

Minutes of Sunderland Planning Commission
Wednesday, June 22, 2022

Call to Order-6:00

commission members Rob Zeif, Ben Travis and Gordon Dossett
guests, David Mooney, Alex Bresnick; present

1. Approval of Minutes – May 25, 2022 (to be voted on in future meeting)
2. Acting Zoning Administrator Update (postponed)
3. Hill Farm Inn – discussion regarding their proposed change to the parking lot.
 - A. David Mooney, architect for the Hill Farm Inn, presented an overview of the Hill Farm Project. He addressed these concerns from the Zoning Administrator (ZA):
 - i. Two recent curb cuts are only temporary. They were made to allow for building equipment.
 - ii. Fire and Safety said no permits needed; if agriculture permits needed, will file. Green houses exempt since for onsite purpose (farm-to-table). But if Inn is a small farm, then needs certification. David will follow up to see if required.
 - iii. Land use permit possibly expired, but an amendment in 2021 suggests it didn't expire. David Mooney said that Hill Farm applied for a permit in 2019 but the process took 2 1/2 years. He believes that there was no renewal of 2015 permit.

Rob Zeif said that the proposed linking of the inn and restaurant parking areas needs to be filed, along with the increased square footage. David requests that the PC approve the proposal subject to state approval. He agrees to closing curb cuts before completion of the project. Rob believes ZA can act alone on these matters, but if not, PC will take up issues in a subsequent meeting.

Since the inn and new restaurant are separate, David asked about signage. Rob said we will need to consult the bylaws.

4. Working session regarding short-term rental regulations

- A. Ben Travis brought up hip camping—renting out property for primitive camping experience. Hip camping seems to provide basic facilities. Sewage needs met by a hole in the ground, simply plowed over periodically. Such sewage pits raise long-term environmental and health concerns.
- B. These other issues are of special concern to the PC:
 - a. safety (chimney, fire), garbage, noise, possible limiting of days (although of questionable efficacy), corporations and/or absentee landlords buying properties, parking

- b. Gordon Dossett shared an article entitled “Regulating Airbnb: how cities deal with perceived negative externalities of short-term rentals” by [Shirley Nieuwland](#) & [Rianne van Melik](#) available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/figure/10.1080/13683500.2018.1504899?scroll=top&needAccess=true>. Although the article argues for no one approach to address concerns, it does provide a helpful listing of concerns and approaches from cities around the world.
- c. A registration fee (.5% possibly) could cover costs for inspection and enforcement. Distinctions might be made on whether the owner lived on the property or not and the district of the property.
- d. It would be helpful to know the exact number of short term rentals in Sunderland.

5. Follow up on Village Center discussion

- a. Look further into having Hill Farm Inn as part of VC, charging station; encourage partnerships; ARPA;

- b. Motion (made by Dossett, seconded Travis) to call for Select Board to vote on application for VC at meeting on the 27th. Passed unanimously

6. Old Business—none

7. Public Comment – Visitors / Concerned Citizens—none

- 8. Schedule summer regular meeting(s)—because of uncertain summer schedules and the ability to warn a meeting if necessary, members of the PC agreed to not schedule meetings for July and August.

9. Adjourn 7:30 pm

Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, September 28 at 6 pm.