to the floodplain bylaw draft as requested by the PB, and Mr. Hoberman has shared the most recent version with the Conservation Commission.

3. Ground Mounted Solar at Wastewater Treatment Plant

Heather Butler expressed gratitude to the PB for its research about the 2018 bylaw changes which were intended to lessen the requirements for the municipality for projects such as this one. Ms. Donlon noted the application, the first Section 14 application to be considered, will still need to go through the special permit process. Ms. Butler noted some criteria did not appear to apply to a site already being used for industrial purposes; co-chair Gould noted Section 12 allows for provisions to be waivable. Co-chair Hoberman asked about the timeline for site plan review. Ms. Butler replied the town is hoping for a spring construction start.

October 26 was set for a pre-application conference and/or application submission.

4. Set date for public information session on bylaw

October 17, 6:30 pm - public information session for STRR; public hearing for floodplain bylaw proposed revisions; public hearing for bylaw 8-4 c (trailer) bylaw proposed revisions

(Co-chair Hoberman departed the meeting)

5. Review and approve minutes from previous meeting
None to review at this time.

6. Other topics unanticipated by Chair(s) 48 hours in advance

Member Olcoz reviewed information from attending the public information about the Bridge of Flowers. Info on structural issues to be addressed, seasonal nature of work, efforts to have gardens to visit throughout town while the Bridge of Flowers will be closed.

Member Donlon attended one portion of the UMASS-sponsored solar information session, covering where commercial solar installations are located throughout the state. Average size of installations is 5 acres, but the trend has been towards larger arrays. Information will be made available to PB members.

7. Adjourn meeting

Member Donlon moved to adjourn the meeting; member Isaza-Geary seconded

the motion; all voted in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Alison Cornish, Boards Clerk

Documents Referenced

Buckland Short Term Residential Rentals, Public Information Session Draft (9-12-23)

Town of Buckland Proposed Floodplain Overlay District Bylaw to replace the current Section VII Floodplain Overlay District ~ SECTION VII: Floodplain Overlay District (Public Hearing Draft 9-11-23)