

Harwich Planning Board  
Meeting Minutes  
November 5, 2018  
Joint Meeting with Board of Selectmen  
Griffin Room, 732 Main Street, Harwich, MA

Planning Board Members Present: Jim Joyce, James Atkinson, Joseph McParland and Craig Chadwick

Planning Board Members Absent: Mary Maslowski, David Harris, Allan Peterson

Selectmen Present: Julie Kavanagh, Michael MacAskill, Larry Ballantine, Edward McManus and Don Howell.

Others Present: Christopher Clark, Town Administrator and Charleen Greenhalgh, Town Planner

Mr. Joyce called the Planning Board (“Board”) meeting to order at 6:53 pm. The Selectmen’s meeting was already in session.

Selectmen Chair Kavanagh explained that the joint meeting was requested to discuss two topics of interest and concern to the Selectmen. The Selectmen wanted to hear from the Planning Board as to their thoughts.

**Accessory Dwelling Units:**

Mr. Joyce explained that the Board had only just begun reviewing possible changing to the Accessory Dwelling bylaw. He turned the presentation over to Mrs. Greenhalgh who explained that an early draft of changes was presented to the Board at the Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. A copy of this document was also available to the Selectmen in their meeting packet. There has been very little discussion thus far by the Board, but more discuss will occur. Mrs. Greenhalgh provide a brief overview of the draft thus far, which includes accessory units by right if it is within the existing principle dwelling building envelope. An accessory building would still require a special permit. The review for by right or by special permit would essentially be the same, except the by right would be reviewed by the Building Commissioner and the Community Develop team through the normal review process.

Mr. Ballantine expressed that he would like to see some of the criteria relaxed particularly in the East Harwich area to allow additional bedrooms. Mrs. Greenhalgh provide that this would be a Board of Health matter rather than a zoning matter as the number of allowable bedrooms is determine through Health regulations. Mr. Clark pointed out that he has been before the Planning Board for several town projects, and although he has found the Board to be very thoughtful, the process can be intimidating for the layperson. By allowing the Building Commissioner to review would be an easier less intimidating process.

**Route 28 Downtown Retail Zoning**

Neither the Board nor Mrs. Greenhalgh knew exactly what the Selectmen wanted to discuss regarding this matter. Mrs. Greenhalgh in anticipation did provide a memo and map of those areas along Route 28 that are not zoned commercial. The areas a small, Freeman Road to just east of Wychmere Harbor Road (approximately 1/3 of a mile) and a very small portion of Route

28 in West Harwich at the Herring River. The remainder of Route 28 is zoned either CV or CH-1, both commercial zones.

Mrs. Kavanagh asked about the width of the commercial zoning districts. Generally they are 200 feet deep on either side of Route 28. She asked if there was any thought to expand this. Mrs. Greenhalgh provided that back in the early 2000s there has been discussions about expanding the commercial districts to lot lines rather than the arbitrary width of 200 feet. At that time there was great opposition to the idea. People wanted the extra buffer to the commercial zones, which the 200 foot width provided. Mr. Howell asked about the overlay district in Harwich Center. This idea could be expanded to other areas along Route 28.

The Board agreed to keep the Selectmen informed about their progress with the zoning bylaw amendments. The Board would like to have review by both the Selectmen and by Legal Counsel before zoning amendments are advertised. All thought this to be a wise decision. Additionally, it was pointed out that zoning amendments require a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting, so it is essential that there is support for amendments.

The Planning Board adjourned their portion of the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charleen Greenhalgh, Town Planner  
Adopted: November 15, 2018