

Town of Windham

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Town of Windham
Ordinance Update Committee
July 2, 2008 - 8:30 am
Minutes

Committee members present were: Dave Nadeau, Jim Lauzier, Brooks More, and Dave Tobin.

Discussion occurred regarding the need to allow off-site signage in the Industrial and Enterprise Development districts. Concern was expressed that the current ordinance prohibits signage where it will be seen from a street for businesses in the Enterprise Business Park. The consensus was the situation should be addressed, but limited in its scope.

Roger, Dave Nadeau and Brooks were continuing to review the proposed changes for consistency.

The Committee talked about the Senior Citizen Housing Ordinance. It was suggested to put forth the Committee's recommendation of the 1,000 foot setback proposal with a density difference and the 500 foot setback proposal with no density difference.

There appears to be some difference between Council expectations of the Committee's work and the Committee's expectation of how best to do that work. The Council had requested the opinion of individual Committee members, while the Committee had formed a consensus of opinion. Discussion occurred regarding the most effective way to present the Committee's work to Council.

The Comprehensive Plan desires a 30/70 commercial/residential mix. The Committee was trying to work toward that, but expressed doubt the ratio would ever be met. There is not currently enough area for commercial space in town. The Council will be presented with the pertinent copy of the Comprehensive Plan and the results of a recent study that pinpointed the ratio at closer to 20/80.

Discussion occurred regarding sewage. Some concern was expressed:

- That the high school's pre-treatment plant may be affected, should the legislature ever reclassify the Prespumscot River, since the high school must renew its license every five years.
- That sewerage load for North Windham may exceed the Town's ability to buy into the Westbrook plant.
- That other options to meet the Town's need should be examined.
- The current ordinance contains a disincentive for running sewer.
- The Gerber Groundwater study had determined the current ordinances wouldn't contaminate the aquifer in 30 years. Would changing the ordinances shorten that time frame?

The Committee had previously discussed whether or not the aquifer zones were still needed to protect Portland Water District wells. From the District's standpoint the district was not needed, however, removing it may affect private wells.

Open space and cluster development was discussed:

- It was suggested that having a 50 foot buffer only in the front of the subdivision would increase the square footage available for open space.
- Side and rear setbacks could be changed to compensate for the absence of the buffer strip.
- Concern was expressed that after subdivision approval by the Planning Board the Council may not accept the open space and the subdivision would remain unfinished. A suggestion was made to obtain Council approval before Planning Board approval.