Town of Stanford Zoning Commission

April 17, 2025

Present: Thomas Angell, Don Smith, Chris Flynn, Wendy Burton, Steve Horowitz

Absent: Barbara Warren

Stephan Gotovich stepping down from the Commission

Meeting begins at 7:04 PM

3.20.25 Nina Peek Memo from previous meeting

The Commission discussed the priority items that they want Nina to put her hourly rate towards Task 4. The recommended priorities are:

- Use Table – Classification of Principal/Accessory Uses
- Home Occupations Regulations
    - Steve Horowitz has been working on this item, but said having extra eyes on specific items would be helpful
- Renewable Energy Regulations
    - There is a moratorium that will need attention and language for large scale projects in the future
- Dark Skies Regulations
    - This was something that Nina brought up just because there is nothing in the Code specifcially
- Lot Standards
    - Mr. Angell suggested that Lot Standards could be impacted by the new ADU law and the Right to Farm law, so would like to see how things start to shake out before working this item.

Ms. Burton and Mr. Smith said they both get complaints about noise, but there is no ordinance that is enforceable, so that could be an item for Ms. Peek. Mr. Angell said noise ordinances are hard to enforce for constitutional reasons.

The Commission Members selections for priorities:

Mr. Smith selected Use Table for his priority, then Home Occupations, then Lot Standards, then Dark Skies, and then Renewable Energy Regulations

Mr. Flynn selected Renewable Energy Regulations, then Home Occupations, then Lot Standards, then Dark Skies, and then Use Table

Ms. Burton selected Use Table, then Home Occupations, then Renewable Energy, then Lot Standards, and then Dark Skies

Mr. Horowitz selected Use Table, then Home Occupations (by an effort by the Commission first), then Renewable Energy, then Lot Standards, and then Dark Skies
Mr. Angell selected Use Table, then Home Occupation, then Lot Standards, then Dark Skies, then Renewable Energy

The tally put the priorities as:
1. Use Table
2. Home Occupations
3. Lot Standards
4. Dark Skies
5. Renewable Energy Storage

Mr. Angell asked if the Commission ran out of Task 4 money for Ms. Peek before she could get to Renewable energy what could be the solution. Ms. Burton suggested the Commission could start on it, or Bob Butts could work on it.

4.6.25 Home Occupation Ordinance draft from Steve Horowitz
Mr. Horowitz presented the draft law he constructed based on the draft from 1986. Mr. Horowitz explained that he included a number of footnotes to help clarify some of the language within the draft.

Mr. Horowitz said he added Section 4: restrictions on use of outdoor areas in connection with permitted home occupations to help alleviate common complaints.

Mr. Horowitz said he added Section 5: Home occupation by special use permit, to allow the Planning Board help with specific home occupation standards.

Mr. Horowitz said he added Section 6: registration of home occupation to help with enforcement issues.

Mr. Angell asked Mr. Horowitz to expand upon Section 4 and 6. Mr. Horowitz pointed out that footnote 5 highlights that a lot with a residence may not be able to have a business where another non-residential lot may be able to conduct business and that the Commission should evaluate which uses are prohibited in which zones.
Mr. Angell pointed out that registration with home occupations may been an issue because there are home occupations that came into existence between the adoption of the Code and when this new code would be adopted that could be grandfathered in that maybe should not be.

Mr. Horowitz highlighted footnote 6 about the Commission discussing a potential strictly residential zone that does not allow any home occupation.

Mr. Angell pointed out that 2(a) includes professional service or business, but there is a separate Home Professional Office already existing in the code.

Mr. Horowitz said 2(b) was created by numbers he found by looking at other Codes. Mr. Flynn suggested including veterans, special needs, and elders for care. Mr. Flynn and Mr. Smith suggested that there be no percentage of floor area for these types of care. Mr. Horowitz pointed out that a special use permit would help with the more subjective areas. Mr. Horowitz said he could re-write the section to keep the 30% floor area but then make an exception for care so they can use the whole floor area. Mr. Angell countered that a non-profit organization could come in and do the same care as a group home that uses 100% of the home, and he wanted to clarify once the percentage is gone it no longer can be regulated. Mr. Smith said the inspections are done by the agency that funds the care. Mr. Angell suggested changing the 50% of habitable floor area for foster care to 50% of the bedrooms in the home and include elder care, veteran care, and special needs care. The Commission agreed with that edit.

Mr. Horowitz asked if the Commission would like to keep 2(c) the same for the number of employees as he has it currently written. The Commission agreed yes.

Mr. Horowitz highlighted 2(f) for discussion on the number of parking spaces. Mr. Flynn said putting a number on the vehicles makes it complicated if they have more acreage than someone else. Mr. Angell pointed out that allowing increases in the scale starts to turn the home occupations really into just a business. Ms. Burton said the Zoning Board of Appeals could be used so the term home occupation does not get too bogged down by definitions and people can get variances if they need to go outside the standards.

Ms. Burton said the idea behind home occupations in the Comprehensive Plan was to encourage home occupations but in a manner that can respect the neighborhood. Mr. Flynn pointed out that there is always going to be noise, but what bothers each person is different, and he suggested 8 am – 5 pm for operating hours. The issue discussed further was if this includes all home occupations or outdoor operations.

Mr. Horowitz motioned to approve the March 20, 2025 meeting minutes. Mr. Smith seconded. All in favor, Mr. Angell, Mr. Smith, Mr. Flynn, Ms. Burton, Mr. Horowitz. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm