Town of Stanford Zoning Commission

June 23, 2025

Meeting Minutes

Present: Thomas Angell, Wendy Burton, Don Smith, Steve Gotovich

Absent: Chris Flynn

Meeting begins 7:06 PM

Annotated Outline of the Zoning Code

Nina Peek and Taylor Daigle were present. Ms. Burton explained that the Town will be doing public comment on any new laws the Town has on Short Term Rentals before the State law comes into play. Mr. Angell suggested that the County could be doing their own registry and that could be helpful to the Town. Mr. Angell said the latest Right to Farm draft law has all the zoning changes removed, and the audit from the County had been addressed, but now there are areas that are not in compliance. Ms. Burton said a lot of the public comment was aimed at the building permit components and property buffers. Mr. Angell explained that trying to zone the pig farms would not comply with Right to Farm and Ms. Peek agreed that it is like trying to zone the user not the use. Ms. Burton commented that the County did not like the idea of the Agricultural Overlay District. Mr. Angell explained that previously Ms. Peek would not be involved in Right to Farm, but now it seems like she will have to be involved. Ms. Burton said the feedback primarily indicated that the Right to Farm law should be short and to the point, and that zoning pieces of the law should be introduced separately. Ms. Peek and Ms. Daigle will be now tasked with the zoning issues with Right to Farm law. Ms. Burton said that Mr. Butts essentially took the model law from the County and it will be reintroduced to the Town.

Ms. Daigle explained the structure of the Zoning Code as they revised it. Ms. Daigle said the Special Use Standards section would be the most visually unique to how it previously looked. Ms. Peek and Ms. Daigle have taken existing code sections and reorganized them. Mr. Angell asked if by doing it piece by piece versus presenting the code as a whole is the correct way to approach this. Ms. Burton said she felt logistically with new Board members in the future it would be complicated. Ms. Peek said presenting a reorganization without substantive text changes may be the best approach because it helps it become an easier code to look at initially. Mr. Angell pointed out that even most recently the introduction of the ADU law had already caused confusion as indicated by Ms. Peek's notes on those definitions. Ms. Peek explained that this revision is a reorganization for ease of use and hopes that it does not face much resistance and then can look at priority items. Mr. Angell

suggested that the date of existing lot of record be changed to the date that the County required filing maps. Mr. Angell also suggested that the Code include notification of property owners for minor subdivisions as well. Ms. Peek clarified that the placeholder for Right to Farm overlay should be removed, and it was decided the placeholder should be removed and can be reintroduced in the Use Table instead. Ms. Daigle said they would likely put these topics within Special Use Standards under Animals & Livestock or under an agricultural line. Ms. Peek said the fee structure should be the same across buildings, but Mr. Angell and Mr. Smith said that Ag and Markets have seen issues with excessive agricultural building fees. Mr. Smith said that Ag and Markets have been supportive of the method of permitting agricultural structures.

164-16: Scenic Roads would come out of the Zoning Code because it is not a zoning standard, and it will go into the Code elsewhere.

164-21: Accessory Dwelling Units. Mr. Angell said originally that the Zoning Commission had removed Guest Cottage, Duplex, and Accessory Apartments definitions, but the Town had put them back in the Code to help regulate the maximum size. Mr. Angell said that Accessory Apartment is very restrictive, and he is questioning whether it needs to be in the Code still. Ms. Daigle thought Accessory Apartments would be not necessary because lot size is not required anymore with the ADU law. Ms. Peek pointed out that the use of the guest cottage is regulated by other means, so it is not really needed as a definition. Ms. Peek said 2 family dwelling and duplex seem the same, so duplex should be removed for clarity purposes. Mr. Horowitz clarified that there is no square footage limitation on double acreage properties, that was confirmed correct. Mr. Angell explained that subdivisions are overseen by the Planning Board more closely because they can regulate future development, but if the lot is buildable at the time, they just need a building permit. Ms. Burton emphasized that the focus on property rights, and Mr. Angell said most people are going to complain about removal of trees and houses in sightlines.

164-23: Antennas (Tower, Dish, Radio). Ms. Daigle questioned if there is a regulation for under 35 feet. Mr. Horowitz pointed out that technology could shift again so best to keep it in. Ms. Peek asked if 34.5 feet needs to be regulated. It was discussed it can stay the same.

164-26: Farm Buildings & Operations. Mr. Angell said the main issue with Farm Housing is the placement of the buildings for what is considered “behind” and the number of the residences. Ms. Peek pointed out that regulating the user for farm housing is complicated.

164-28: Gasoline Stations. Ms. Daigle pointed out that convenience store on its own is just retail.

164-31: Logging, Timber Harvesting. Mr. Smith said currently that they have to do a mailing and a contractor must mark off the area that will need to get input from DEC and a driveway permit. Ms. Peek said it is not uncommon to have a site plan required if the Zoning Commission wants to include that. Ms. Daigle asked for clarification on forestry operations versus a one-time clearing. Mr. Angell suggested that Ms. Peek add it to her research items.

164-32: Manufacturing. Ms. Daigle asked about the definition of large versus small, and does light manufacturing fit into this as well. Ms. Daigle pointed out that "miscellaneous large" is included, but what is that definition. Ms. Peek recommended light or heavy for definitions. Ms. Peek said that a brewery would fall under light industry, and Mr. Angell explained that Ag and Markets told the Planning Board that the Town cannot regulate distilleries. Light manufacturing in the category of agricultural and artisanal uses would be ideal.

164-39: Residential Cluster Subdivision. Ms. Daigle asked if it requires a special permit, and Mr. Angell said the Planning Board would like to have regulation over what a cluster subdivision is and what the lines of authority are. Ms. Peek said the terms for cluster and conservation subdivisions are used interchangeably. Mr. Angell said he would be open to combining the cluster and conservation subdivision with an incentive. Ms. Burton pointed out that would be helpful with land conservation. Mr. Angell said building envelopes could also be used in the Code as well.

164-40: Resort & Recreation Areas. Ms. Daigle asked if golf courses should be included in the definition, yes it should. Ms. Burton asked if resorts should be more regulated. Ms. Peek pointed out that "related facility" is included in the definition. Ms. Peek suggested changing it to just recreation and take resort out.

164-44: Special Permits. Ms. Peek and Ms. Daigle said the term "most" is used for site plans, and it is unclear when it is required. Ms. Daigle and Ms. Peek suggested that a site plan is required, but the Planning Board has the ability to waive certain requirements. Ms. Peek commented that if the uses are allowed, multiple uses should be allowed as well. Mr. Angell also pointed out that it is unclear about the mix of residential with business use, and when it is permitted or not. Mr. Horowitz pointed out the issue of home occupations in every district makes it challenging.

164-47: Amendments. Ms. Daigle asked if "amendments" is the full process, and if it should remain in that part of the Code. Ms. Burton said yes it is.

164-52: Terms Not Defined. Ms. Daigle asked if there should be authority if a use is not defined. Mr. Angell said typically the Zoning Board of Appeals would be the authority on the matter if the Code Enforcer has a different opinion than the applicant and wants an appeal.

Ms. Peek and Ms. Daigle will come to the August 28 meeting (date moved for availability).

Next meeting is July 17. Meeting minutes from April 17 will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM