

Westmoreland Planning Board

Notes of 6/18/18 meeting

Attending: Lauren Bressett, Frank Reeder, Alison Fissette

Excused Absence: Tim Thompson, Bruce Smith, Steve Houle Mark Hayward, Elaine Moore

Members of the public were in attendance.

Due to the storm and power outage there was no quorum. However, Lauren Bressett felt since members of the public were in attendance to voice their concerns on the planning board updating the agriculture and farm stand ordinances, she would explain what the planning board does and their thoughts would be collected.

Members of the public were informed of the roles of the planning board. By NH law, the board must meet at least once a month. One of their roles is to create, review and update the ordinances of the town, while also reviewing applications for subdivisions, site plans, boundary line adjustments, and other items.

Frank Reeder said he had informed specific members of the public that they might want to come to the meeting of the Planning Board, as the board was in the process of updating the agriculture and farm stand ordinances. Frank Reeder also stated that if the public does not attend these meetings, then it is the members' opinions that create these ordinances. Frank Reeder noted he has not been a member very long, just a couple of months.

Lauren Bressett stated she disagreed with this statement. She feels the board works hard to become informed, does research, reviews information carefully and then does informed decision making.

Lauren Bressett read out loud the section of the May draft minutes relating to the ordinance work that was discussed at the previous meeting. She clarified what some of the changes referred to such as including agriculture as a permitted use in most of the zoning tables.

Mary Bradley stated she was more concerned with the truck traffic on Rt 63 than a vegetable stand on the side of the road. Lauren Bressett noted that state highways have their own rules and laws.

Pam Clark stated she did not understand what a small vegetable stand would hurt on a country road and did not understand why the board was even considering creating new ordinances for this.

Lauren Bressett and Frank Reeder both confirmed that there is an existing ordinance for this that as written means most existing stands are probably in violation which is why the board felt this needed to be reviewed.

Doug Oatley stated that maybe the board should check to see what other towns are doing with ordinances. Lauren Bressett noted that she does do this, she had a file with examples from about 10 towns that she prepared for tonight.

Clay Lasher Summers stated she feels a CSA is totally separate or different from farm stands and feels she needs to be able to have signs to direct the public to her farm.

Frank Hunter questioned why this has been brought up, was there a complaint or something? Lauren Bressett reiterated that the board had reviewed all ordinances and marked those for a closer look in the future. We do not always have ample time due to hearings or other matters that may take place throughout the year, but work from this list as we have time, and the agricultural ordinances was the next up on the list.

Jan Maes, stated we should encourage more local farming

Members of the public were encouraged to read the town ordinances, mark those they feel present a problem, note why they feel it is a problem and recommend possible changes or solutions. This would be of great help to the board as they work on ordinances. The ordinances are available online on the planning board page or a paper copy is available from the town office. Recommendations can either be submitted via email or folks can come to the next meeting with their suggestions. Planning board meetings are open to the public and public input is welcomed during ordinance work sessions.

Alison Fissette
Recorder