

# Woodstock Planning & Zoning Commission

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## SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, February 8, 2024

7:30 PM

WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL, MEETING ROOM 1 & VIRTUAL via Zoom

*The state statute currently allows for in person meetings unless quorum or more requests virtual meetings. Because of virtual attendance, this meeting is being recorded. This procedure has been reviewed and approved by Town Attorney Richard Roberts.*

A recording of this meeting can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/mpPBi2uk1M8>

1. **Call to Order**- Chairman Jeffrey Marcotte called meeting to order at 7:31 pm
  - a. Roll Call- Noted for record: Quorum  
Members Present- Jeffrey Marcotte (Chair), Joe Polulech, Joseph Adiletta, Aaron Farbo, Syd Blodgett, Mark Blackmer, David Morse  
Members Present via Zoom - John Day, Dwight Ryniewicz  
Members Absent-, Doug Porter, Timothy Young, Dean Gould  
Others Present- Delia Fey (Town Planner), Cameron James (Assistant Planner), Laura & Ray Curley, Joe Macho, Rania Biak, Joan Rivers Bardwell, Arno Winkelman, Erin Yasgar, several other members of the public and Recording Secretary Amy Monahan. Public attendance via Zoom: Gale Raducha, Chris Baker
  - b. Designation of Alternates: John Day was seated
  - c. Pledge of Allegiance: Jeffrey Marcotte led the Pledge of Allegiance
2. **Chair's Report**
  - a. Chairman Jeffrey Marcotte shared that Dan Malo will be the new full time Zoning Enforcement Officer for the Town of Woodstock starting March 4, 2024.
3. **Citizens' Comments**
  - a. None
4. **Meeting Minutes**
  - a. January 18, 2024
    - i. David Morse made a **\*Motion** to approve the January 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes as amended. **\*Seconded** by Joe Polulech. **\*The motion passed unanimously.**
      1. Delia Fey clarified that the application came before Planning & Zoning because the events proposed are not **agriculture** (it was noted as agritourism in the original minutes).
5. **New Business**
  - a. #SP565-07-05M Woodstock Academy – 150 Rt 169 (map 6395 block 64 lot 11) Special Permit Modification for construction of 4 tennis courts to replace soccer fields at WA South Campus (request referral to Design Professionals)
    - i. Delia Fey recommends that this application be sent Design Professionals for review.

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- ii. David Morse recused himself from this agenda item.
  - 1. Joe Adiletta made a **\*Motion** to send application #SP565-07-05M Woodstock Academy – 150 Rt 169 (map 6395 block 64 lot 11) Special Permit Modification for construction of 4 tennis courts to replace soccer fields at WA South Campus to Design Professionals for review. **\*Seconded** Aaron Farbo. **\*The motion passed unanimously.**
- b. CT Federation of Planning & Zoning Agencies, Application for membership (which includes newsletters). Full year: \$110.
  - i. Jeffrey Marcotte updated the commission that the commission currently has an active membership and suggested that the commission renew this membership for future benefits.
    - 1. David Morse made **\*Motion** to renew the membership for CT Federation of Planning & Zoning Agencies. **\*Seconded** by Joe Adiletta. **\*The motion passed unanimously.**

## 6. New Business

- a. Short-Term Rental discussion
  - i. Review results of STR Survey
    - 1. Delia Fey reviewed the commission members input to the short-term rental survey.
    - 2. Joe Adiletta noted that survey results show that the PZ should approach this topic in some way. Jeffrey Marcotte felt the survey brought up areas he previously had not thought about.
    - 3. John Day shared his investigation into the number of Air BNB locations posted online to rent in Woodstock. He feels that the numbers do not seem to be largely impactful to the Town of Woodstock. He does feel that safety concerns need to be addressed for those rentals.
    - 4. David Morse feels the Town of Woodstock should know how many Air BNB type rentals are operating in town and ensure all safety needs are met. The operation should require an application/permit so that the town knows where these rentals are and that they meet adequate standards. He would not like to overregulate short term rentals, only ensure safety.
    - 5. John Day suggested the consideration of limiting the number of days you could rent any location in order to keep out corporate run rentals.
    - 6. David Morse noted that regulations should not create enforcement issues.
    - 7. Joe Adiletta noted that concerns addressed by NDDH and Fire Marshal are his primary concerns. Dwight Ryniewicz also feels that septic and fire are areas to regulate.
    - 8. Delia Fey will reach out to NDDH for their input on the topic.
    - 9. Aaron suggested having annual applications to ensure safety and allow for problem sites to be denied/addressed.
    - 10. Syd Blodgett noted the impact that neighbors have on this use and that you cannot regulate good neighborliness.
    - 11. Delia Fey noted that certain concerns are not within the Planning & Zoning purview. She noted that noise, for example, is not under PZ and is very hard to regulate. She did refer to the existing student housing regulations in town which has standards to meet and process to follow.
  - ii. Discussion
    - 1. Concerns to address are fire, safety and septic
    - 2. Bed and Breakfast is a variation of STR
    - 3. Complaints about rentals can be documented in the property file
  - iii. Public Discussion

