

Town of Ancram
Zoning Revisions Committee

MINUTES, Bonnie Hundt
September 16, 2024, 7:00 pm
Via Zoom, Steve Olyha -host

PRESENT: Carol Falcetti, Norman Anton, Bonnie Hundt, Jim Miller, Steve Olyha, Erin Robertson, Dennis Sigler, Kim Tripp
ABSENT: Susan Wohleking

Carol asked permission to disseminate to the group contact information. All consented.

1. Minutes of August 19, 2024. No corrections, additions or objections.

2. SCOZ V 3bxvi. Wind Farms. Suggested definition: Wind Power Energy System, Utility Scale is a land based wind energy project which produces larger than 1 megawatt (MW) of energy. **Approved.**

3. Unpacking the Housing Toolbox. Discussion/Questions

Discussion centered around Nan Stolzenberg' report: **Understanding Municipal Capabilities to Address Housing Insufficiencies.** We went through each item of the toolkit, but not necessarily in order. Since Ancram already has zoning for **Accessory Dwelling Units and Density Increases** we skipped over them. However both topics came up in our discussions.

The question of what is **Inclusionary Zoning** was clarified by saying that when a subdivision was planned, including affordable housing units will be an incentive to planning board approval. The density bonus needs to be explored in connection with this.

Expansion of housing types/ Mixed uses covered co-housing and tiny housing. Some uses are already covered under Ancram's accessory housing zoning. The definition of co-housing states that there are shared spaces in the development; outdoor spaces are shared. Erin said that it sounds like our Open Space Plan which usually comes into play with five or more lots. The plan requires a percentage (60%) to be open space. The question of should we tweak zoning for mixed and multi family use was brought up but put off until we can give time to the discussion. Erin said that currently a mixed used structure - residential and commercial - is before the planning board. The ZRC said they would like to look into this to possibly offer the Planning Board some guidance.

Average lot size/conservation subdivision. We already have zoning regulations for average lot size and open space density bonuses. But what are the rules applying to a family wanting to build a house on a small piece of property and can those rules be changed? We need to review minimum density. Erin said that we should be looking at lot size in the hamlets. Right now in the hamlet there is two acres minimum to build. The ZRC consensus is that 2 acres is big. And we should look at a 40 foot rear setback. We could review zoning - height restrictions, changing minimum lot size and setbacks - for residential hamlets (see page 52 in

the Zoning law). Erin says density increases are for everyone. Steve believes that reducing lot size is good for Ancram as a whole. Erin said that septic is the biggest problem with small lot size; that lowering lot size is an option not a requirement. Ancram and Ancramdale have 1/2 acre lot size but this is for business/residential, not for residential; Rhoda is 1 acre minimum. The big question is do we want to change to ½-acre zoning. We decided to make up questions and send to Nan and have her speak to us.

Under **Design and development standards** we discussed as-of-right housing. Can as-of-right housing apply to multiple family housing. When how as-of-right housing would affect our planning process, Erin said that single and two family residential use have abbreviated site plan review. Could that apply to a 3- or 4-plex housing?

We could explore **floating/planned districts** to increase affordable housing. Does this apply to Ancram and if so how? Erin said we have a floating business district; she doesn't think we have anything in zoning that addresses making a new hamlet, which is essential what a planned district is.

Can we do more with **short term rentals**? Some towns restrict the number of short term rental businesses. Do we want to and can we legally restrict the number of STRs we have? Other towns (Rhinebeck) have been doing it. Steve said that one of the things we never addressed was STR density which is something we need to address quickly. He also said that we should recommend to the board to fine those who do not have a permit and they should not be allowed a the get a permit for a period of time.

As for streamlining the approval processes, Dennis and Erin will lead us through the problems with that route. One streamline we have in place is the abbreviated site plan review. We thought that it would be useful for Nan to review use table and see if there other permits that would need an abbreviated process.

At the end of the meeting, we returned to **mixed-use structures**. Dennis pointed out that in our zoning law, over two apartments is considered an apartment building. Erin said that then it becomes a commercial use. We discussed what the town might allow and what we would like to see and what to avoid.

Since a mix use structure is not listed in the use table it is not allowed. Only multifamily is listed under residential commercial uses. Therefore we need a definition of what multi use, mixed business residential might be and the supplemental standards we would want to have on it. Erin said we need to put it in the use table and determine the review process.

Steve said that we need to agree as to whether or not we want to allow it. If yes, make a definition, and then make standards and requirements that are needed. Norman said that he would look into the New York state definition of such a mixed-used structure , it's occupancy classification and the codes that would be applicable.

At this point since it is not in the use table it would be turned down by the planning Board and if it went to the ZBA it would be a use variance. Steve said that four tests are stringent and clear and it would be challenging for the ZBA to grant a use variance. The Farmers Wife with an apartment upstairs would be considered a non-conforming use. The same for Simon's Store and Ancram Center for Arts. Erin said that supplemental standards are for that; the important thing is how it looks; we should be talking about design standards.

4. We did not get to **Affordable Housing-Accessory Building and Uses: Article VA1, p62.**

Meeting ended at 8:28. Next meeting will be November 4. Norman will take the minutes_