

**AMHERST PLANNING BOARD**  
**Wednesday, February 20, 2008 – 7:00 PM**  
**Town Room, Town Hall**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Aaron Hayden, Chair; Richard Howland, Denise Barberet, Jonathan O’Keeffe, Kathleen Anderson, Susan Pynchon (7:10 PM), Jonathan Shefftz (7:14 PM), Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham (7:55 PM)

**ABSENT:** Eduardo Suarez

**STAFF:** Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director; Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant

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Mr. Hayden opened the meeting at 7:06 PM.

**I. MINUTES – Meeting of February 6, 2008**

Ms. Barberet noted that a comment from her on page 7 needed to be clarified. She said adding the word “likely” after “will” in the second sentence would work.

Mr. Howland MOVED: to approve the Minutes of February 6, 2008 with Ms. Barberet’s correction. Ms. Barberet seconded, and the vote was 4-0-1 (Hayden abstained).

**II. PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING AMENDMENT**

**A-12-08 Density Calculation Amendment**

To see if the Town will add a new Section 4.12 and amend Sections 4.3231, 4.330, and 4.520 of the Zoning Bylaw to create a mechanism for dealing with fractional results in maximum density calculations for development methods.

Mr. Hayden read the preamble and opened the public hearing for this proposal.

Mr. Tucker summarized the proposal for the Board and said that three of the current development methods have formulas for calculating maximum density, but two do not (Standard Subdivision, and Planned Unit Residential Development). The intent of this proposal is to provide a method for dealing with fractions, he said.

Mr. O’Keeffe said that the Zoning Subcommittee voted 3-0 to recommend that the Planning Board recommend that Town Meeting adopt this article because it’s a reasonable change and consistent with the other methods.

Mr. Hayden said that it adds clarification.

Mr. Howland said he didn’t understand it and suggested it be postponed.

Ms. Barberet asked why it wasn’t done before.

Mr. Hayden said that there are places in the Zoning Bylaw that could be updated and some have been over time. This seems a modest change and something that the Subcommittee believed would be doable at this time.

Ms. Barberet asked why this wasn't done to begin with, and why it wasn't created in whole numbers.

Mr. Tucker said that there have been incremental changes, modest technical improvements. Nobody thought of it before, he said. But there have been times when developers have questioned why the number of lots couldn't be rounded up. For instance, if the calculations equal 7.93, only 7 lots can be developed; the number cannot go up.

Mr. O'Keeffe noted that this would make the development methods more equitable.

Mr. Howland suggested that lot requirements should be changed instead.

Mr. Tucker said that minimum lot requirements would still have to be met.

Ms. Pynchon said that having an example with a picture would be helpful and that the Board's discussion should be on file.

Other members agreed that illustrations would be useful and would be helpful at Town Meeting. Some suggested that illustrations should be included in the Bylaw. Mr. O'Keeffe said that all of the information would be included in the Planning Board's Report to Town Meeting, rather than putting it in the Bylaw.

Mr. Howland said that it would be helpful to have a simple and clear illustration in the Bylaw. He said it would be better to table the proposal and review it at the next meeting along with an illustration.

Mr. Howland MOVED: to review the proposed amendment at the next meeting.

Mr. O'Keeffe said that the appropriate mechanism for the illustration and the Board's discussion is the Town Meeting Report.

Ms. Barberet said that a "before and after" picture would be useful.

Ms. Pynchon said that she would be more comfortable voting after seeing an illustration and revised language.

Ms. Pynchon MOVED: to continue the hearing to March 19. Ms. Barberet seconded, and the Motion passed 6-1-0 (Hayden opposed).

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **Citizen Planner Training Collaborative** – Mr. Tucker noted that the Board received the brochure in their packet. He recommended that members attend if they could.
- B. **Other** – None

**IV. OLD BUSINESS** – None

**V. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS** – None

**VI. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS** – None

**VII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS** – None

**VIII. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. **Zoning** – Mr. O’Keeffe said that three citizen petitions have been submitted and the petitioner will be meeting with the Zoning Subcommittee. The petitions are: (1) Steep Slopes (Mr. Hayden thanked Mike Olkin of the Information Technology Department for accurate maps) (2) Main/High/Dickinson Rezoning – This will probably not be ready for Spring Town Meeting, but the Subcommittee is hoping to bring it back in the Fall as originally planned. (3) Changes to Inclusionary Zoning.

Mr. Howland said that it would be helpful if the Board received copies of citizen petitions earlier in the process. Mr. Tucker said that they would be sent out to the rest of the Board. Mr. O’Keeffe said that it is the Zoning Subcommittee’s responsibility to inform the Planning Board of what they’re working on.

Mr. Tucker said that he is attempting to schedule the public hearings for the zoning amendments to allow ample time for a thorough review by staff, the Zoning Subcommittee and the Board before Town Meeting, as well as time for compromise proposals for the petition articles if appropriate.

- B. **Atkins Working Group** - Mr. Tucker said that Atkins corner is being realigned. Realigning Route 116 at the Notch is in the planning stage. Currently, there is some discussion about using the former trolley line for a bike path, but there are many issues, he said.

**IX. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. **Pioneer Valley Planning Commission** – Mr. Howland noted that there is a meeting tomorrow which he will attend.
- B. **Community Preservation Act Committee** – Ms. Barberet said that the Committee will be meeting with the four groups (community housing, historical preservation, open space, and recreation).

- C. **Agricultural Commission** – Ms. Pynchon announced that the Farmers Forum is scheduled for March 13 at the Hitchcock Center. Invitations will be going out soon, she said. Ms. Pynchon also reported that work continues on the right-to-farm bylaw.
- D. **Comprehensive Planning Committee** – No Report
- E. **Water Supply Protection Committee** – No Report
- X. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR** – No Report
- XI. **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR** – No Report
- XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Howland MOVED: to adjourn this meeting at 8:13 PM. Ms. Anderson seconded, and the Motion passed 8-0.

Respectfully submitted:

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Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant

Approved:

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Aaron H. Hayden, Chair

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