

Approved 12/1/10

**HAMPDEN PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC FORUM MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2010
Town House**

Called to order 7pm

Members Present – Neil Flynn, Chair, Charlie Dolben and Robert Howarth

Absent – John Matthews and Joe Kruzel

Other Boards Present: Lance Trevallion, Building Inspector

This was the third public forum held to receive public input on the Zoning Bylaws, in particular Home Occupations, Large Vehicles and In-Law Apartments. Mr. Flynn explained that the Bylaws should be revisited as the Town grows and evolves. Some good discussions and input were received from the past two forums, though resident attendance has been very low. The Planning Board is looking for input as to whether changes need to be made or things should be left the way they are.

A resident asked about unregistered vehicles, which is a General Bylaw. Mr. Trevallion stated that he receives a fair number of complaints about unregistered vehicles which he refers to the Police Department.

The question “what is a large vehicle?” came up. Mr. Flynn answered over 1 ton capacity on board the truck. A clear definition is needed. A resident felt that conditions for emergencies, weather and snow storms should apply when it comes to parking a truck at a residence. Mr. Trevallion noted that Wilbraham’s large vehicle bylaw states that 10,500 GVW is not allowed in a residential area. Stopping home for lunch is fine. Each situation would be different. Parking a truck on Steeple View Drive is different from parking a truck in a driveway that is off the road and out of site. Mr. Trevallion believes that a special permit case by case would be the answer.

Mr. Flynn brought up Home Occupations. A home based business does not carry the “cost of doing business” (rent, insurance...). This bylaw was written for a different time and is not enforceable as it is written per Mr. Trevallion. Should there be a cost of doing business, a cost to enforce the bylaw? Special permits would protect the small businessman as well as the neighbor. Maybe special permits with conditions and a timeline to regulate growth are needed.

The topic of boats parked in front yards was brought up. The current bylaw allows for no more than two boats on the property which have to be 50’ back from the front property line. A “boat” is not defined.

In-Law Apartments were discussed. Eighteen communities in the Pioneer Valley have an In-Law Apartment Bylaw per Mr. Trevallion. He provided a list of the communities to the Board. The definition is two separate independent living units, sectioned off from each other. A family member living in the second unit would be ok but a non-family member would be a rental. They are currently

non-conforming and illegal in Hampden. A special permit could manage the in-law apartment so that it does not become a rental. Wilbraham's Bylaw has been in place at least 10 years and special permits are issued by the Planning Board.

Mr. Flynn stated that the Planning Board will look at the feedback received with the Building Inspector, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Selectmen.

Public Forum was closed at 8:15pm

Submitted by: Deborah House, Clerk