



TOWN OF OXFORD
S.B. Church Memorial Town Hall
486 Oxford Road, Oxford, Connecticut 06478-1298
www.Oxford-CT.gov

Planning & Zoning Commission

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKSESSION

September 17, 2012
7:00 PM, Room B
Oxford Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bill Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Secretary Pat Cocchiarella, Vice Chairman Bonnie Bartosiak, Chairman Bill Johnson, Alternate Edna Cruz, Tanya Carver & Attorney Peter Olson

REVIEW & DISCUSSION

1. Proposed DRAFT Regulations of Article 10, Section 9 – Affordable Housing Applications

Attorney Peter Olson stated that the paperwork that he handed out this evening is the same paperwork that was handed out to commission members at the last regular meeting. He noted that it is a four page document which would be an amendment to the current Article 10, Section 9, of the Oxford Zoning Regulations.

Harold Cosgrove joined the meeting.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that the intention is to put forth standards that applicant's that want to pursue an 8-30 (g) application are going to follow. He stated that a developer is going to do their best to follow the criteria so that they will be approved, if the applicant is denied, it usually goes to litigation.

Chairman Bill Johnson commented that he thinks that the best approach to affordable housing is to be positive rather than negative.

Attorney Peter Olson commented that the regulations are intended to deal with the policies and procedures in the regulations to deal with any 8-30 (g) applications.

Wayne Watt joined the meeting at 7:05 PM.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that another way to approach this is to look at the accessory apartments in town and come up with any units that may already exist and qualify under 8-30 (g).

Attorney Peter Olson stated that the idea of smaller lots works in conjunction with an overlay zone. He commented on this item briefly.

Chairman Bill Johnson stated that there are only four items in the document, and questioned if that would be enough criteria for commission to be able to deal with any affordable housing applications which are submitted for approval.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that under 8-30(g), there is only so much that the commission can do to survive an appeal. He commented that they are trying to put as many guidelines on an 8-30(g) application that they can, so that the applicant will conform to the specific requirements in the regulations. He commented that he thinks the overlay zone will provide the most benefit, but that is a different process that the commission needs to go through.

Chairman Bill Johnson stated that the previous and the current proposal does not look very different.

Secretary Pat Cocchiarella stated that 8-30(g) is something that the commission has little control over, and other areas of the regulations will be affected. He commented that the idea of an overlay zone and possibly getting the accessory apartment amnesty, which are separate from the regulations that would deal with 8-30(g) applications.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that when he drafts regulations he refers to statutes rather than incorporates the statutes in the regulations. He commented that he talked about ancillary projects that can be done in order to get to the 10% and work toward the moratorium. He stated that they need to make sure that if the commission receives an 8-30(g) application, they have guidelines in place for the applicant to follow, and the commission is not going to be able to use those regulations to deny an 8-30(g) application. He stated that the second approach is to find ways to encourage affordable housing in a way that the commission approves without it being an 8-30(g) application, which would be the overlay zone. He commented that the third approach would be to look at the densities in town and not have one size fits all in an overlay zone, and base density on location.

Harold Cosgrove stated that once affordable housing is approved for a certain parcel; he suggested having a new zone designation.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that the overlay zone would partially cover that.

Harold Cosgrove commented that the commission should try to have some portion of the common fees set aside for future maintenance.

Commission members agreed that these types of developments should be common interest communities.

Alternate Edna Cruz questioned how you identify the areas of Oxford that would be suitable for these developments.

Attorney Peter Olson answered that the one of the responsibilities of the Planning & Zoning Commission is to plan for the growth and conservation of the town through the Plan of Conservation and Development. He stated that if the commission wants to manage growth, then the commission can look at certain factors that would be appropriate for these types of developments.

Vice Chairman Bonnie Bartosiak stated that the 8-30(g) regulations state that they have to have access to sewer and water.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that it doesn't have to have sewer, it has to have adequate sewage disposal. He expanded on the state health requirements for sewage disposal.

Secretary Pat Cocchiarella commented that it may be beneficial to include the sewer and water requirement and let the applicant state his case for something other than the sewer and water requirement.

