

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ 2025

CORNWALL PLANNING COMMISSION (CPC)  
Regular Meeting  
Cornwall Town Hall and via Teleconference  
May 21, 2025

DRAFT

DRAFT

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chet Van Dellen, Don Burns, Mickey Heinecken, Steve Mahoney, Anna Burns

ALSO PRESENT: John Roberts, George Cady, Lynn Coale

**1. OPENING BUSINESS**

a. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by the Chair Chet Van Dellen at 7:02 pm.

b. **Quorum** - established

c. **Approve Agenda** - Steve M. MOVED / Anna B. SECONDED a motion to approve the agenda as distributed. **Motion passed** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

d. **Approve Minutes** - April 16, 2025 -Steve M. MOVED / Anna B. SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes as distributed. **Motion passed** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

**e. Announcements and Correspondence**

i. Welcome to visitors George Cady who is interested in housing issues, Lynn Coale, Zoning Administrator for Cornwall and Weybridge, and John Roberts, Select Board member and Liaison to the Planning Commission during the regulations update process.

ii. Chet announced that Katherine Branch needs to step back from Planning Commission work for a while due to family needs. She will be back when she is able.

iii. Notice from Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) that the new regional coordinator for Act 181 implementation is Danelle Birong..

f. **Public Comments** - none

**2. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Zoning Administrator - Lynn Coale**

Lynn Coale described his role as Cornwall's Zoning Administrator, the limits of his authority, the details of how he administers and enforces the zoning regulations, and which actions he can take regarding subdivisions.

In terms of zoning, he issues Building Permits, Certificates of Compliance (to the zoning regulations) when a property is sold, and Certificates of Occupancy for new construction of dwellings. Before he issues a building permit, Lynn requires that a septic permit has been issued first by the State. If a property owner is in violation of the zoning regulations, the ZA has the authority to issue fines of up to \$250 per day for every day in violation. Lynn added that he always tries to work things out in a reasonable manner with people first, before issuing fines.

In terms of subdivisions, the ZA only has the authority to issue boundary line adjustments. The Development Review Board (DRB) has the authority to make decisions about other subdivisions: small subdivisions of 3 lots or less, large subdivisions of 4 or more lots, and planned unit developments (PUDs). Lynn assists owners in determining what they need to make application to the DRB for these other types of subdivisions.

Lynn's work involves interactions with the State regarding wetlands, flood corridors, and septic issues, interactions with the Town highway department, and knowledge of the Town Plan, Town regulations, DRB process, and history of development in the Town.

In Cornwall, the ZA is compensated by permit fees, an hourly rate of \$30 per hour, and travel reimbursement. When he attends a training, he splits the cost between Cornwall and Weybridge.

His advice for the Planning Commission as they update Town regulations, is to think about how zoning impacts the broader community. For example, if zoning regulations are preventing moderate income families from building or buying a home in Cornwall, that has a negative impact on school enrollment. Lynn also suggested that PUDs be strongly encouraged. He also expressed that zoning regulations be changed for historic properties that are non-conforming, so that as long as improvements do not violate setbacks and other zoning regulations, the process for approval would be easier than it is now, having to make application to the DRB.

Lynn ended his presentation with high praise for the office staff, the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer and the Listers. He greatly appreciates the friendly helpful atmosphere and the professionalism and competence of all who work in the Town Office.

**b. Shared Infrastructure Questions from DRB** - Adam Eckhart, member of the DRB, emailed some questions relevant to an application they are currently considering, and the CPC discussed each one.

**i. Driveways** - "Should the DRB be encouraging or discouraging shared driveways?" After discussion, the CPC agreed that shared driveways should generally not be discouraged. Shared infrastructure has the potential to increase density, and so, on a case by case basis, shared driveways can be encouraged.

**ii. Septic** - “Should wells and septic systems be located on the same lot as the home?” The answer to this question is with the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), that has regulations relevant to this issue.

“Should shared septic be on its own lot?” - The answer to this question is also within ANR regulations.

**iii. Wells** - “Can a well serve more than one home?” Yes, it can, according to State regulations. A shared well becomes a public well and falls under State regulations for public wells.

### **c. Zoning and Regulation Updates**

- i. Review Proposed Revisions and Feedback (Articles 9-10) - The CPC reviewed changes made by the working group to Article 9: Flood Hazard Regulations and Article X: Definitions. Don pointed out that, as far as anyone knows, there is only one dwelling located in the flood hazard area. FEMA is reassessing flood maps and has provided working maps in the interim. The new maps will be effective during the fall/winter of 2027. Language has been added to Section 904 about FEMA regulations changing over time. Meanwhile, the State has developed stand along regs about building in flood zones that can be referenced.
- ii. Don explained that changes to the definitions include organization by alphabetic order of the term, definitions are from the State Statutes or the LUDR, a summary table of uses, zoning districts table, and zoning permits and approval table.
- iii. Next Steps - send Article IX to Katie at ACRPC for her review. It is not required that ACRPC review updated zoning regulations, but Katie asked for the CPC to send her the sections that need her help the most.

### **3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - tabled until the next meeting

- a. Action Items from Previous Meeting
- b. Town Plan Action Items Update
- c. Parking Lot Items

### **4. ACTION ITEMS**

- Send updated Article IX to Katie at ACRPC for her review.
- A member of the Housing work group will bring an ADU definition to the next CPC meeting, including proposed dimensional requirements.
- Consider adding an affordable building packet of information to the Town website as a way of encouraging affordable housing in Cornwall.
- Jim Ross has offered to do copy editing of the updated zoning docume

## 5. ADJOURNMENT

Steve M. MOVED / Don B. SECONDED a motion to adjourn the meeting. ***Motion passed*** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Secretary of the CPC