



PLANNING AND
ZONING COMMISSION

LYME TOWN HALL
480 HAMBURG ROAD
LYME, CT 06371

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting

The Lyme Planning and Zoning Commission held a regular meeting on July 8, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lyme Town Hall, 480 Hamburg Road, Lyme, CT 06371.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ross Byrne, Chairman, Dave Tiffany, Ann Rich, Hunter Ward, Phyllis Ross, Bill Koch, Bernie Gigliotti, ZEO, and Jennifer Thomas, Secretary.

Several members of the public were also present.

Regular Meeting

Sunset Hill Vineyard, 5 Ely Ferry Rd, Map 25 Lot 21; preliminary discussion of modification of their Special Permit regarding potential expansion of operating hours and possibly 3 to 5 events per year.

Present: Matt Caruso and Donna Moore

Caruso stated that they would like to expand their operating hours to include Fridays from 12pm-4pm July through September and potentially add 2-4 small events a year.

Moore reviewed the current operating hours, which include 54 days a year, Saturdays 12-6 and Sundays 12-5 May through November. Expanding hours and including several events would help compete with and capitalize on the growing brewery business. The types of events would include team-building events, baby showers, and tours. These events would have a maximum of 50 people, and carpooling would be encouraged as the winery can accommodate 15 parking spaces.

Koch questioned whether the hours of 12-4 were enough. Ross stated that asking for 12-6 would save the applicant from having to return to the commission in the future if they wanted to remain open an additional 1 or 2 hours.

Ward questioned whether there have been any complaints and Gigliotti said there have been none.

Byrne called for any additional comments from the commission and encouraged the applicant to put in a formal application to the commission.

Old Business

Update on Farming Regulations

Present: Attorney Fritz Gahagan

Byrne stated that the objective for this meeting is discuss the options that the subcommittee has presented to the commission throughout the proposed regulations and approve the general format of the proposed regulations.

The commission approved the general format of the proposed regulations and agreed to move forward with such.

Byrne stated that the subcommittee will be meeting the following week as well as the last week of the month to discuss the feedback received from the farmers in town and the feedback received from the commission.

The commission discussed several options that were noted throughout the proposed regulations, and members provided feedback and opinions on which option would work best within the regulations. The subcommittee will continue to work on incorporating these changes and others into the proposed regulations and complete the cross referencing. A revised draft will be presented to the commission at a future meeting.

Further discussion of regulations needed regarding Airbnb

Byrne stated that he would like to hear from the members who were tasked last month to gather information.

Tiffany stated that he reviewed the Lyme Plan of Conservation and Development from 2014. The items that stood out included the data regarding promotion of Lyme as a tourist destination, wherein 88% were in favor of limiting or discouraging tourism, and 61% discouraged or strongly discouraged commercial development.

Rich researched the zoning regulations and ordinances in Old Lyme pertaining to short term rentals and bed and breakfasts. She noted that Old Lyme does not have a specific Airbnb or short-term rental regulation, but there are regulations for boarding houses and the letting of rooms. Of note, there are limitations on number of rooms and owner occupancy.

Byrne spoke with the Lyme Ledge Light Health District representative regarding the type of inspections, if any, are done for bed and breakfasts.

After discussion, it was agreed that Gigliotti and Byrne would draft some minor regulations to present to the board at a future meeting for discussion.

Continue discussion regarding how best to proceed with control of reflectivity of large squared footage of glass walls along the Gateway and the potential for similar problems arising from solar panel installations

Byrne suggested that in the interest of time this discussion be tabled until a future meeting and the commission agreed.

New Business

Discuss response to the Board of Selectmen's inquiry regarding the appropriateness of maple syrup harvest tubing installation on Town owned land

Present: First Selectman Steven Mattson

Byrne read an email from First Selectman Mattson requesting input from the commission.

Byrne also read part of a correspondence between Phyllis Ross and Fritz Gahagan.

Byrne stated that he feels this falls outside zoning's jurisdiction and is unsure whether the commission should weigh in on this subject.

Gigliotti asked whether the tubing crosses existing hiking trails.

First Selectman Mattson clarified that he is not looking for the commission to make the final decision. The Board of Selectmen are simply trying to get opinions from the major groups in town that deal with town land, including the P&Z, Lyme Land Trust, and others.

Koch asked whether there has been public complaint.

Mattson stated that there have been some complaints, mainly regarding aesthetics, but also that a resident would receive financial gain off town-owned property. The Leasee has been accommodating to requests made in the past to move tubing that crossed trails.

Tiffany commended the town in its efforts to allow residents with varied interests to use the property, i.e. hikers, hunters, etc. and stated that it seems that multiple uses of the land is a good thing and benefits as many townspeople as possible.

Ward questioned whether the equipment can be removed in the off-season and Mattson stated the equipment is fixed and it is too labor intensive to remove when not in use.

First Selectman Mattson thanked the commission for their time.

Approval of Outstanding Minutes

A motion was entertained by Byrne to approve the minutes of the June 2019 meeting. Tiffany made the motion, seconded by Ward, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Thomas, Secretary