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1. Joan Rivers noted that troublesome rentals are not what the AirBNB/VRBO sites want to promote. She noted her specific role in having a STR removed from the platforms for the problems that site caused through reporting to the host platform.
  2. Gale Raducha feels that these commercial businesses should not be allowed in residential area like Woodstock. She has submitted a letter to the Commission for consideration.
  3. Dawn Peters noted that her home is next door to Air BNB and it has been a fantastic experience with no problems.
  4. Mark Peters sees that we are looking for a solution to a problem that may or may not exist. He noted that he could have family visit his home every weekend that would create the same impact as a rental situation and asked if the commission would ever try to regulate that activity.
  5. Arno Winklemen noted that the speculation was well done but most of this discussion is based on speculation and not knowledge of the topic. He noted that this country was created with boarding houses. He currently owns a STR and is considered a super host. He stated that the hosts and the renters review every stay with this type of rental. As a host, he wants to keep his home safe so he has fire extinguishers and the septic pumped every 2 years. Most of his renters want to enjoy the country. In order for renters to host a party, they have to apply for that with their rental.
  6. Rania Biak noted that a 20 acre property and a .5 acre property need to be considered differently. A Short Term Rental is not a one size fits all problem.
  7. Jose Macho has concerns with rental for profit replacing residential homes.
  8. Linda McGee supports those who own homes and want to do what they want in their own homes. She feels this has been an issue of 1 or 2 instances that has been blown out of proportion. She noted that Bungay Lake has been referred to as an association and she wants to correct that statement as LBTD is a tax district.
  9. Laura Curley referred to deed restrictions on lake properties, specifically LBTD deed restrictions. She would like those deed restrictions to be considered.
    - a. Delia Fey noted that deed restrictions within tax districts need to be handled privately by the district. The town will not become involved in private deed restrictions of separate tax district. As of now, the Town of Woodstock regulates all lakes in the Lake ZONING District.
    - b. Delia also noted that when LBTD was created, there was no zoning. Thus the Town of Woodstock never agreed/approved LBTD deed restrictions when the Lake Association was created.
  10. Mark Peters noted for the record that the LBTD was created in 1982 and land use regulation was not selected at its creation.
  11. Dwight noted, for the record, the specific statutes that Lake Bungee Tax District was formed under and noted that he LBTD needs to seek advice from lake council. Dwight shared this information from his experience as the former lake president, vice president, road chair, beach chair and current position with the Town of Vernon.
  12. Aaron asked if lake can regulate Short Term Rentals. Delia Fey noted they can create a deed restriction but they would have to enforce it themselves. Aaron asked if commission can make regulations for just the Lake District. Delia noted that the commission can create regulations that apply to all lakes in the Lake District.
- b. b. Plan of Conservation & Development Update – follow up
- i. Jeffrey Marcotte spoke with First Selectmen Jay Swan. Jay Swan is planning to reach out NECCOG to discuss the plan for POCD.

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## 7. Zoning Enforcement Officer and Land Use Department

- a. a. Appointment of Manuel Medina, Tyche Planning & Policy Group as an additional ZEO (to assist Zoe Chatfield)
  - i. Joe Adiletta made a **\*Motion** to accept the appointment of Manuel Medina, Tyche Planning & Policy Group as an additional ZEO. **\*Seconded** by David Morse. **\*The motion passed unanimously.**

## 8. Citizens' Comments

- a. None

## 9. Correspondence

- a. The commission has been distributed a CT Mirror article "From frost fans to hayrides, wild weather is forcing CT farmers to adapt to climate change" that refers to local area farms for their reference and review.

## 10. Adjournment

- a. David Morse made a **\*Motion** to adjourn. **\*Seconded** by Mark Blackmer. **\*The motion passed unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

\*Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan, Recording Secretary. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.