

New Ashford Planning Board Meeting

New Ashford Town Hall

December 5, 2024

Planning Board Present: Diane George (Co-Chair), Steve Jennings, Richard George, Tammy Steinhoff

Absent: Jen Lescarbeau (Co-Chair), Kevin Flicker (alt)

Others Present: Lori Jayko, Luisa Volpi, Mark Phelps, Lars Reinhard

Meeting opened at 6:00

1. Approve minutes from previous meeting: On a motion by Steve, seconded by Richard, the minutes from the October 23, 2024 New Ashford Planning Board meeting were approved unanimously.
2. Meet with Luisa Volpi (ANR): Luisa Volpi, from Guntlow and Associates presented an ANR to give ten feet to the old schoolhouse lot from Steve Nielsen's lot. The Board reviewed the plot plan. Steve questioned if the Planning Board was able to rule on it, as there is not 200 feet of frontage and an ANR has to meet all the zoning requirements. It may be a Select Board issue. Steve made a motion to table the ANR discussion and send to legal counsel for advisement, seconded by Diane. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Discuss the new ADU laws and by-laws: The state is enacting new ADU laws effective on 2-5-25. The Board reviewed and discussed the ADU by-laws from Great Barrington, West Stockbridge, and Lenox and began drafting an ADU by-law to send to the town for approval. Once the town approves, it will be sent to the state for review. The by-law proposal will include that only one ADU will be allowed per lot and it can be half the size of the existing dwelling, but not larger than 900 square feet of gross floor area and no taller than 25 feet. The ADU may be located in or attached to the existing dwelling. The ADU must be on a foundation. Short-term rentals will not be permitted. Certificate shall be obtained from the Board of Health that the water and sanitary systems are adequate to support the primary dwelling unit and the ADU. The Board discussed including a minimum required off-road parking space. The ADU must meet zoning requirements for residences, except when it is a pre-existing nonconforming structure that has been authorized by special permit by the Planning Board. If a dwelling of more than 900 square feet is created, the residence will be considered a two-dwelling residence, and subject to those related by-laws. The Board discussed adding a purpose statement to the proposed by-law of meeting a greater housing demand than supply permits, without jeopardizing the community. The Board discussed how to number the by-law and where it fits in to the current zoning by-laws. Once the proposed by-law is drafted, it will be sent to the Building Inspector and legal counsel for advisement. The Board will set another meeting to discuss further and will contact legal counsel about the ANR.
4. Any unforeseen business: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 on a motion by Steve, seconded by Diane.