



Planning Board Rt. 6 Rezoning Workshop Minutes
Town of Foster
Saturday, September 29, 2007
Benjamin Eddy Building, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

A. Call to Order

Workshop convened at 8:30 by Julia Parmentier, Chair.

B. Roll Call

Present were Julia Parmentier, Planning Board Chair; Heidi Colwell, Zoning Board; Pat Moreau, Planning Board Vice Chair; and Marcia Bowden, Conservation Commission Secretary.

C. Old Business

The meeting began with a discussion of what constitutes a mixed-use zone. Participants agreed that it could include shops/markets, professional offices, restaurants/coffee shops, bank(s), elderly units or facility, handicap units, and residential units, excluding family-homes and other community resources such as a library. There was some discussion as to whether residential units had to be attached to the commercial units. Pat volunteered to get Providence's mixed-use ordinance as a guideline. Participants agreed that mixed-use zones should have the same commercial characteristics as a neighborhood commercial zone rather than a highway commercial zone. One constraint to development would be that properties would have to have large enough areas for setbacks and other requirements for public water supply wells. Another constraint is the lack of high-speed internet availability along Route 6.

Participants also discussed whether existing or former commercial properties are grandfathered forever, if they are in an area rezoned AR. We will check this with Ann-Marie Ignasher, Town Planner.

Marcia questioned whether once we have a plan for mixed-use development we can go out and solicit bids from commercial or non-profit developers. We should check with other communities and see what they have done.

There was a question as to whether mixed-use allowed commercial and residential structures to be separate or whether they had to be attached as this would play into the design of developments and keeping the rural character.

The workshop participants then discussed which zones to work on first and identified the node (node H) north and south of Route 6 at the Connecticut line as one priority and Zone C at Route 6 and 94 as another priority.

D. Future Agenda Items

At the next meeting we should have a draft mixed-use definition – Julie volunteered to write one. We will need to draft a press release to start informing the public, especially owners and abutters and set a date for an informational hearing. We discussed having several informational hearings including one Saturday and one at night to reach the most people.

E. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Parmentier
Chair