

TOWN OF TAGHKANIC
ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
December 16, 2019

Members present: Joyce Thompson, Chair; Linda Swartz, Co-Chair and Secretary; Members: Al Huehnel, John Roberts, Moisha Blechman; ZC Consultant Ted Fink

Excused: Donn Critchell, Kathy Bainer

Absent: Elizabeth O'Donnell,

This is an "unofficial meeting" due to lack of quorum. Called to order 4:13 p.m. by Joyce Thompson.

Approval of Minutes:

Vote on the Minutes of the November 18, 2019, is tabled due to lack of quorum.

Meeting with CAC:

Joyce met with the CAC on Thursday, December 12, 2019. Present, in addition to Joyce, were Chairman Tony LaSalvia, Val Hoffman, Zita Kobos, Larry Kadish and Anna Kadish. Moisha, who is also a member of the CAC, was unavailable for this meeting. The purpose of the meeting was so that Joyce could inform the CAC of the many regulations in the draft zoning code to protect trees, water and ridgelines. Joyce cited numerous entries found in sections 10, 60, and 90, and said that she is confident that these issues have been addressed throughout the code; they are part of the basic fabric of the code. It is an element in all of the conservation design and is taken care of in a way that is very meaningful.

Linda added that Section 50-G. also states that when the Planning Board is reviewing an application for a flag lot, they must consider protection of open space, agriculture, forests, biodiversity resources, surface water, and watersheds. She further stated that the statements contained in Section 10-A. are very strong in terms of protection of water, trees, and ridgelines, and they encourage sustainable agriculture. The language in 10-A. are the goals cited in the town's Comprehensive Plan.

Moisha asked that Section 90-A. contain language for protection of water. The ZC asked that Ted include the words "the watershed" in the second sentence following "... does not adversely affect ...").

Short-term rentals:

There has been a great deal of discussion and some controversy concerning short-term rentals. The ZC feels that, in the interest of getting the nearly-complete code to the Town Board early in 2020, it is better that we not address this emerging use at this time. Instead, we will closely watch how the regulations drafted by other towns and the City of Hudson work, and see if the County takes a stand. We may then be better able to decide how short-term rentals will be treated in Taghkanic. Finally, we will make a recommendation to the Town Board and have the use added by amendment to the code.

Susan Raymond referred to a recent story in the Columbia Paper about Hillsdale's approach to short-term rentals. Hillsdale requires that the homeowner register the short-term rental with the Town and pay a \$50 permit fee; and the homeowner, or other responsible party must live within 20 miles of the rental.

What are some of the issues associated with short-term rentals (positive and negative)?

- Possible negative impact to neighbors in (noise, traffic, diminished marketability of home, vulnerability of neighborhood)
- Loss of local people to serve the town (boards and volunteer fire departments)
- Loss of sense of place, being surrounded by short-term rental homes.
- Positive impacts include income for homeowner and lodging for tourism.

Possible options:

- Registration with fee
- Responsible party within 20 miles of the rental unit and contact information must be kept up-to-date
- Limit number of weekends home may be rented
- Cap on number of permits issued (based on percentage of residencies – Taghkanic has approximately 750 dwellings as of the 2010 census).

How does “short-term rental” use compare with hotels and motels and other hospitality uses?

- Hotels and motels are allowed only in the MU district with requirements for direct access on state or county roads.
- Conference centers, resorts or lodges are not permitted in the MU district and require Special Use permit in residential districts.
- Inns require Special Use Permit in residential districts and require site plan review in the MU district.
- It is assumed that most, if not all, short-term rentals would be in residential districts.

Susan expressed concern about allowing accessory dwelling units, saying that it opens the door to the short-term rental. She urges that we not delay in getting a law in place to control short-term rentals. (If it’s not in the code, it’s prohibited by omission.) However, to avoid problems, we will require that rental of accessory dwellings be for a period of not less than 30 consecutive days. Language will be inserted into Section 60-Q.

Moisha handed out information on Ridgelines and asked that it be made part of these Minutes.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the ZC is scheduled for Monday, January 6, 2020. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 4:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Public Audience: Kara Gilmore, Susan Raymond

Minutes Prepared by: Linda Swartz