

TOWN OF DURHAM

Planning and Zoning Commission

P.O. Box 428

Durham, Connecticut 06422-0428

MINUTES OF APRIL 2, 2008, MEETING Special Workshop

Present

Members: Ralph Chase, Frank DeFelice, Richard Eriksen, Jim Kowolenko,
Gene Riotte, Tom Russell

Town Planner: Geoffrey Colegrove

Alternates: Cathy Devaux, Mike Geremia

Absent

Members: George Eames, Dave Foley, Dian O'Neal

Alternate: Mark Laudano

The special workshop meeting was called to order by Richard Eriksen, Vice Chairman, in the role of acting Chairman, at 7:00 p.m. Mike Geremia was seated on the Commission in George Eames' place. Cathy Devaux was seated on the Commission in Dian O'Neal's place.

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Tom Russell, seconded by Mike Geremia, to approve the agenda of April 2, 2008, special workshop meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Workshop

Richard Eriksen noted the reasons for the special workshop, to discuss retail sales along Main Street and in farm-residential neighborhoods. Frank DeFelice indicated that this was separate from consideration of varied uses for the special structures along Main

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Street that have the ability to apply for a special permit to allow certain professional uses. Frank DeFelice also stated that a line was apparently drawn arbitrarily separating lots along Main Street (thus splitting lots in half). Geoffrey Colegrove indicated that this has been the case for more than 40 years; the uses are identical and there are no properties split between commercial and residential except at the south end of town. The issue for the special workshop is determining whether or not to amend the special permit criteria that allows for specific uses in 11 structures on Main Street.

Geoffrey Colegrove also stated that, in this case, retail sales have nothing to do with the subject at hand; rather, it is how professional offices are to be defined. The Commission had previously determined that professional offices would exclude such uses as doctors and dentists because of potential traffic volumes and parking constraints. Thought is being given to expanding the uses to include professionals requiring licenses to practice (i.e., engineer, chiropractor, surveyor, teacher, and perhaps to consider financial services and personal services). Applications would still require a public hearing for a special permit.

Ralph Chase stated that criteria needs to be defined so that it is as objective as possible.

Because of the need for a special permit, the Commission has the ability to approve or deny a request based upon a specific neighborhood.

Frank DeFelice stated that he still visualizes Main Street as a residential area and wants to retain the character of the town while still allowing professional offices. Signage was mentioned—those uses along Main Street are limited to two square feet, as with a home occupation.

Motion by Ralph Chase, seconded by Gene Riotte, to proceed with a public hearing for professional office language (including by special permit); final language to be distributed at the April 16, 2008, meeting. The hearing will likely be scheduled for the May 7, 2008, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ralph Chase, seconded by Mike Geremia, to adjourn the special workshop meeting at 7:22 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Melnik

4/9/2008