

MINUTES OF THE
October 17, 2013 Meeting of the
Easton Planning & Zoning Commission

Members Present: Members, John Atwood, Debbie Renshaw, Linda Cheezum and Don Hilderbrandt and Richard Tettelbaum.

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Lynn Thomas, Town Planner, Zach Smith, Current Planner and Stacie Rice, Planning Secretary.

Mr. Atwood called the meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission to order at 1:00 p.m. The first order of business was the approval of the minutes of the Commission's August 15, 2013 meeting. Upon motion of Mr. Tettelbaum seconded by Mrs. Cheezum the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the minutes.

Mr. Thomas discussed with the Commission a few long range planning issues. The first being the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Thomas explained it is time to consider the next packet of amendments to the Ordinance. However, the extent that the Commission may want to pursue any such amendments may be influenced by the fact that we also need to initiate the larger undertaking of comprehensively updating the Zoning Ordinance. The Commission and staff then discussed the various options for updating the Ordinance including the scope and magnitude such changes would entail. The Commission indicated they were not interested in a total restructuring or new direction for the Ordinance (by, for example, switching to a Form-Based Ordinance as had at least been discussed in the past) but rather would prefer to simply refine and improve the current Ordinance. Mr. Thomas stated that with that being the case, we could initiate such an update in the near future and the timeframe for completion should not be too long.

Mr. Thomas explained the one item that he had noted as a possible amendment for this year's packet of amendments. It concerns a potential change and/or clarification to the use that was added a few years ago, "mobile food use." This use was created to address sales of food from trucks, trailers, etc. Such a use is permitted now in the Town, but only in very limited circumstances. Recently there have been a couple of "twists" on this use. One is the use of a mobile structure to sell non-food items. Mr. Thomas indicated that to a certain extent that was covered by the Ordinance in another provision which allows such sales a limited number of times for a limited duration and under certain conditions. It does not address such a use that is more permanent (or at least more frequent) in nature, other than by implication to prohibit such arrangements.

Mr. Thomas added that another variation was the use of a mobile food unit but in a non-mobile way. An example was given of the trolley that has recently been opened at Rise Up Coffee on Dover Road. This structure and the use of it to sell food from, is permitted if it leaves the site and goes to the site of an approved temporary use. However, it cannot remain permanently in one spot, even if it is on the site of the business which owns it. Staff discussed the issue and pointed out that we would allow an expansion of the business onsite as an expansion of the principal structure or by addition of a second building, but based on our current definition of mobile food use, the expansion of the use into the same (or less) space via something like the trolley or a specialized RV-type vehicle, would not be permitted. The staff also pointed out that there could be Building Code implications to consider.

After a spirited discussion, the consensus was that while not inclined to make any changes at this time (other than perhaps to clarify the intent of the use), the Commission would at least consider the range of options available. Mr. Thomas indicated that he would prepare something for a future meeting for the Commission's consideration.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m. by motion of Mr. Hilderbrandt, seconded by Ms. Renshaw.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacie S. Rice
Planning Secretary