

Hardwick Planning Commission
August 8, 2023
3rd Floor, Memorial Building, Hardwick
Minutes

HPC Members Present: Joyce Mandeville; Ken Davis; Shari Cornish; Jim Lewis; Kole (2nd Alternate); Bud Stevens (1st Alternate); Larry Fliegelman; and Dave Gross, Chair

Also Present: Kristen Leahy, Hardwick Zoning Administrator, and Heather Carrington, CCDS, LLC Consultant (by Zoom).

Absent: Michael Haveson (*Bud Stevens assumes his vote for this meeting*)

Chair Dave Gross opened the meeting at 6:30 pm. An amendment was proposed to include the opening of the presents from Shari Cornish at the end of the meeting. Ken Davis moved to approve the agenda as amended. Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor. Shari Cornish moved to approve the July 18, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Joyce Mandeville seconded. All members were in favor.

Updates from the Community Development Coordinator:

No updates at this time.

Motion: None.

Updates from the Bylaw Modernization Consultant – Heather Carrington

Compact Residential

The zoning district which was discussed at the August 8, 2023 meeting was the **Compact Residential** district.

Compact Residential Minimum Lot Sizes:

- Minimum lot size in CR-Class 1 matches the current size on the only lot in that classification (minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet). The Compact Residential zoning district does not have density caps.
- Minimum lot size in CR-Class 2 does not match in 46% of the lots (minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet). No density caps.
- Minimum lot size in CR-Class 3 does not match in 28% of the lots (minimum lot size is 30,000 square feet). No density caps.

The HPC extensively discussed the difference between Class 1, 2, and 3. The on-site wastewater and potable water requirements impact the necessary sizes of both Class 2 and Class 3.

Motion: To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Compact Residential – Class 2 zoning district from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

Shari Cornish made the motion and Larry Fliegelman seconded. All members were in favor.

The decision was made to continue to have the minimum lot size at 30,000 square feet in Compact Residential – Class 3. No action was taken.

During the discussion about the sole property in CR-Class 1, Heather reminded the HPC and Hardwick staff to look at the larger planning vision rather than an individual lot. The Commission temporarily ended the discussion on the benefits of smaller parcels (more opportunities for housing, more developable parcels) with regards to the Compact Residential-Class 1 district. The HPC will discuss the Village Neighborhood-Class 1 lot size concurrently with the Compact Residential-Class 1 lot size (later in the August 8, 2023 meeting).

HOME Act language requires the Unified Development Bylaws to allow affordable housing developments to exceed maximum height requirement by one floor. This will need to be incorporated into the Bylaws (Section 3.7). Heather will craft language to address this statutory requirement. (All districts will be impacted).

The question of second buildings on the lots will be addressed with the Zoning Administrator. Heather and Kristen will create language with more flexibility and less ambiguity for Section 3.8 and the review of the Planning Commission.

A motion regarding residential parking requirements was approved at the July 18, 2023 meeting but the HPC validated that motion in the August 8, 2023 meeting.

Motion: To set the parking per residential unit rate for all residential units, regardless of parcel class, in the Town of Hardwick at 1 space per dwelling unit in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change will bring Hardwick into compliance with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act) and will maintain consistency, clarity, and ease of permitting.

Shari Cornish made the motion and Ken Davis seconded. All members were in favor.

- Allowable uses are limited. The new state standards require changes to the Hardwick bylaws in Class 1.

Motion: To move Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Compact Residential zoning district (Class 1, 2, & 3) in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

Joyce Mandeville made the motion and Larry Fliegelman seconded. All members were in favor.

- Street standards – complete streets standards should be considered by should receive more attention in the Central Business zoning district and the East Hardwick village center.

Village Neighborhood

The Hardwick Planning Commission returned to the Village Neighborhood zoning district at the August 8, 2023 meeting. The Planning Commission had requested additional information on what size would bring the most parcels into compliance. Heather provided a complete breakdown of the information in her memo to the HPC. To meet 86% parcel conformity, the minimum lot size would need to be reduced from 7,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet.

Motion: To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Village Neighborhood (Class 1, 2, & 3) zoning district from 7,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would meet 86% parcel conformity.

Ken Davis made the motion and Bud Stevens seconded. All members were in favor.

Motion: To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Compact Residential – Class 1 zoning district from 10,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change will align Compact Residential – Class 1 with the Village Neighborhood minimum lot sizes.

Larry Fliegelman made the motion and Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

Highway Mixed Use

The Hardwick Planning Commission also returned to the **Highway Mixed Use** zoning district at the August 8, 2023 meeting. The Planning Commission had requested additional information on what size would bring the most parcels into compliance. Heather provided a complete breakdown of the information in her memo to the HPC. To meet 72% parcel conformity, the minimum lot size would need to be reduced from 20,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet.

Motion: To reduce the Minimum Lot size in the Highway Mixed Use (Class 1, 2, 3) zoning district from 20,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would create 72% parcel conformity.

Ken Davis made the motion and Jim Lewis seconded. All members were in favor.

Motion: To reduce the Minimum lot area per unit in the Highway Mixed Use – Class 1 zoning district from 1 per 5,000 square feet to 1 per 1,250 square feet in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update. This change would align with the new State regulations (Act 047 – HOME Act).

Shari Cornish made the motion and Bud Stevens seconded. All members were in favor.

Heather will provide a comprehensive picture of Class 2 and 3 in the Highway Mixed Use zoning district at the September 12, 2023 meeting. The HPC will wait to review the minimum lot area for those classes in HMU.

Heather will also draft language for a glazing window requirement in the Highway Mixed Use zoning district. This was requested by the Commission members.

Motion: To move Multi-Family Dwelling from Conditional Use to Allowable Use in the Highway Mixed Use zoning district (Class 1, 2, & 3) in the draft version of the Bylaw Modernization Update.

Larry Fliegelman made the motion and Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor.

Public Forum

The first Public Forum will be on September 28th at 6 pm at the Hardwick Town House. This forum will be a joint presentation from Heather Carrington and Kristen Leahy. The presentation will focus on the new requirements from the HOME Act and how the changes will impact Hardwick. This outreach will help to clarify areas of the bylaw amendment that the Town of Hardwick is required to change under state law. This will also provide an opportunity to inform potential housing developers about the coming changes which may assist them in creating more housing opportunity in the future.

The forum will not merely state the statutory requirements but make the connection with the Town's stated goals (Town Plan).

Phase II:

None at this time.

Updates from Commission Members or the Zoning Administrator:

The Zoning Administrator sought advice from the Planning Commission on the issue of parking at 118 Church Street. The advice from the Planning Commission was to speak to the Town Manager/Select Board. The property is within easy walking distance of two public parking spaces (Hardwick Town House and Creamery Road). The process and/or the permission for continuous parking in the locations are not known at this time. The ZA will have a discussion with the Town Manager.

Motion: None

Planning gifts from Shari Cornish were opened and appreciated. (*With much gratitude, Shari!*)

Motion: To conclude the Hardwick Planning Commission Meeting.

Ken Davis made the motion and Shari Cornish seconded. All members were in favor.

The meeting ended at 8:00 pm.

The next HPC meeting will be at 6:30 pm on September 12, 2023 on the 3rd Floor of the Memorial Building.

~ Respectfully submitted, Kristen Leahy, ZA