

Town of Ancram
Zoning Revisions Committee
9 July 2012

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

The ZRC convened at 7:03 p.m. and approved minutes of the 25 June meeting.

The Chair handed out hard copies of the third package of zoning revisions, which had been submitted to the Town Board on 20 June.

Noting that Package #3 contains Section V (J), specifying application and review procedures for special use permits, the Chair pointed out that this section V (J) 9 contains factors the PB must consider when reviewing all proposed special uses. However, based on their distinctive nature, some special uses (e.g. adult entertainment, gas station, shooting preserve) need tailored standards.

Section V (J) 10, Individual Standards for Specific Uses, contains tailored standards for 58 uses or groups of uses, which have already been approved by the ZRC. Nan Stolzenburg and the Chair have proofed it again to prepare it for inclusion in package #4 and will send it to members via email. The Chair noted that a troubling inconsistency was detected during review—the maximum square footage of adult entertainment uses was significantly greater than for other business uses. The ZRC thereby approved an edit to Adult Entertainment paragraph 1c changing 5000 square feet to 2000 sf. The Chair urged members to check the use table in package #3 once more and, for each use requiring SUP, determine whether the general standards in V (J) 9 will suffice, or whether individually tailored standards should be included within V (J) 10.

Noting a situation that has come before the PB, the Chair pointed out that two passages in the current zoning ordinance apparently conflict. Section II D (4) and Section IV F (1) appear to be inconsistent about whether more than one single family or two-family principal dwelling may be on one lot. The ZRC must determine whether more than one principal dwelling may be on a lot and, if so, in what district(s) would two or more be allowed. During discussion, the following points emerged:

Mr. MacLean and Mr. Sigler commented that the PB has known about these passages for a long time and that past PBs had farm worker housing in mind as the context for these passages.

Mr. Sigler also said that Section V (I) (Residential Cluster Development), which has been superseded by OSCS, also provided for more than one principal house on a lot. He cited V (I) 1, Single Family Detached Houses, which says, “Single-family detached houses may be grouped in clusters on minimum lot areas per dwelling unit....”

Members unanimously agreed that any principal dwelling should only be on a piece of ground that has proper water and sewage and can ultimately be carved out as a stand-alone, independent lot that conforms to all ground-rules.

Members disagreed about the point at which the second or subsequent principal dwelling gets established as its own independent parcel:

Some said that it was ok to do all the mapping out of boundary lines, water, sewage, etc—and ensure such features are on an officially recorded map—so that subdivision could occur as the final step, but not actually subdivide at the moment;

Most said that, having done all that mapping out, it was best to just go ahead and complete the process and actually execute the subdivision.

Some commented about accessory “guest cottages” migrating to become de facto second principal dwellings on a single lot.

Some opined about possible tax benefits from holding off on the actual subdivision.

Others cited the likely difficulties arising from altered intentions due to owner death, changing family situations, and other happenings that tend to affect properties.

Some also inquired about the relationship between multiple principal single-family dwellings on a lot and the ASPR process.

Most also opined that practicalities probably mean that if more than one principal residence were allowed on a parcel, it would only be in the Ag District.

The Chair related main points from a telephone conversation with Nan Stolzenburg about this issue. Ultimately, members again requested Nan’s perspective, especially about the pros, cons, and effects between subdividing immediately versus “mapping out,” but not requiring immediate subdivision.

Final decision will occur on 16 July after all have had opportunity to think more and to hear again from Nan.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.