

Manchester by the Sea Planning Board
Zoning Bylaw Subcommittee Meeting
Minutes of the February 9, 2023, Meeting
Held in Town Hall, Room 7

Members Present: S. Creighton, M. Foley, and C. Olney (not a quorum)

Staff Present: E. Ware, Interim Town Planner

The group started discussion of senior housing and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings that had outlived their purposes. It was noted that most of the buildings in the town center were non-conforming in terms of zoning compliance so would need zoning relief to be redeveloped.

M. Foley stated that the language was too loose, and that development was a “not one size fits all”. She stated that she would prefer two separate bylaws- one for smaller facilities where it was just the housing and the other for a facility with additional complimentary uses, such as health club, barber shop, convenience store, etc. She also stated that she wanted these facilities to be non-profit. More acreage would allow for additional amenities. Employee parking was another issue.

C. Olney stated that nursing homes were allowed in all districts.

M. Foley stated building heights were not consistent. S. Creighton stated that there were bigger issues than height in that there needed to be reasonable design standards.

M. Foley stated that she wanted several additions to the bylaw including, but not limited to:

1. housing vs. assisted living.....two separate bylaws;
2. Not one size fits all for all districts and the use was not appropriate to all districts;
3. impacts to abutters, with parking, trash disposal, lighting, loading zones, etc.
4. Hamilton’s bylaws included a limit of units/year, there was more distance between facilities, and more town services (water, sewer, etc.);
5. more open space was required in the larger lot districts;
6. there was a limit of who could live in the units. The minimum age had to be 18 or above.

She noted that the goal was supposed to be housing for services and she was not seeing that in this draft. She had been talking with residents and no one wants more negative impacts on their properties, including more dense housing. She does not want the decision to be made by 7 board members. She is not in agreement with this proposal.

C. Olney stated that the Planning Board could make findings in the special permit and that specifics are hard to foresee. M. Foley stated that there was an issue with lack of enforcement.

Further discussion took place and included discussion of:

- Definitions of open space
- Concerns with lot coverage requirements
- Issues of enforcement (or lack thereof)
- Too much to interpret.
- Limit of number of units/years
- Lack of specificity
- Concern with building heights and consistency with the language

As of February 27, 2023, the Board was considering four proposed changes to the zoning:

- Adult Use
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Administration
- Senior Housing

An article was to be prepared for the Manchester Cricket on April 20th or 21st.

Discussion continued of the schedule for town meeting and getting the word out about the articles. S. Creighton stated that she would write a memo to the SelectBoard regarding the proposed amendments.

This meeting lasted approximately two hours. No quorum was present, no votes were taken.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Ware

Acting Clerk