

MINUTES – JANUARY 9, 2024
TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD - ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
DRAFT

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Present: Selectboard Members Mike Martin and Walter Martone. Also attending were Town Attorney Steve Ankuda (through zoom), Planning and Zoning Administrator Charles Wise, Town Manager Jeff Mobus, Jules Oguin (zoom).

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 p.m. at Town Hall and through Zoom Conferencing. A quorum was present.

B. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion: Michael Martin moved to approve the minutes of the August 30th meeting as presented. Seconded by Walter Martone. Motion passed unanimous.

C. ANY REQUESTED ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

D. OLD BUSINESS: None

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Consider amendment to ordinance regarding the discharging weapons within 500 feet of a structure (Sec. 12-126)

There was a discussion about the rights of property owners and hunters under the Vermont Constitution and Statutes. If a property owner wants to prohibit hunting and shooting on their land, under current law they must follow state rules for posting and can also post their land as a “Safety Zone.” If the Town were to prohibit discharging weapons within 500 feet of a structure, this would infringe on a property owners use of their own land because a neighbor may have a structure within 500 feet of the property line. After a lengthy debate over these rights, it became clear that there would be no consensus on changing the existing ordinance.

2. Consider amendment to Chapter 12 - Health, Sanitation, Nuisances – Article II. – Nuisances - DIVISION 4. - NUISANCES AFFECTING PROPERTY, Sec. 12-96. - Certain activity in public places restricted, which states: (e) No person shall course, coast or slide upon any board, sled, vehicle or other thing upon any sidewalk or footwalk within the limits of the town. (f) No person shall course, coast, or slide upon any sleigh, sled, vehicle or other thing in any streets or highways within the limits of the town, except such streets as shall be designated by the Selectboard.

Several alternative wordings were proposed to try to support safety of the traveling public while not overly restricting the use of non-motorized travel vehicles. The specific example of roller skates as a mode of transportation on public streets, much the same was as bicycles are used. The simplest solution that was proposed and accepted by all was to delete the words “course, coast, or” in item (f). A method such as roller skates would be allowed on roads and streets, while sidewalks and footpaths/walks would be restricted to pedestrians.

MOTION: To delete the words “course, coast, or” from item (f) in Sec. 12-96. Certain activity in public places restricted. Motion by Mike Martin and seconded by Walter Martone. Passed unanimous.

3. Discussion and possible action on Superfund site issues noted in the 5 year review (deed restrictions) (Sec. 12-239 through 247) + Resolution adopted August 3rd, 1992.

The EPA 5-year Review of the Springfield Superfund site included an Issue/Recommendation that “Institutional controls to prohibit groundwater use outside the fenced landfill area and within the area of the groundwater plume have not been implemented.” They are requesting that deed restrictions with additional Institutional Controls be placed on potentially 9 properties outside the fenced area. This potentially includes the Curtain property that surrounds the Superfund Site, some State-owned property that continues down to Route 11. It was determined that this does not require any amendment to the existing ordinance and therefore no Committee action is required. Town Attorney Steve Ankuda will work with Town Manager Jeff Mobus to develop a solution that may include a Selectboard Resolution for each impacted property and the recording of such.

4. Possible discussion of fee schedule for Zoning.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Chuck Wise indicated that no action is required from the Ordinance Committee.

The following Future Agenda Items will remain on the Committee’s to-do list:

- Food Truck ordinance/licensing policy (It was noted that Chapter 14 – Licenses and Business Regulations, should be modernized and include food trucks) – Chuck – hold till Fall.
- Liquor and cannabis license renewal restrictions (up to date property tax and water/sewer payments) – Barbara – hold (may not be able to do anything per VLCT).
- ATV Ordinance and trails closure ordinance or policy (Fall) – Jeff Mobus, Jeff Strong, Chris Merrill, and Jason Rasmussen.
- Substantive amendments to the Code of Ordinances – Barbara, Jeff and all Department Heads – received notes from Barbara from last codification meetings. Wait for input from Department Heads.
- Sign Ordinance (consistency between zoning regulations and ordinances) – Chuck.
- Coordination of transportation, water, sewer, stormwater, other things? (Fall) – Chuck, Jeff, and Donnie.

F. NEXT MEETING DATE: No future meeting dates were set.

G. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn by Mike Martin and seconded by Walter Martone. Motion passed unanimous. The meeting ended at 3:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Walter Martone