

Planning Commission Minutes
May 12, 2021

Members Present: Dawn Bower, Vance Bell, Bill Dunkel, Tom Johnson, Kate Wright

Meeting began at 6:30PM

Tom moved to adopt the minutes of the April 14, 2021 meeting; second by Vance; all agreed.

We discussed options available for dealing with the possibility of a paramilitary training facility in Windham. We reviewed a number of options given to us by Carl Andeer, a staff attorney for the VLCT. These options included:

- 1) Do nothing and hope that Sec 201 of our zoning regulations would prohibit paramilitary facilities if someone sought a conditional use permit for that purpose.
- 2) Amend the zoning bylaws to add more specific restricted uses in particular zoning districts.
- 3) Adopt a stand-alone ordinance restricting firearms discharge. This however is legally tricky because towns cannot limit the possession of firearms or limit discharge of them at any existing sport shooting range. This also might be very controversial and divisive.
- 4) Adopt a noise ordinance that would apply to firearms discharge.
- 5) Add paramilitary/firearms training facilities to the list of prohibited uses articulated in Sec. 207 of our zoning regulations.

After considerable discussion we unanimously agreed to recommend option #5 to the Select Board with the stipulation that an attorney should be consulted to help us define the term “paramilitary/firearms training facility”.

Then we continued our discussion from our last meeting about helipads and helicopters in Windham. We agreed unanimously to recommend that helipads and helicopters be prohibited in Windham except in emergencies because of the noise they generate, disruption to the peace and quiet that residents enjoy and the

possible risk they pose to public safety. We also agreed to recommend that an attorney be consulted to help us draft a statement to this effect that can be added to Sec. 207 or can be added as a separate section of the zoning regulations.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Dunkel