



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON PLANNING BOARD
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADU)
SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 11, 2016

7:30 am.
Town Office 2nd Floor

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Bonin, Subcommittee Chair; Marianne McEnrue, and Paul Gorman, Planning Board Chair.

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Root (Seamans Road), John Wilson (Lakeshore Drive), Sue Andrews (Turkey Hill Run), Peter Winship (Lakeshore Drive), Fred Sladen (Whipple Court) and Lucy St. John, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Call to Order: Subcommittee Chair Bonin called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Review of the draft minutes of September 27, 2016:

Steve Root suggested several edits be incorporated into the minutes. Subcommittee members and staff noted that specific comments were stated at the meeting and they believe the minutes reflect the discussion. Staff noted that the minutes reflect a general discussion of the meeting, they are not verbatim and it is up to the Subcommittee to amend as they think appropriate.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comment: Chair Bonin noted that he is allowing twenty (20) minutes of this meeting for members of the public to offer comments, and the that Subcommittee welcomes participation in the process.

Chair Bonin explained that there have been studies done at the State and National level about this subject as this a reflection of the changing State and National demographics (aging population), to provide housing options for adult children with disabilities, and to foster a sense of independent living arrangements. He discussed the whole “Tiny House” movement, which won’t be part of this process. The new State legislation also allows local municipalities to decide if they want to include detached ADUs by right or by special exception/ or conditional use permits. Detached ADUs can also be designed to enhance the aesthetics of the property, as compared to someone just enlarging a house. He noted the minutes include a discussion of the meeting and any draft document discussed at any of these meetings is a draft, and subject to change.

John Wilson identified several concerns including: detached ADUs, condominium rights if attached or detached, increase in density, units could become two-family units, lake protection, increase use of septic systems, stormwater management/runoff issues, would units now be workforce housing or affordable housing, why permit this in the Shoreland Overlay District, can the Town limit or restrict the square footage of an ADU unit, how would the Town keep people from renting out these units.

Steve Root identified several concerns including: rental issue, if someone wants a 2nd unit they should have to go through the subdivision process. He stated he understands the issues facing families with disabled children, stated the Subcommittee is pushing detached units, the Subcommittee is resisting the need for an internal door, referred to the 2003-2004 Planning Board minutes when the issue of ADU units was introduced as a zoning amendment and believes the Town doesn't want detached ADUs. Suggest the current ADU provisions can be amended with just a few changes including removing the minimum 5-year provision and the reference to square footage. The subcommittee is suggesting loosening the provisions. Lake protection is an issue for the whole Town not just the properties around the lake. Concerned about any additional ADUs, undermines the current density provisions, the current ADUs are out of control, need more enforcement, and questioned if nonconforming lots can they have an ADU.

Sue Andrews identified several concerns including: she noted she has a disabled child, concern about doubling the density, people can stretch the rules, would the ADU provision also apply to other parts of Town (further from the lake), suggest including a size limit on the ADU unit, don't want increased density, should refer to the Master Plan people don't want more density, the maximum size of an additional ADUs should be considered.

Subcommittee members asked participants some questions and responded to various comments:

1. Aesthetic appeal is a concern (if just attached, could create large massive structures, where if a detached separate unit, could be strategically located on the lot).
2. Family vs non-family occupancy is difficult to enforce and the Town can't tell someone they can't rent their house.
3. How would a detached unit be any different from an attached unit (as the square footage, amount impervious) would still be the same?
4. If detached or attached, it could essentially include the same number of people living there.
5. If the Town doesn't allow them in the Shoreland Overlay District, this would create an inequality for residents on the lake that may want an ADU, as there are some ADU already on the lake.
6. Is a detached unit less attractive, in terms of the physical layout of the property?
7. Staff noted that in reference to comment about the 2003-2004 minutes issues have changes since 2003-2004; there is now a new State law; NH OEP, Plan NH and others have conducted workshop and provided information on the changing demographics; there is a recognized need for new housing choices and opportunities;; and the Planning Board is attempting to address the current, relevant planning issues facing the Town and State.

8. Need for review by Town Counsel on the condo issue, can an attached or a detached ADU be a condo unit.

Chair Bonin noted that the Public Comment section is being closed (currently 8:25 am).

Subcommittee summarized the key issues (not in any order):

1. Based on public feedback to date; attached ADUs are perceived to be more attractive, increased density is not desired, detached ADUs are seen as a “loosening” of the regulations.
2. Condo provisions, if an attached unit, and what if not occupied by a family member, and if detached, now these could be rented out. Town Counsel needs to weigh in on this formally.
3. Density on the lake a major concern.
4. Detached units appear to exacerbate concern about the lake protection although impervious area and septic load are identical whether attached or detached.

Next meeting: No meeting scheduled at this time.

Motion to Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:57 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Bonin, Chair ADU Subcommittee