



TOWN OF STERLING PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Butterick Municipal Building, Room 205
1 Park Street, Sterling, MA 01564
March 25, 2021 – 6:30 PM

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, public participated remotely via Zoom.

Present: Kirsten Newman, John Santoro and Patty Page. Participating remotely was Carl Corrinne. Rob Protano was absent.

Staff Present: Domenica Tatasciore, Town Planner

MEETING:

Carl Corrinne called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:30 pm.

Agenda

Call to Order

Public Hearing

1. 6:30 PM - Protective Bylaw & Zoning Map Amendments

- A. Aquifer and Water Resource Protection District/Groundwater Protection Districts: Overlay Map, Article 4, Section 4.7.3, Section 4.7.5.2(b)(i) and Section 4.7.5.2(d)
- B. Display Setback: Article 2, Section 2.4.5
- C. Signs: Article 3, Section 3.1
- D. Earth Removal/Quarrying or Mining: Article 2, Section 2.3.1.D.; Article 5 – Definitions; Article 6, Section 6.2.2.2.a.4.
- E. Table of Principal Uses: Article 2, Section 2.3.1
- F. Protective Bylaw, generally: Board of Selectmen/Select Board references

New Business

- 2. Chapter 61A Releases:
 - a. Lot 19, Upper North Row Road - Justice Hill, Inc., portion Map 18, Parcel 17
 - b. Lot 14, Roper Road – Justice Hill, Inc., portion Map 18, Parcel 17
 - c. Lot 16, Justice Hill Road – Justice Hill, Inc., portion Map 18, Parcel 17
 - d. Lot 18, Justice Hill Road – Justice Hill, Inc., portion Map 18, Parcel 17
- 3. Master Plan Status Update
- 4. Approval of Minutes: February 25, 2021
- 5. Schedule Next Meeting Dates

6:30 pm Public
Hearing

The public hearing for the proposed zoning amendments was opened at 6:30 pm.

Public Hearing –
Aquifer & Water
Resource
Protection

Ms. Domenica Tatasciore presented the proposed changes to the Aquifer and Water Resource Protection District. This proposal builds off a previously supported re-write of the Aquifer and Water Resource Protection District to the new Groundwater Protection District. This proposal includes a new proposed Groundwater Protection Overlay District map as well correct a number of citations to the article.

Public Hearing –
Display Setback &
Signs

Mr. Patrick Fox, Chairman to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), presented the proposed amendments sponsored by the ZBA. Item B – Display Setback, and Item C – Signs, from the agenda are related. The proposal will remove ambiguity, clarify language, and remove the requirement to obtain a Variance and replace with a Special Permit.

Public Hearing –
Earth Removal

Mr. Fox presented a proposed amendment that would delete the definition of Earth Removal from the Protective Bylaws, as well as delete the Variance process from the Protective Bylaws. This article will be pulled if the new proposed Earth Removal General Bylaw is passed at the Annual Town Meeting.

Public Hearing –
Amend a number
of uses in the Table
of Principal Uses

Mr. Fox presented a number of modifications in the Table of Principal Uses. These proposed changes include:

- B.3., rename to “Family child care home, large family child care home”;

- B.4., allow by-right in TC zoning district;
- C.8., C.16 and C.17, allow by-right in LI zoning district;
- C.10., to be renamed as “Kennel as defined in Town of Sterling General Bylaws, c.18 §18-2; Commercial Kennel, Animal Hospital, Veterinarian’s Office - prohibited in RR and permitted by SP in LI zoning districts;
- C.15., C.20 and C.21, allow by SP in LI zoning district;
- C.23., to also include trailers, allow by SP in LI zoning district;
- D.5., allow by SP in C zoning district;
- D.8., allow by SP in C zoning district and also include the wording “with or without retail and/or showroom component.”

Mr. Fox further discussed the Kennel change that would prohibit owning more than 4 dogs in the Rural Residential & Farming district. Owners with a current kennel license would be grandfathered. Mr. Fox explained that part of the reason for this proposal is that when the ZBA does have hearings on “Commercial Kennels,” there is usually quite a bit of opposition to allowing the use. Mr. Fox also proposed the description for C10 (Kennels) be reverted back to the description that is currently in the Protective Bylaws which reads: “Commercial Kennel, Animal Hospital, Veterinarian’s Office.”

Chairman Corrinne then opened the floor for comments and discussion from the public. There were many questions about the proposed change to the Kennels. The Board heard from a number of the members of the public at this very well attended meeting. A number of participants were members of the public that helped to draft the current Animal Control General Bylaw and questioned why the definitions in the Protective Bylaws do not appear to be in sync with the General Bylaw. The public was reminded that any citizen can propose their own bylaw amendments and were encouraged to contact the Town Clerk’s office to learn more about the process.

Public Hearing –
Selectman/Select
Board References

Select Board member Arden Sonnenberg presented the proposed amendment to remove any reference to Selectman and change it to Select Board in the Protective Bylaws.

Patty Page made a motion to close the public hearing, Kirsten Newman seconded. All in favor, 4-0.

Patty Page made a motion to support all proposed amendments with the exception of Kennels by changing C10 to “No” from SP and to not support the proposed changes pertaining to Earth Removal (Table of Principal Uses, Definitions and removing the Variance process that is required in the General Bylaw. Kirsten Newman seconded. All in favor, 4-0.

Chapter 61
Releases

Four lots were requesting release from Chapter 61. Two of the lots were voted on in a past meeting, but the applicant has resubmitted them. Patty Page made a motion to recommend that the Board of Selectmen do not purchase. Kirsten Newman seconded. All in favor, 4-0.

Master Plan
Update

Patty Page updated the Board on the Master Plan. There will be a public meeting on April 15, 2021 to help set goals and actions for the Master Plan. Public is strongly encouraged to participate to help guide the future of Sterling.

Minutes

Kirsten Newman made a motion to approve the minutes of February 25, 2021 as written. Patty Page seconded. All in favor, 4-0.

Next Meeting
Dates

The Board agreed to the following meeting dates: April 22, 2021, May 27, 2021 and June 24, 2021.

Adjourn

Patty Page made a motion to adjourn. Kirsten Newman seconded. All in favor, 4-0.