



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**Planning Board and Housing Commission
Joint Work Session
MEETING MINUTES
Friday, December 1, 2023
Whipple Town Hall, 7:30 AM**

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Tim Paradis, Vice-Chair Jeremy Bonin, Emily Campbell, Paul Gorman, Marianne McEnrue, David Royle,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Kubit, Paul Vance, Katie Vedova, Bill Helm (Selectmen's Representative)

HOUSING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Peter Nichols, Ann Bedard, Marilyn Kidder, Nancy Rollins, Steve Theroux, Thomas Vannatta, Michael Quinn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Winfried Feneberg, Randy Foose

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Planner and Zoning Administrator, Adam Ricker, UVRPC Housing Navigator, Renee Theall, Amy Kaplan

Planning Board Chair Tim Paradis opened the meeting at 7:34am. The meeting is recorded for online viewing.

The Housing Commission is an advisory board tasked with focusing solely on housing issues and they have spent many meetings preparing their recommendations for amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance. Mr. Ricker assisted with compiling the proposed amendments into a draft "red-line" document, which shows the proposed language changes to the New London Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Paradis asked Mr. Nichols to walk through the Housing Commission's proposed ADU Zoning Amendments and provide an overview of their approach. Mr. Nichols noted that the goal of the commission is to increase moderate housing units in New London, and to achieve voter approval of the proposed ADU amendments at Town Meeting in March 2024.

Mr. Nichols provided some context for what the proposed increases to the bedroom count, and square footage could look like for a future ADU, if the amendments were approved. Mr. Bonin noted he appreciates the connection between adding a bedroom to the maximum number allowed, and the increase to the overall square footage. Mr. Gorman and Ms. McEnrue expressed concerns over public support based on their experiences as members of the Planning Board when the ADU ordinance was first implemented. There was a conversation regarding state septic regulations and how they can help mitigate uncontrolled growth. It was discussed that there was much more public support for flexible housing options now and the planning board could take back up the discussion of specific amendments during future meetings.

Mr. Royle asked about how New London's efforts compared to other regional towns. Mr. Ricker noted that Ms. Theall was working as the Housing Navigator for Wilmot and Newbury as well.

Mr. Nichols provided an overview of the proposed change to the number, and styles of allowed ADUs. There was a discussion on how best to protect the shoreland, without inadvertently encouraging development that does not fit the intent or spirit of the proposed changes.

Mr. Ricker reminded the boards that all approved ADUs would still need to meet the “owner occupancy” provision currently required. Ms. Bedard noted that it is very difficult to regulate owner occupancy. Marilyn Kidder felt it would be worth exploring if ADUs could be included on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) used by real estate agents.

There was a discussion around including design and hazard review elements in the proposed changes. Pros and cons considered included the subjectivity, and legality of the proposed language. Adjustments were made to focus on community safety while clarifying the language.

Mr. Ricker reviewed the impact of having a permissive Zoning Ordinance and endorsed the creation of a definition for “short term rentals.” Mr. Nichols explained that the definition was specifically crafted with consideration of the short-term contracts that travelling nurses typically have.

Ms. McEnrue asked for clarification on the enforcement of the proposed amendments. There was discussion around the pros and cons of conditional use permits, technical review committees, and considerations for an affidavit of existence.

Mr. Ricker provided an overview of the adjustments made during the meeting and reiterated that there could be more changes made at the next planning board meeting. Suggestions were given for using Municipal Matters and the Citizen’s Advisory Committee as ways to gather feedback on the proposed amendments.

Mr. Paradis and Mr. Ricker thanked the Housing Commission for the time they have dedicated to providing the recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03am

The next regular Planning Board meeting will be held on December 12, 2023 at 6:30pm. It will not be a public hearing, but further amendments to the proposed zoning amendments may be discussed.

A public hearing on the changes will be held on January 9, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cara Leone
Land Use and Assessing Coordinator
Town of New London