

Vinalhaven Planning Commission

In Person Meeting
July 27, 2023
5:04 pm

Present: Matthew Eddy, Professional Land Use Planner, Mid Coast Council of Governments (Via Zoom) and Claire Jackson, Elin Elisofon, Wes Reed, Chuck Gadzik; Banner Moffatt, Planning Board Chair; Marjorie Stratton, Town Manager.

Regarding the latest version of the proposed revised Land Use Ordinance:

On page 72 the word “commercial” in lodging has been removed.

In Lodging 3 , Pg. 34: the words “but not annually” have been removed.

There was a long discussion about when a permit is required for various types of lodging.

Marjorie pointed out that Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs) are required to have a Health and Human Services permit because they serve food, perhaps indicating that is when a permit might be needed from the Planning Board. Members said because of this B&Bs have stopped serving food.

Banner said “Summer rentals are not a commercial activity and don’t need permits.”

Claire suggested a registration of short term rentals with a manager identified to address problems as they arise.

Marjorie has been doing research on this subject. The message she relayed is “Understand what you have before you regulate, and don’t over regulate”.

Elin expressed concern about families having to move from their rentals in the summer for new owners use and/or additional income thru short term rentals.

Chuck pointed out traditionally homes available for year round residents have been purchased as summer residences and there is nothing we can do to address that.

Mat will send along his thoughts on how to resolve when a permit is required for lodging.

Allowing residential use on the second floor of buildings in the commercial district, such as above Harbor Wharf requires more discussion and thought.

Wes said the building across from the Fire Hall, partially used on the street side by veterinarian Dr. Falcheck, was traditionally a residence and is not subject to the commercial use requirement of the first 30 feet.

As the meeting ended Elin asked Chuck about his concern about the number of wells being drilled on the island. Perhaps an update of the Gerber water study of 30 years ago is warranted.

The meeting ended at 5:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Elin Elisofon, Sec.