

Sunapee Forward Planning and Zoning Meeting Minutes - April 1, 2025

Rescheduled from March 24th which was cancelled due to inclement weather

Committee Attendees

David Andrews
Lynn Arnold
Annie Montgomery
Rhonda Gurney
Trina Hill

Special Guests

Peter White, Chair of Sunapee Planning Committee
Allyson Treager, Sunapee Land Use Coordinator

- Reviewed for Peter and Allyson the committees' goals and focus to date
- Key feedback from Peter and Allyson:
 - Cannot set an overlay or district by lot. Otherwise considered "spot" zoning which is not allowed.
 - Dimensional controls are by district not overlay. Overlay prevents doing certain things but not dimensional controls.
 - District areas are set by intersections (road intersections) and connect by the area want to cover.
 - Easier to expand an existing district than create a new one.
 - Look at existing Village commercial District and expand to what we want
 - Look at existing dimensional controls that exist and determine what you want to change them to
 - Look at dimensional setback requirements for streetscape for village
 - Setbacks
 - Parking
 - There is only one Village Commercial District which is the harbor one
 - Focus on what we want in terms of
 - Setbacks
 - Uses (size of uses)
 - Determine what is allowed by right or requires Special Exception.
 - Density
 - Heights

- 40-foot height restriction to peak within the buildable area of your lot (lowest grade 15 feet away or out from the building)
 - Lot coverage
- Town of Sunapee is looking to apply for river exemption
 - From mouth of Sugar River to lower wind hill road
 - Provides local control from state shore land provisions
 - Plan is for April select board meeting to approve application
 - Can take 2 months to get approval
 - Would be entirely in Village Commercial District
- State emphasis on housing so cannot restrict any single or multifamily housing. Not law yet but heading that way.
- Ascetic preservation
 - Other towns have kept language on ascetic control vague to get passed voters
 - Allow pre-existing status
 - New construction must be in keeping with the ascetics of the harbor
 - Concern expressed about difficulty in establishing specific criteria for ascetic regulations as there is already a mix of architectural styles in the harbor area and difference of opinion on what looks in keeping with New England look
 - Other option for ascetics is to rely on SHA rules for rebuilding or deed restrictions
- There is time for our committee to make recommendations to the Planning Board for getting on the March 2026 ballot
- Use Georges Mills Village Commercial changes for example of how to do it well
- Next meeting is April 7th at Sunapee Library starting at 4:30 pm
 - Agenda – discuss and review feedback from Peter and Allyson