

Town of Killington Planning Commission
Minutes from 2/13/2024 Meeting
Meeting held in Public Safety Building as well as Zoom.

PRESENT:

Jennifer Iannantuoni, Chair
Vince Wynn
Ricky Bowers
Andy Salamon
Robert Hecker
Jim Haff, Zoning Administrator
Michael Ramsey, Town Manager*
Lisa Davis Lewis, Town Planner
William Austin, Assistant Town Planner*
Jeremy Farkas, Town Counsel *

GUEST ATTENDEES:

Jay Wong*
Keith Nelson*
Tom Karlhuber*
Katy Schofield*
Michael Sneyd
Curt Peterson*

Members Joining via Zoom

Start Time: 7:04 pm

End Time: 9:42 pm

1. Open Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:04 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested a Motion to approve the meeting agenda as may be amended. Wynn made a motion to approve the agenda. Hecker second. There being no amendments, the Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes – Jan. 31, 2024

The Chair indicated that the minutes for January 31, 2024, have not yet been finalized and will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

4. Assistant Planner Welcome

The Chair welcomed the new Assistant Planner, William Austin.

5. Citizen's Input - None

6. Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Davis Lewis informed the Commission that the Zoning Bylaw Amendments that addressed cannabis establishments were approved by the Selectboard.

The Commission continued their discussion of Section 426 of the Zoning Bylaws – Building Height. Town Counsel, Jeremy Farkas brought up the fact that the maximum building heights should be adjusted to address the change in measurement. He also indicated that the current bylaw which limits both the number of stories and building height as defined in feet is unnecessary and that the Commission may consider just defining height in terms of feet and not stories. Wynn stated that if we, for example, remove the 3-story restriction, someone may be able to construct a 4-story building within the same height limitation. The Commissioners discussed whether this was an issue. The Zoning Administrator indicated that this is unlikely since the height story must meet the state building code. Furthermore, other regulations such as NFPA come into play making it expensive to build higher. Following this discussion, the Commissioners agreed that building height should only be reflected by feet and not the number of stories.

The Commissioners discussed appropriate height restrictions in Ski Village II. They agreed that for most of the buildings, a maximum height of 70 feet with no limitation on the number of stories made sense. They reiterated that this did not represent an increase in height because of the change in how building height is measured. The Commissioners then held a lengthy conversation about Great Gulf's request to allow one building for every 200 units constructed to be allowed to be a maximum height of 100 feet. There was discussion as to whether it is more appropriate for Great Gulf to seek a waiver or variance from the DRB. Jeremy Farkas indicated that the current zoning bylaws do not give the DRB the right to grant a waiver to increase building height. Davis Lewis stated that even if the DRB could grant a waiver, the goal is to create a unified village based upon zoning standards. The Town Manager concurred with this assessment. The Zoning Administrator brought out the fact that the zoning bylaws allow clock towers, church steeples and other design elements without any height limitations and therefore Great Gulf could construct a 70-foot building with a 50-foot steeple which is taller than what Great Gulf is seeking. Wen Wen explained that Saffie Architects do not believe in design elements that do not provide a function which is why they are seeking permission for a taller building that would serve as a visual landmark but also is functional in that it would be used. The Zoning Administrator reminded the Board that Great Gulf is limited to the number of units that they can build through their Act 250 permit and therefore this would not be an "additional" unit. The Commissioners discussed what would be an appropriate distance between the taller buildings and whether a maximum height of 100 feet made sense or whether a somewhat smaller building was more appropriate. To assist in making this decision, they reviewed the building elevations and the 3D model of the project. Following this review, The Chair stated that she was leaning towards allowing the taller building but was not sure whether 100 feet was the right number. In terms of the base lodge, she wanted to know what percentage of the building would exceed the maximum height of 68 feet. Davis Lewis informed her that they are asking for 30%. The Chair asked for

input from other Commissioners. Bowers stated that he had some initial concerns but is leaning towards allowing the one taller building upon review of the plans. The Town Manager reminded the Commission that they are tasked with writing zoning regulations and not conducting a review of plans. The Chair thanked him for bringing us on track. The Chair asked the Commission to try to reach a consensus. Bowers stated that he is sold on this plan but understands that it could change. Davis Lewis clarified that the job of the Planning Commission is to set parameters and that the plan must fall within these parameters. After more discussion and reviewing the 3d model of the Village, the Commissioners agreed that a minimum distance of 200 feet between the taller buildings was appropriate. The distance should be measured from building edge to building edge. The Chair asked the Commissioners to comment on what height in excess of 70 feet would be appropriate. Davis Lewis reminded the Commissioners that for the extra height to be functional it needed to be at least 15 feet higher. To assist in making a decision, the Commission again reviewed the building elevations. They noticed that the taller building was 90 feet with a skylight that added an additional 8 feet. Following more discussion, the Chair instructed Jeremy Farkas to amend the zoning bylaw to allow one building for every 200 units constructed to be a maximum building height of 90 feet with a total height of 100 feet including sky lights or other design elements. The distance between these buildings must be a minimum of 200 feet. Farkas responded that he would draft the language for the Commissioners to review at their next meeting.

The Commissioners discussed the request to allow 30% of the base lodge to be an absolute height of 120 feet. The Commissioners reviewed the building elevation. The Chair stated that she supported their request. The other Commissioner concurred. Jeremy Farkas noted that other parts of this section needed to be modified to reflect the change in the height definition. He indicated that he would revise the bylaw for the Commission to review at its next meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed Great Gulf's request to reduce the size of parking spaces and the width of drive aisles. Davis Lewis stated that she was fine with the reduction in the size of parking spaces but that she could not support the reduction in aisle width. She recommended that the language remain unchanged which gives the DRB the right to reduce the aisle width upon review of a plan. The Commissioners agreed with this approach.

The Commissioners discussed signage and whether they wanted to reconsider allowing internally illuminated signs provided it did not create glare. Davis Lewis proposed language that would allow an applicant to seek approval from the DRB for an internally illuminated sign. The Commissioners agreed with this approach.

The last zoning item discussed was the addition of Health Care services and Health Care facilities to the Definition Section of the bylaw. She reminded the Commission that Health Care facilities are an allowed use in the Ski Village, but the use was never defined. She asked if the Commissioners were interested in allowing this use in other zoning districts. The Commissioners decided to table this item.

Davis Lewis suggested the Commission should determine its next meeting. After some discussion they decided to meet on February 21, 2024. If they move forward to warn a hearing on the zoning bylaw changes, the hearing would be held in March sometime after the Town Meeting.

7. Updates and Reports

- **Raise Grant** – Davis Lewis informed the PC that the grant is due on February 28, 2024. The Chair acknowledged her hard work.
- **TA Grant** – The Steering Committee met earlier in the day but did not reach a decision on a preferred alternative.
- **Killington Forward** – No updates
- **Recreation Master Plan** – Davis Lewis stated that she and Emily Hudson met with the SE Group who will bring forward a proposal.
- **VOREC** – Town Manager stated that the Town hosted the Steering Committee, and the meeting went well.

8. Commissioner’s Concerns - None

9. Other Business - None

10. Executive Session - None

11. Next Meeting

February 21st at 7:00pm

12. Adjourn

The Chair Motions to adjourn the meeting. The rest of the group is in favor. The meeting is adjourned at 9:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William H. Austin
Assistant Town Planner