

**ZONING COMMISSION - DECEMBER 2015 MEETINGS REPORT
TO JANUARY 2016 TAGHKANIC TOWN BOARD**

The commission met on the two scheduled meetings of 7 and 21 December.

The focus in December was a continuing review of the Use Table in terms of Special Use Permits and Site Plan Review requirements. The Use Table continues to be further refined.

The Commission is deeply concerned that there are serious misconceptions about the direction and intent of the draft code to date. The Planning Board review stated that Draft Article 60 presents too much regulation. Others have commented that it is too difficult to read. A town-wide letter from Candidate Richard Skoda cited factually incorrect implications of several regulations, and as such, labeled them as excessive and inappropriate.

The Commission agrees that the Draft Article 60 is difficult to read, has listened to this feedback and is developing ways to present the material for easier reading and clearer understanding. Commission Co-Chair, Linda Swartz, reviewed the Draft Article 60 that was presented to the public in September with an eye for confusing verbiage and possibly excessive regulations. Finding both those and other issues, she prepared a typed list of comments and presented them to the Commission in December. Each member of the Commission is conducting the same review and the draft will be revised accordingly.

As part of this work to clarify and simplify, the Commission requests that the Town Board become a more active partner in the development of the new zoning code. The Commission would like to send sections of its work as they are developed to the Town Board for its review and written comment within the month in which it is presented.

It is important that the work of the Commission move in directions that are acceptable to the Town Board as representatives of the people of Taghkanic. What is to be avoided is partial or wholesale rejection after years of work by a hard-working commission of volunteer townspeople. The Commission goal is to present the Town Board with a product that can be approved for the benefit of the whole town.

Zoning Commission minutes are critical to its work and therefore, to provide for essential continuity and consistency, the Commission unanimously passed a motion to appoint Linda Swartz as secretary. The motion also stipulates that this position will be paid from Commission funding at the same rate as the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals secretaries.

The Use Table Review will be completed in January. A comparison of Comprehensive Plan / Existing Code / Draft New Code will be developed for key areas during the first quarter of 2016. The Commission hopes that this comparison will facilitate better understanding of the draft code.

The public is welcome to attend, listen and comment.

The next meetings are scheduled for 4 and 18 January 2016. All meetings run from 6:30PM to 8:30PM at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Thompson,
Chair, Town of Taghkanic Zoning Commission
7 January 2016

7 December 2015

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