

Minutes – FINAL
Meeting of the St Johnsbury Select board
October 7, 2015 at 6:00PM-Pomerleau Building

Present- SB: Kevin Oddy, Jeff Moore, Tom Moore, Tim Angell, Jamie Murphy

Staff- Chad Whitehead, Susan Cherry (Planning Commission Chair)

Press- KATV, Channel 7 News, Taylor Reed (Caledonian Record)

Meeting opened at 6:00PM

- Public hearing and public comment on amendments proposed for the Zoning Bylaws.

Proposed Amendments include the following:

- Temporary Overnight Shelter:

Temporary Overnight Shelter definition

Add criteria for Temporary Overnight Shelter to the Zoning Bylaws to guide Development Review Board.

Temporary Overnight Shelters recommended by the Planning Commission to be located in zoning districts: RL-2, R-T, R-A, R-B, MU, Com, and HS with criteria.

- Transitional Residence/Shelter

Transitional Residence definition

Add criteria for Transitional Residence to the Zoning Bylaws to guide Development Review Board.

Transitional Residence recommended by the Planning Commission to be located in zoning districts: RL-2, R-T, R-A, R-B, MU, Com, and HS with the above criteria.

Resident CK indicated that they felt the use should be confined to a hospital environment for a Transitional Shelter.

Resident DH indicated that there should not be shelter type use in residential areas.

Resident PS indicated that there should not be shelter type use in residential areas.

Resident DH indicated that there should not be shelter type use in residential or mixed use areas.

Resident KG indicated that there should not be shelter type use in residential areas.

Resident CB and KA indicated that there should not be shelter type use in residential areas and the board should be considering impacts on safety of children and senior citizens.

Resident IN indicated concerns for no criteria for distance from schools. Susan Cherry indicated that there is a state criteria for distance from school.

Resident IN asked where 600' distance came from. Susan Cherry indicated that this was to remain consistent with other parts of the bylaws.

Resident IN indicated that the Temporary Overnight Shelter would be best located in the Health Services district to take advantage of medical services.

Resident DH indicated he did not feel this type of use should be allowed just anywhere in town.

Resident BK indicated the Town cannot make a decision to put people in the hospital area, and feels there may be a legal issues with making something so restrictive that it cannot be built. If this use is only allowed in Health Services district this may put more pressure on Churches to look into providing the service. She supports the definition changes and a less restrictive on the Zoning Districts.

Resident EB indicated there was a concern on the economic impacts a homeless shelter would have on the area. The Town needs to maintain residential involvement in these issues. The shelter type uses should be limited to Health Services District.

Resident DT indicated the Town should look into the Town Farm Concept. He indicated that we are not locating a specific place, and are just reviewing bylaw changes at this time and the Town needs to put efforts in to the larger Housing discussion.

Janssen Willhoit (Representative) indicated that there was a new law passed in Montpelier in 2014 that required towns to develop plans to handle homelessness.

Resident BQ indicated that the original Correction Center Work Camp agreement that came to the Town allowed for 10 people 5 days a week in the work program, and now it has been expanded. The methadone clinic also grew beyond what was originally approved. The State tends to grow services like this once the door is open.

Resident KH indicated that Section 1a of the language may be restrictive and should be modified. He recommended the board consider economic impacts, especially in regards to mixed use, citing degradation of property values.

Resident PC feels 600' is too small, and it should be increased to 1000'.

Resident TH indicated the selectboard should limit the use to zones, as if they keep it open, there is a potential the DRB could approve the use with conditions, but enforcement is difficult. They feel the use belongs in Health Services. They indicated that recent similar service applications that went to the Development Review Board had no opposition and were approved.

Resident BC indicated that 600' may be adequate, but in residential areas there was still concerns of safety of children, and due to the likelihood of users being pedestrian traffic feels it does not belong in a residential zone.

Resident KA indicated that this service would not be provided just to the stereotypical homeless population, but also veterans, senior citizens, etc.

Susan Cherry indicated that the Temporary Overnight Shelter could include youth shelters as well as others.

Resident CK feels the 600' should include schools and playgrounds

Resident RM indicated the shelters should not be in residential neighborhoods.

Resident JF indicated the shelter use should be in or near medical services and closest to existing special services. Hope to be able to find places that can provide heat all day.

Resident DH indicated that there would be no guarantee that these services were being offered to just St Johnsbury residents, but residents from other communities. Feels the shelter use should be limited to Health Services.

Resident DH worried of people seeking expansion of service in future

Resident RC indicated the board needs to consider who would be responsible for enforcement of permit conditions, and would we be looking to expand police service to the Health Service zone.

Resident SF indicated loitering enforcement is virtually impossible now and should be addressed

Barnet resident GJ indicated there should be clarification of the term residence.

Resident IN indicated that looking into expansion of the Health Services district makes sense and the Town should be proactive.

Resident CK indicated the board needs to consider expansion of the Village Police Department to support Health Services.

- Changes to the Zoning Bylaws

Jamie Murphy made a motion to accept the bylaw amendments for Temporary Overnight Shelter including the definitions of Temporary Overnight Shelter, strike the term “but are not restricted to” in 1.A., change the 600’ in 2.A.1). to 1000’, and on 1.D. remove RL-2, R-T, R-A, R-B, and MU leaving Com and HS.

No second was made to the motion.

Jeff Moore made a motion to accept the bylaw amendments for Temporary Overnight Shelter including the definitions of Temporary Overnight Shelter, strike the term “but are not restricted to” in 1.A., change the 600’ in 2.A.1). to 1000’, adding the term “or playground” at the end of 2.A.1), and on 1.D. remove RL-2, R-T, R-A, R-B, MU and Com, leaving HS.

The motion was seconded by Tom Moore and passed unanimously.

Jeff Moore made a motion to accept the Transitional Residence bylaw amendments including definition change of Transitional Shelter to Transitional Residence, and under item 2.C. remove RL-2, R-T, R-A, R-B, MU and Com, leaving HS.

The motion was seconded by Tim Angell and passed unanimously.

On a motion by Jeff Moore and second by Tim Angell , the board voted to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter under the provisions of Title 1, Sec. 313(3)(a)(3) of the Vermont State Statutes.

On a motion by Tom Moore and second by Tom Moore the board voted to enter executive session.

On a motion by Jeff Moore and second by Tim Angell, the board voted to come out of executive session.

The chair had nothing to report and the meeting adjourned on a motion by Tom Moore and second by Jamie Murphy.