

## ELMORE PLANNING COMMISSION

Draft minutes for September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 5:30pm.

Attendance: Elmore Planning Commission: Kate Sprague, Glenn Schwartz, Bruce Olsson, Michelle Greeson, Hans de Boer, Don Valentine

Development Review Board: Caroline De Vore, Warren West, Jill Lindonmeyr, Mike Furst, Jason Cohen

Public: Jason Doiron, Stuart Wepler, Bill Nass

Agenda: Joint meeting with Elmore Planning Commission and the Development Review Board.  
Discussion of changes to Forest Reserve district boundaries.

Minutes: Introductions made. Agenda and proper warning of meeting discussed and approved

1. K. Sprague begins the conversation by setting ground rules on the discussion and goal of discussing the Forest Reserve District (FRD). There is concern regarding the understanding of conflicts of interest around this topic but it is agreed upon by the group that if conversation remains on the goals of the FRD and not specific boundaries and properties, we should be able to continue the meeting.
2. It is brought to attention that the Development Review Board (DRB) meeting minutes fail to document that any FRD issue has ever existed. It is questioned if this meeting is warranted until the DRB has a documented issue that needs fixing. Some members of the group feel that the DRB minutes may be inaccurate and there have been issues with the FRD zoning. It is decided as a group that since we are all gathered and there is possible conflict in zoning elevations, we should at least continue on with the meeting to discuss what our goals are with the FRD and no specifics should be discussed as previously mentioned.
3. Reading from the current zoning bylaws regarding the FRD followed by discussion about what the FRD means to the individuals in the group. The group agrees as a whole that the definition is correct but there is discussion about the clarification of the extent of the Worcester Range (both sides/end to end of the range). If the purpose was to protect valuable forest land (i.e. taking trees out of the ridge line) but now the elevation is dropped down into fields, is it doing its original task? It is noted that the current FRD zoning and discussion relate to the west side of the mountain and little consideration has been given to the East side which is technically part of the district, this will need to be considered as well.
4. One member speaks of needing to identify physical boundaries that are fair to land owners instead of elevation boundaries that might cut across one property. If a property falls half in and half out, which side is followed? It is noted that the town could have not been built if the zoning existed as it is today, which urged discussion that there should be no undue burden placed on landowners but instead make it balanced between preservation and development. A member of the public states that it is important to remember that restricting subdivision in the zone will not just create "losers" if a property owner can not subdivide and sell their land, but will also increase the value of existing properties.
5. One member states it seems counterintuitive to restrict development on one whole side of Elmore Mountain road when our goal is to cluster development along existing roads. Elmore Mountain Road is an artery to the town and there is concern with it handling more traffic if we

allow further subdivision of lots. On the flip side there are existing lots that are grandfathered right now, but can't even add on a garage due to zoning bylaws.

6. Decided that the EPC will take it from here. There is a lot going on in this topic and the EPC did its best at the time when reviewing the latest bylaws. It appears that as a town we didn't realize the extent of the impact of the boundaries and it's clear there are multiple different issues (elevation, grandfathering) that are very different and need addressing. The EPC will sit down and revisit the zoning laws before presenting our recommendation to the Select Board.
7. Meeting adjourned.