

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
MARCH 19, 2012

(tape recorded meeting)

Present: Chair Judy Colby, Pam Dunning and Ed Polewarczyk

Absent: Bill Curtis and David Nichols

1. Call to Order

Judy Colby called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

3. Misty Gorski - Presentation regarding zoning and ordinance changes proposed for the June Warrant with the Ordinance Review Committee

A public hearing will be held on April 9 to inform the public of the proposed changes and to receive feedback. The proposed changes reflect recommendations made at a previous select board meeting.

Article I, Section 4.3.3: The current ordinance requires the Planning Board to meet at least once per month. The proposed amendment will require the board to meet at least once per month unless there is no business before the board.

The Village 1 District, in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan of 2008, is a proposed expansion of the downtown business district that will include the courthouse, bank, gas station and municipal building. A matrix illustrates the proposed uses for Village 1 and Village 2 Districts and indicates the approval needed, i.e. none, code enforcement officer, or planning board or that the use is prohibited. Notes attached to the matrix indicate development standards for certain uses, limitations on uses in certain areas, and other limitations. Town Planner Misty Gorski explained the process by which the Ordinance Review Committee came to decisions on boundaries and uses and how it attempted to address uses to protect the historic district in the absence of an official historic overlay district.

The Village 2 District according to the comprehensive plan should be mostly residential with some commercial uses. In order to provide commercial areas without affecting the residential area, commercial uses will be restricted to properties within 500 feet on either side of Routes 1 and 27 and with direct access to Routes 1 and 27. Maximum size of buildings within this commercial area will be 6,500 sq. ft. Development standards, such as buffers and restrictions on lighting are proposed for this district. Non-conforming uses in this district may expand up to 40%.

The Route 1 Commercial District will extend from the Woolwich town line to the power lines and will include an area 500 feet on either side of the road. The boundary line will follow lot lines and will not include residential subdivisions which may be within the 500 feet but without access on Route 1. This proposal will change the use from rural to commercial on the south side of Route 1 and the two-acre requirement per business will be changed to one acre per business.

In Article 3, a proposed change to the sign ordinance will allow a tenant of a single building, mall, plaza or office park to have an eight-square-foot sign on the sign of the building bearing the names of all tenants plus signage up to a maximum of 64 sq. ft. on its own premises.

Gorski described how the amendments had addressed comments at previous meetings such as the protection of historic buildings and other residences in the expanded Village 1 district by

development standards and limiting uses by prohibiting drive-through businesses and chain restaurants.

Another concern was non-conforming uses in existence before the ordinance was changed and the proposed ordinance will allow to expansion of up to 40%, but new non-conforming uses will be prohibited.

Balancing commercial and residential uses in District 2, another issue raised previously, was the thinking behind the 500-foot commercial district along Routes 1 and 27, keeping high impact businesses out of the residential area.

Gorski said the definition of home occupation had been changed; however, the ordinance requirements themselves will be reviewed by the ORC in the future. The ORC felt that the renting of rooms was not appropriate in the Village 1 District as that would attract a more transient clientele.

In response to Ed Polewarczyk's question, Gorski said that the expansion of a non-conforming use or the change from one non-conforming use to another would require connection to public water and sewer. Other questions pertained to existing ordinances or requirements of the state for shoreland properties. Gorski explained the rationale behind the appearance requirement in Section 9.1.1 was that it was to be compatible with the immediate neighborhood. She also explained that the ORC had decided that outside storage of fishing gear in Village 1 or Village 2 was not appropriate; that the CEO would determine whether a home occupation would have a negative impact on the neighborhood, that a drinking establishment, micro-brewery or agricultural/lawn equipment sales were not deemed appropriate by the ORC in District 2 which is predominantly a residential area.

Other comments were made by George Green who encouraged the town to act now to ban adult entertainment and was advised that it was proposed to not allow it the Village 1, Village 2, or residential districts. Other districts have not yet been considered by the ORC. Constance Schumann asked why marinas would not be allowed in the Village 1 or 2 districts and was advised that they were more appropriate in the Village Waterfront District than in a residential district. In response to Judy Colby's question, the business district on Route 27 was recognized by the Comprehensive Plan Committee as a commercial district, which would be allowed in District 1 although it was surrounded by a residential district. Gorski said the proposed amendments were a positive step by the town and consistent with the zoning in other towns.

Town Manager Laurie Smith thanked the ORC and Misty Gorski for their work and thoughtful approach to the revisions of the ordinances.

4. Adjournment

Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Vote 3-0-0.