Wayne Watt commented briefly on the mobile manufactured homes.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that there are special regulations that apply to mobile manufactured homes.

Harold Cosgrove shared information that he had obtained from his attendance at a COGCNV Meeting.

Attorney Peter Olson commented that for the sewer and water requirement, they can make incorporate it in the 8-30(g) regulations and the overlay zone regulations as a requirement.

Chairman Bill Johnson suggested that the Commission has goal numbers in writing to keep track of the town's progress towards meeting affordable housing requirements.

Commission members discussed "senior housing" and whether or not it counts toward affordable housing.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that it is considered if it is deed restricted.

Wayne Watt questioned if the existing in-law and accessory apartments would be counted toward the percentages required for affordable housing.

Attorney Peter Olson commented that the commission needs to figure out a way to do a study of all the units in town and get a list of the accessory apartments.

Secretary Pat Cocchiarella stated that the Assessor's office previously called homes with accessory apartments two family homes. He commented that this adds to the confusion and difficulty with this concept.

Commission members discussed percentage requirements.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that the first percentage is 10%, which would exempt the town from further affordable housing applications under 8-30(g). He stated that State Department of Economic and Community Development are in charge of compiling the information on each town. He noted that the latest information for Oxford is 4,746 housing units. He commented that 45 are considered senior housing, and in order to be exempt from the act, the town needs to have 475 affordable housing units.

He stated that in order to qualify for a 3 year moratorium on affordable housing applications, it is based on the actual construction of a specific number of housing units in a given time period. He briefly discussed the concept of the housing unit point system.

He commented that the Commission's goal is 2% or 75 housing unit equivalent points within that time period.

Attorney Peter Olson and the Commission discussed details and examples of how the point system works. He stated that there is a strong advantage to putting into the regulations what the Commission is trying to accomplish.

Secretary Pat Cocchiarella commented that the regulations should keep as much control as possible with the commission, especially regarding density.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that a one page mission statement may be beneficial to explain the goals of the commission regarding affordable & high density housing. He gave examples of points and examples of what type of wording would be appropriate for the mission statement.

Commission members discussed publicizing the proposed regulations prior to the Public Hearing.

Attorney Peter Olson and Commission members discussed ways to implement the Accessory Apartment Amnesty Program. He stated that the Commission should publicize that they are in the process of compiling an inventory of accessory apartments in town, whether permitted or not, and set a deadline for homeowner's to come forward and obtain the necessary permits if needed and file deed restrictions.

He stated that he would draft the document and have it for the next meeting.

Secretary Pat Cocchiarella suggested having a public informational meeting before the Public Hearing.

The Commission discussed the detailed information that they would like to have for the informational meeting.

The Commission members discussed when they would like to hold the Public Hearing.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that any workshops that are held should be done before the Public Hearing is scheduled.

Alternate Edna Cruz made a suggestion to broadcast the meeting over the web for those who cannot attend.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that on October 1st they would hold a workshop, and to inform the public of the amnesty program.

Wayne Watt suggested handouts for the workshop.

Commission members discussed concepts and information that would be available to the public at the workshop.

Attorney Peter Olson discussed briefly with the commission a double overlay zone, and about dividing different parts of town into areas with different density requirements. They also briefly discussed "green development" criteria.

Attorney Peter Olson proceeded to go through the draft proposed affordable housing regulations.

Commission members discussed changes and modifications.

Attorney Peter Olson stated that he would incorporate the corrections, changes and modifications discussed and have the revised draft to the Commission members by the end of the week. He reiterated that the applications would have to be Special Exceptions.

Chairman Bill Johnson stated that all applicants would be informed that they will be responsible for payment to any outside experts that the Commission deems necessary.

Attorney Peter Olson suggested amending the Town Ordinance regarding the Planning & Zoning fee schedule and the administration of the affordability plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Tanya Carver moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. **Second by Secretary Pat Cocchiarella.**
All Ayes. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,



Jessica Pennell

Administrative Secretary

Planning & Zoning Commission

12 OCT 24 PM 4:48
TOWN OF GROTON, CT
Margaret A. West
TOWN CLERK