

Town of Arrowsic
Minutes of Planning Board Meeting
February 7, 2022 at ~ 7:10 PM
Video Conference via Zoom

Attending: Jennifer Geiger (PB Chair); Matt Caras (PB Secretary); Roger Heard (PB); Vicky Stoneman (PB); Jim Davis (PB); Chris Wilcoxson (CEO); Mike Kreindler (Deputy CEO).

Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed the draft Minutes of its January 3, 2022 Meeting. There was significant discussion concerning a portion of the draft Minutes stating that there appears to be “consensus” among Planning Board members on three general parameters related to the issue of short term rentals, including the following parameter: It is not in the interests of the Town and its residents “to have Short Term Rentals used on a regular basis for activities that would be inconsistent with the interests of the Town as articulated in its Ordinances, such as event venues.” The discussion was triggered by one Planning Board member’s assertion that “consensus” did not exist on the three parameters set forth in the draft Minutes. As a result, the draft Minutes were revised to eliminate a reference to “consensus” with respect to the three parameters. Upon motion made for approval of the Minutes as revised, which motion was seconded, the Planning Board approved the Minutes of its January 3, 2022 Meeting (all voted in favor).

Discussion Regarding Short Term Rentals

As was the case during January’s meeting, there was significant continued discussion about Short Term Rentals. The Planning Board Chair updated the Planning Board on her discussion with Walter Briggs of the Select Board. Jennifer advised Walter that following Planning Board discussions regarding Short Term Rentals she did not see a consensus on the Planning Board regarding how to address the issue, and without a clear path forward did not anticipate the Planning Board would be submitting a warrant article on the subject. Jennifer said that she would like to have more input from Town residents before proceeding. Walter agreed, and suggested that the annual Town Meeting might offer an opportunity to seek input. Discussion ensued regarding concerns about postponing a warrant for this year’s Town Meeting, including: (1) The Planning Board’s past experience that it is always more effective to address a concern pre-emptively, rather than in the context of an actual case or controversy before the Planning Board; (2) that failure to act leaves the CEO without any guidance regarding whether, in the event of additional inquiries regarding Short Term Rentals, Short Term Rentals are a “commercial” activity subject to the provisions of the Town’s existing Ordinance; and (3) the CEO’s concerns regarding waste water systems on lots with Short Term Rentals (numbers that a system was not designed to manage). There was also discussion on utilizing a permitting or registration system with regard to Short Term Rentals, and discussion that we could begin by defining a Short Term Rental.

Footprint Amendment, so-called

The CEO reported that he had a discussion with State DEP representative Jeff Kalinich about the Footprint Amendment, so-called. Jeff Kalinich said that the purpose of the Amendment was to simplify the process of reviewing proposed expansions of non-conforming structures, and did not indicate that a Town must adopt the Amendment. The Deputy CEO referred the Planning Board to MRSA Title 38, Section 439-A, querying its meaning and role, if any, in Arrowsic’s discussion regarding the Footprint Amendment.

Miscellaneous

The Planning Board reviewed the current status of the ongoing legislative effort to enact a law in Maine regarding “accessory dwelling units.” And it was noted that our Ordinance, while defining a “dwelling unit” and an “accessory structure,” does not define an “accessory dwelling unit.”

Adjourned at about 9:20 PM.