

Town of Ancram  
Zoning Revisions Committee  
21 May 2012

Members Present: Hugh Clark, Terry Boyles, Barry Chase, Donna Hoyt, Bonnie Hundt, Don MacLean, Jim Miller, Bob Roche, Dennis Sigler  
Members Absent: Barbara Gaba, Bob Mayhew, Kyle Lougheed, Jane Shannon

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The ZRC convened at 7:03 p.m. and approved minutes of the 14 May meeting. The Chair noted comments received via email from Barbara Gaba, who could not attend the meeting.

Members approved the second draft outline for Section V, Supplemental Regulations, which arranges subjects in alphabetical sequence. Mr. MacLean noted inconsistencies in the numbering and lettering of portions of the revisions and his preference for sequential numbering. The Chair noted that all numbering and lettering will be revised when the ordinance revisions are reconfigured into a local law. Mrs. Hoyt reminded all that “Manufactured Homes” are treated elsewhere in the ordinance the same as single family homes and should be deleted from this list, leaving only “Manufactured Home Parks” as the probable subject for “M.”

Examining the second draft of “Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations,” committee decisions and questions included:

-B1: Emphasize in the last sentence that the PB decides the number of parking spaces. Adjusted verbiage might be: “The Planning Board, in its sole discretion, shall determine the parking requirements for any proposed use. When making that decision, the Planning Board shall consider:”

-B1a: Add verbiage that provides to the PB rationale for the 85%, to the effect that: “In most instances, requiring spaces beyond 85% is likely to foster parking lots that are larger than necessary.”

-B2: Upon reflection, Mr. MacLean and the committee perceive that saying the PB “may use the following guidelines” provides too much latitude and could enable the PB to opt for some completely different guidelines or to think that use of guidelines is optional. So, the ZRC decided to restore “shall”—“Parking Lot Guidelines: In addition to...requirements, the Planning Board shall use the following guidelines for determining....”

-B2a(a)(b) and B5: Mrs. Hoyt requested the source for the 400’ distance.

-B2c: “For hospital...one space for each two beds”—Mrs. Hoyt asked whether parking for employees is considered within that calculation.

-B2c: “For club....”—Mrs. Hoyt asked whether the 85% of max capacity verbiage used at B1a should be included.

-B2e: Noting the change from 2 spaces to 3 for one or two family dwellings, Mrs. Hoyt inquired about the relationship between parking for single/two family dwellings versus for multi-family. Others noted the apparent balance when factoring the guest space for multi-fam.

-B5: Change “there-from” to “or not more than 400 feet from that lot.”

-B8: Delete “and resort hotel, resort lodge, resort ranch” and change to “For bed and breakfast, hotel, inn, lodge, and motel, one berth....”

-B8, second paragraph (“For office, business, and commercial uses....”): Add at end of sentence—“...of floor area, unless it can be proven that truck deliveries shall not exceed one vehicle per day.”

-B11: Change “may be paved with an impermeable surface such as asphalt or concrete, or may be constructed of permeable surfaces such as crushed gravel” to “shall be paved with either an impermeable surface such as asphalt or concrete, or a permeable surface such as crushed gravel.”

Also, move the last sentence about lighting into B13, so that all guidance about lighting is consolidated in one passage.

-B12 and B15b: B12 requires at least 8% and B15b requires at least 25% as the minimum for landscaping. The committee believes 25% may be excessive and seeks Nan’s thoughts about a minimum of 10%. The outcome should be the same number in both passages.

Also, in last line of B12, “slightly” should be “sightly” and in B15b, “one deciduous tree per six parking spaces” struck some members as excessive. ZRC seeks Nan’s thoughts.

Examining the draft of “Sign Regulations,” committee decisions and questions included:

-F1: To aid clarity, add verbiage—“The following signs are exempt from the requirements of this ordinance and shall require no permit or approval by the Planning Board.”

-F1a and following: To aid clarity, insert “maximum” in front of square footage—e.g. “sale or rental signs (maximum 6 square feet).”

