



Office of Planning & Codes

WISCASSET ORDINANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

December 10, 2012, 5 p.m.
Wiscasset Town Hall Meeting Room

1. Call to Order

Chairman Karl Olson called the meeting to order at 5 p.m. Present were Al Cohen, Larry Lomison, Jackie Lowell, Karl Olson and Doc Schilke. Town Planner Misty Parker was also present

2. Approval of minutes of November 26, 2012

Al Cohen moved to approve the minutes as amended. Vote 5-0-0.

3. Appoint Chair

Al Cohen moved to appoint Karl Olson as Chairman. Vote 5-0-0.

4. Approve Sign Ordinance

Misty Parker had sent a revised draft of the sign ordinance to the committee members for approval; however, because of time constraints, she had not been able to determine how many signs in the downtown area were not in compliance with the ordinance. This was considered key because the members felt they needed to know how large the problem was or if the change would affect only a few signs.

Comments made on the draft included the following:

In the first paragraph (5.1), wording should be changed in the first two lines to indicate that the CEO would contact property owners regarding non-compliance following the adoption of the ordinance and the property owners would have five years from the date of the letter.

If a sign requires change, repair or maintenance which would constitute an expense of more than 50% of the cost of replacement (or should this be cost of the original?) (how would this be calculated? Original cost?) the sign must be removed (by whom?) (how much notice would be given, 30 days?) How would the town know that a sign is being repaired, since no permit would be required?

The signs at the primary entrance would not necessarily apply to the bank whose entrance is on the side of the building or to the municipal building whose main entrance is in the rear.

Change last sentence in 5.1 to "Any sign for a new business shall conform to the ordinance."

Does the town remove a sign that has been installed without a permit?

How are permits tracked? Chronologically? By property?

It is critical to have the list of non-conforming signs before the committee goes forward.

What is the purpose of the ordinance? Could we determine everything is grandfathered and all new signs need a permit?

How long is a permit valid for a sign which complied when the permit was issued? For instance, if a sign permit was issued just before the new ordinance was adopted, would the owner have only five years before he had to come into compliance?

In order to determine if signs comply, could the fire department use its equipment to measure?

The purpose of changing the sign ordinance was to comply with the comprehensive plan. If the plan is a guide for the future, do we put restrictions only on future signs?

Al Cohen moved to table the sign ordinance until we have the number of non-conforming signs. Vote 5-0-0.

5. Approve: Rural Commercial-Industrial Zone Permitted Uses.

The following changes were made:

Agriculture will be CEO

Airports will not be allowed.

Minimum lot size is one acre; the requirement for two acres per business will be removed.

Every property owner will be sent notification of the changes to the uses with the exception of Village 1, Village 2, Village Waterfront and Commercial.

Karl Olson recommended that lot coverage be included in the zone and suggested 75%. Current setbacks are ten feet from the road and ten feet from the side lot line. Setbacks are required for both aesthetic and safety reasons. Misty Parker will recommend new setbacks for residential and commercial.

Jackie Lowell moved to accept the Rural Commercial-Industrial Zone permitted uses with changes. Vote 5-0-0.

6. Review: Residential District and Permitted uses

Parker pointed out on the map the additions proposed for the residential district. The uses were determined for this district in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan's suggested uses – residential and open space. In the first category, Community garden will be left, but Commercial greenhouse, nursery or similar agricultural use will be a separate category that will not be allowed in this district.

Parker will recommend setbacks for this district.

7. Other Business

There will be no meeting on December 24. The next meeting will be on January 14.

8. Adjournment

Al Cohen moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.