Vinalhaven Planning Commission

In Person Meeting

Notes

November 30, 2022

4 pm

Present: Elin Elisofon, Jeff Aronson, Wes Reed, Marjorie Stratton, Town Manger; Banner Moffatt (Planning Board), Matt Eddy, Executive Director, Mid Coast Council of Governments. Via Zoom.

Matt went through the Planning Commission’s edited/revised version of the Vinalhaven Zoning Ordinance and made suggestions for improvement. The focus of this meeting was multi-family housing.

Matt suggested changing the Village Overlay to a separate distinct.

At the previous meeting: Village Overlay District: “It is one of the largest most important districts in the community. Why not make the Village Overlay district a separate district instead of an overlay district”. Make the district more in accord with the existing development in that area, lot size, setbacks, density, etc. instead of changing the 40,000 sq feet lots to 20,000 sq ft and allowing a greater density due to our suggested revisions for ADUs and the new state mandate. Discussion suggested including the area outside the Village Overlay District served by Town water and/or sewer which we all thought a good idea. Matt said we should think about the Village District in relation to the Downtown Master Plan.

Jeff and Wes conferred saying the District was established before the town water and sewer systems were established. This change would create a lessening of options/rights for some (?).

No one is obligated to be on town water and sewer. Permit applications only require a source for water and septic which meets the code. There was much discussion about this suggestion but in the end it was decided to keep it as is.

Matt said there is a financial incentive to have multi family development in the area of town water and sewer. Committee members felt adequate parking per unit, will be a limiting factor in the creation of multi unit, multifamily housing.

Some places in the overlay district have their own wells, Wes has two, at his house 125’ deep with 10 gpm, and his apartments 325’ deep with 20 gpm. The library has a drilled well too. There are areas where the town water and sewer could be extended.

Multifamily is currently defined as 3-10 units. How will an allowance for a large housing complex be permitted? How will cluster development be permitted? Matt offered to bring a suggestion.

How will the permitting process assure the units in a converted structure are safe? Ask the Fire Chief to review the plans? Widths of stairs, hallways, egress, ingress, etc? Matt checking for state regulations/building codes.
Conversions outside the town water and sewer area must have adequate water and sewer. In the water and sewer area there could be no minimum lot size, and the conversion limited to the existing structure’s footprint. 1 parking space per unit.

Matt mentioned in Biddeford, in an existing structure, if there is the room to add apartments without expansion, it would be permitted, requiring 1 parking space per unit required.

New apartments and conversions will have the same apartment size requirements.

The removal of the wording “no unit will exceed 1200 sq ft” was agreed to. Low flow water systems retained in ordinance?

We need to assess how the units sizes and bonus density matches the state definition (?)

The density bonus remains 2 ½ times the base density. Lot requirement 5000 sq ft per unit on town water and sewer, 10,000 sq ft outside service area. Discussion on why have these size requirements? Lessen or remove them? Why are they necessary when these requirements may be inconsistent with village residential development? Does the new law address setbacks and lot sizes?

No seasonal rental will be allowed in year round multifamily housing. How will this be enforced? Additional work of CEO who works 3 days a week currently? Thru complaints? Deed restrictions? Permit restrictions? Leases filed with Town?

What is a seasonal rental? Stern men who need to be here 3-5 months? If a tenant leaves for the summer can they sublet their apt?

A discussion on establishing boarding houses for short term work force housing. Matt offered to research this opportunity.

Is there a need for various aspects of housing: short term work force housing, multifamily housing, and elder housing? How to permit and enforce?

There was a discussion regarding structure design in the permitting process. It was pointed out that the permit application does not ask for a structure design, simply the footprint of a proposed structure.

We expressed our appreciation for the great benefit of working with Matt eddy, and thanked Marjorie for this opportunity.

Our next meeting with Matt Eddy is on Dec. 21st at 4 pm-5:30.

The meeting ended at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elin Elisofon, Sec.