



PLANNING AND
ZONING COMMISSION

LYME TOWN HALL
480 HAMBURG ROAD
LYME, CT 06371

LYME PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Public Hearing/Regular Meeting

The Lyme Planning & Zoning Commission held a public hearing/regular meeting on Monday January 9, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Lyme Town Hall, 480 Hamburg Road, Lyme CT 06371.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bernie Gigliotti Chair, William Fiske, Kristina White, Carol House, Phyllis Ross, Fritz Gahagan, Tom St. Louis (alternate), Mary Stone (alternate), Ross Byrne ZEO and Lannie Mossberg, Secretary.

Also present; Commission's Attorney Michael Carey.

Absent Members: David Tiffany, Anne Littlefield (alternate)

Gigliotti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Seat Alternate: Mary Stone was seated for absent member David Tiffany.

Public Hearing:

Gigliotti confirmed the public hearing was going to continue today despite what they may have heard, to be sure the public was able to give comments on the regulation changes.

A. An amendment to the Lyme Zoning Regulations, Chapter 315, Article 8 with new Agricultural Regulations including Article 2, Definitions and all other related Articles.

Gigliotti stated there was some history behind the agricultural regulations, and that 6years ago the regulation working groups started for the agricultural community. Gigliotti thanked Bill Farrel for his helpful gesture of having the draft reviewed by Attorney Branse, at his expense. Attorney Branse's and the town Commission's attorney Carey's review comments were pertinent and helpful.

Gigliotti requested an overview for the public by a committee member. Gahagan gave an overview of the Agricultural regulation amendments.

Ross commented it is a wonderful yet challenging experience and thanks everyone for their time to help support agriculture and the Farmers of Lyme. Stone and St. Louis also agree with Attorney Branse comments.

Gahagan commented that there is a lot to be accepted and some may be policy issues. A working group with Attorney Carey would be helpful. Attorney Carey stated he's happy to meet with anyone from the board that may have any questions. Gahagan agreed with all Branse found and, as what is old/new but there was quite a bit of undertaking and great work.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bill Farrell from Fat Stone Farm was present and spoke. Stated he was one of the farm folks that were able to work on these regulations when the commission was first discussed a few years ago. His concerns are that the regulations should say something about "farm in transition." Second, the regulations do not allow for viable maple syrup or honey. Third, to allow the USDA Farm Service Agency for farms to have the ability to process raw ingredients into value added products.

Baylee Drown from Long Table Farm was present and gave her feedback on the changes. She believes the definition of a farm employee should be changed to farm worker. Farmers market should allow 50% grown in Lyme is very restricting which may restrict certain items sold, for example merchandise with farm logos. Permitted agricultural uses that do not require site plans or special permits. A Farm stand less than 64 square feet should be permitted.

Liz Farrell from Fat Stone Farm was present and spoke. Farrell doesn't understand why maple syrup and honey processing was removed from the definitions. Farrell questioned if small scale processing and expansion will need a special permit.

Ryan Quinn from Long Table Farm was present and spoke. Quinn expressed his concern that small farms that want to sell directly to a consumer need to make sure it's how the consumer wants the product, so clarification on processing would be helpful. Quinn suggested the definition of agriculture be more defined.

Dana Maxwell was present and spoke. Maxwell stated she objects to the special permits and regulations as is. She also agrees with all the other comments from the speakers.

Michael Newburg was present and spoke. Newburg brought up his concerns on buildings, and hoop huts. Will there be enough space for them to produce. Newburg would like to see the definition of a structure regarding farming.

Mary St. Louis was present and spoke. St. Louis believes there should be an active subcommittee with farmers included for working and to voice their opinion on the agricultural regulation wording.

House commented, thank you for all your comments and wording recommendations. Value and flexibility are important and that is what we are trying to work on. A lot of talk on processing. We don't want a company to move in for slaughtering. Not trying to prevent small farms from achieving their goals, just the big farms.

Gahagan commented that most comments were acknowledged, and the board will touch base on every farmer comment that spoke today.

Gigliotti said that everyone has a saying in the hearing. The next draft will be on the website for viewing and comments before the next meeting, with a possible continuance to March as well. Gigliotti also stated that it will take as long as possible, so everyone is satisfied with the regulations. Stone commented to the public, to be sure to submit all the comments in written form to make sure all concerns are taken into consideration.

Gigliotti stated the public hearing is closed and will be continued to next month.

REGULAR MEETING

A. An amendment to the Lyme Zoning Regulations, Chapter 315, Article 8 with new Agricultural Regulations including Article 2, Definitions and all other related Articles.

Ross commented. Gahagan commented we should post the comments, so everyone knows what we are talking about. White questioned if the people see the same regulations as us, reviewed the website and confirmed that they are. The board is looking for a way to make it easier for small farms to get permits but harder for large commercial farms. House and White agree that the regulations should be simplified so it is not hard for the towns people to determine farming regulations. White and Gahagan both touched on hoop huts.

Gahagan would like to gather any questions for Carey, so they can identify any issues and know how to respond.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Continued discussion on the operation of service businesses from rural properties as traditionally allowed in Lyme and how that fits into the Lyme Zoning Regulations.

Fiske, Littlefield, and White will meet Thursday to have a discussion in February.

B. Plan to remove Article 315-17 from the Lyme Zoning Regulations per Department of Energy and Environmental Protection directive and discuss choice of continuing Forestry regulations by the Conservation Commission.

Byrne spoke, Inland Wetlands Commission will continue the regulations and accept them.

NEW BUSINESS

Fiske questioned the landing of helicopters on private property and if there is anything stated in the regulations about it. FAA would be the ones to approve.

Approval of Minutes of the December 12, 2022, meeting.

Gahagan wanted his statement on page 2 under Accessory apartments corrected to “already permit accessory apartments in RU80 and RU120 zones as of right which is well over 95% of the town.” Stone made the motion to accept the minutes with the correction by Gahagan. Ross seconded. Unanimous.

Approval of Minutes of the December 19, 2022, meeting.

Stone approved the minutes. Seconded by Ross. White and House abstained. Unanimous.

Adjournment

9:39p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lannie Mossberg