



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Planning & Zoning Commission

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Minutes – PZC Subcommittee Meeting: Subdivision Regulations Draft Review Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at 7:00 PM via Zoom

Zoom Recording: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/gyiCCVgD4U-sZHjvVj3Mwuz61igFldB4YbVjHM_73pN9tzCWull-DwHJA2c6HOC.qjW7YAoo8mOvyXzQ?startTime=1674691231000

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YouTube Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8cN_W78F6w

1. **Call to Order – 7:00 p.m.**
2. **Roll Call – Members Attending:** J. Parodi-Brown – Chair, R. Blackmer, A. Hill, J. Lenky (joins after roll call), K. Orr-LaVack, D. Poplawski, J. Rice, J. Salce, B. Santos, R. Williams **Staff Attending:** T. Penn-Gesek - Director of Planning & Development, C. Dunne - ZEO
3. **Review and Discussion of Proposed Draft – Subdivision Regulations**
 - T. Penn-Gesek has received the first group of extensive comments from Wetlands Agent M. Butts. The Wetlands Agents will be providing more comments. In order to expedite the evening's discussion, it is suggested that the members limit their review to the previously highlighted content based on the last subcommittee meeting. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to address the Wetlands Agent's comments. The members agree to this strategy, with the next meeting planned for Weds 1 Feb.
 - The content covered in the evening's meeting includes some definitions, digital data requirements, shared driveways, sidewalks and owners' associations.
 - **Definitions:** the members review new definitions for **Collector Roads, Local Lanes and Local Streets**. There is some discussion of the difference between a "road" vs a "street." It is not a legal distinction, but in many planning conventions, a "road" is presumed to be a traveled path between towns or districts, whereas a "street" is presumed to be more localized to neighborhoods. A Lane, as presented, would be a street primarily serving only the residents of that street. There are no objections to the definitions as presented.
 - **Article III, B, Section 3E, 5k – Digital Data Service Fee** ***"If the applicant is unable to provide the required digital data a service fee will be required, as shown in the Table of Fees (Appendix A)"*** This item is a carry-over from the current Subdivision Regulations. It is observed that the Town has never collected such a fee. After some discussion, the consensus is to strike the item.
 - **Shared Driveways** – The members discuss at length the pros and cons of shared driveways, and the specific number of units that may reasonably be allowed to share a drive within a subdivision. Opinions are split over whether shared driveways should be permitted at all, with 2 members (Salce & Williams) objecting to allowing them in new subdivisions based on poor implementation in the past. The reasons for permitting them have to do with reducing curb cuts to the road and the amount of impervious surface (asphalt) added to the Town. B. Santos raises the point that, if they are to be allowed, then clear guidelines must be included. There is content included in the section, and after further review the members decide to move the language regarding maintenance agreements up to be first in the order of the section. T. Penn-Gesek reminds the Commission that they have seen concept plans for a number of proposed subdivisions with up to 5 units sharing a driveway which they found generally favorable. The

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Assessor has also shared information that up to 3 units sharing a driveway has no negative effect on property values. There is a slight downward pressure on values for 4 or 5 units sharing a drive. After further discussion, the members vote for 3 vs 5 units able to share a driveway in residential subdivisions. The majority prefers limiting it to a maximum of 3 units. After further discussion, it is determined that the language concerning business/commercial subdivisions and mixed-use subdivisions needs to be further developed into its own sub-section.

- **Sidewalks** - A suggestion from J. Blanchette from J&D is noted, to add that sidewalks are generally required on at least one side of the road (as opposed to both sides of the road in every case) in the RRAD, TCVD and LD (districts with no access to public water/sewer). The bulk of the discussion is what the appropriate number of lots would be to trigger the sidewalk requirement in those districts. R. Williams and J. Salce observe that in neighborhoods where sidewalks have been constructed, residents often choose to walk in the roadway instead. J. Rice points out the benefits of sidewalks such as children being able to wait safely for school buses, as well as the aesthetic benefits of sidewalks in neighborhoods. After lengthy discussion on the pros and cons, a poll of the members is taken as to whether they prefer the trigger number of lots to be 16 or 20 in the outlying districts. The consensus is 16. The trigger level is set at 12 for subdivisions in the DMRD, BDD and TCDD.
- **Owners' Associations** – This is a brand new section created since the conclusion of the last subcommittee discussion. There is a great deal of discussion about how much the PZC should be able to dictate the specific elements of the legal documents related to associations. In the final consensus, three items are included: the general requirement to create one, referencing the controlling State statutes; the types of commonly held property that would be covered by the related ownership & maintenance agreement; and an edited statement suggested by B. Santos: ***“the owner’s association shall be formed and executed during the approval process related to said subdivision.”*** The further provisions which had been proposed in the draft were struck.

4. Adjournment – 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tyra Penn-Gesek, Director of Planning & Development