-F1b: Change 24 sf to “maximum 6 square feet” (Note: would be 12 sf for both sides).

-F1h: Committee seeks Nan’s thoughts about “on-premise signs used in conjunction with sale of farm products (24 square feet).” Should such signs go in F5 (Advertising Signs)? Does NYS Ag & Mkts offer guidance about degree of regulation that town may impose?

-Definitions are needed for “freestanding signs (F2(b)),” “building mounted signs (F2(c)),” “director sign (F2 [sic](c)),” “ground mounted signs (F2(e)),” “representational sign (F2 4),” “face area,” “total face area,” “aggregate total face area,” and other terms.

-F2(b) and F2(d): There appears to be a contradiction between 24 sf in F2(b) and 15 sf in F2(d). Members determined that 12 sf per side/24 sf 2aggregate appears to be best for both. May also be reasonable to consolidate (b) and (d) into one passage.

-F2[sic](b): Does 24 sf face area here mean one side or two sides?

-F2[sic](e): For clarity, insert “The top of” in front of “ground mounted signs shall not....”

-F3: Delete “Notwithstanding” from last sentence and insert “the top of “ into penultimate line—“...provided the top of such signs shall not extend....”

-F5: Members found this passage to be confusing and request it be simplified and broken into “bite-sized pieces” to aid clarity and comprehension.

-F7: Members seek affirmation that the intent is for multiple, small signs that together will not total more than 50 sf.

-F8: Members request additional language that no sign will be placed on or project above the roof line of any building, but that this does not apply to placing a sign on the porch roof or other subordinate roof of a building as long as the sign does not project above the true roof line of the building, i.e. no sign silhouetted against the skyline.

-F10: Last sentence appears to contain a contradiction—“turned off two hours after the close of business unless the premises...is open for business.” Suggest putting period after “close of business” and deleting remainder of sentence.

-F11: Members seek clarity to ensure that last sentence does not preclude installing Christmas lights during that season. Also, “services” appears to be an inappropriate term; “devices” is more accurate. Possible edit may be: “Also, such devices—as well as strings of lights—shall not be used for, or in conjunction with, advertising when not part of a sign.

-F12: Members initially determined that 10% is too low and then, after discussion, opted to delete this entire section on window signs, but invite Nan to comment.

-F15: To aid clarity and comprehension, the committee requests this passage be broken into appropriate sub-paragraphs.

-F18: Responding to Mrs. Hoyt’s objection to the last sentence, the committee requests legal advice from Nan or John Lyons: Is the Town in legal jeopardy if a sign is a source of immediate peril to persons or property (other than the owner) and the BI does not act promptly to remove the source of immediate peril?

The committee also noted that the lettering/numbering for both the parking and sign regulations must be checked and corrected when the final draft is prepared.

Examining the draft of “Accessory Buildings and Uses,” committee decisions and questions included:

-2g: Responding to Mr. Miller’s concern that the existing septic and water system may need upgrading if additional persons are using it, the committee decided to add to this paragraph the second sentence from 3f—“Any proposed accessory apartment in a single family dwelling shall first receive approval from the Columbia County Department of Health with respect to the on-site water supply and sanitary system to be utilized by the accessory apartment before a zoning permit is granted.”

-2h: While acknowledging the benefits of owner occupancy, the committee stated concerns about discouraging an owner from renovating properties he may not live in, and also expressed concerns about tracking owner occupancy after the initial owner-occupant. Pending further information and advice from Nan, the committee is inclined to delete this paragraph.

-2i: Opining that many properties in the hamlets would find this provision to be a “roadblock,” the committee decided the paragraph should be revised to exempt properties in the hamlet business/residential and residential districts, but should apply to properties within the Ag District and Carson Road District.

-3d: Members opted to insert a period after “1000 square feet” and to delete the subsequent requirement for a minimum of 320 square feet.

-4b: Members inferred that “stored” means “without proper registration,” but seek Nan’s confirmation about this definition and thoughts about this provision.

The ZRC will not meet on 28 May, Memorial Day. The next meeting is 4 June.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.