

Town of Windham

Planning Department
8 School Road
Windham, ME 04062

voice 207.892.1902

fax 207.892.1916

Town of Windham
Ordinance Update Committee
July 9, 2008 - 8:30 am
Minutes

Committee members present were: Dave Nadeau, Jim Lauzier, Brooks More, Dave Tobin, Roger Timmons and Blaine Davis.

Discussion regarding the senior housing ordinance occurred. The Committee reiterated the concern that elderly and affordable housing would use up already scarce commercial properties. It is necessary to consider opening up more land for commercial uses. Some land in areas of existing commercial districts is not suitable for development.

The north part of the commercial district is a narrow area, primarily on the north side of Route 302. There are few large remaining undeveloped parcels. One lot has no frontage, one is the capped town landfill, one parcel is approved for another use. Additionally some parcels have resource protection or shoreland zoning constraints. Some of the soil isn't good for development. There are two decent sized parcels, the rest is developed or constrained.

The central part of the commercial district is located from Whites Bridge Road to the intersections of Routes 115 and 35. Existing big box stores have between 500 to 1,000 foot setbacks. Residential uses shouldn't be encouraged in the area so there is reserved land for additional large commercial projects. There is the constraint of resource protection around Tarkill Pond. If the Town is going to put in a lateral road that area could be developed commercially. If residential uses are allowed, the Town will lose that potential.

The south part of the district is located from the intersections of Routes 115 and 35 to the district line. Large parcels are primarily used for the cemetery, which has a large wetland behind it; churches, schools, and the fire station. There are small residential properties located along River Road. A 500 foot setback along the east of the road would take up valuable commercial land. There is the constraint of slopes to Collins Pond and a resource protection buffer around the lake and Ditch Brook.

The Committee reviewed elements of the upcoming presentation to Council. The Committee's Charge from Council will be included as well as the different elements used by the Committee during deliberations. Next a review of the standards will be presented with a simple conclusion and recommendations based on the amount of remaining commercial property.

The Committee agreed to promote affordable housing not just elderly housing. The HUD 202 program is extremely competitive now; funding is drying up. This program is specific to seniors, and pays capital costs and rental assistance.

The low income tax credits program through Maine State Housing helps you build, but is not extremely affordable and there is not much incentive to do it. You must be in a growth area or on water and sewer.

It may be advantageous to fix the intersection at River Road to open up land for development. Brief discussion occurred regarding the possible imposition of impact fees or a tax to property owners on the benefit of road improvement.