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ORLEANS TOWN CLERK

ORLEANS PLANNING BOARD

SEPTEMBER 30, 2025 – Hybrid Meeting Minutes

A hybrid meeting of the Orleans Planning Board was called to order at **4:00** p.m. from the Nauset Meeting Room at Town Hall. **Present: Chairman:** John Ostman; **Vice-Chairman:** Debra Oakes; **Clerk:** Maria LeStage. **Regular Members:** Mary Wright {via Zoom} and Lynne Eickholt. **Associates:** Francesca Galazzi and Peter Polhemus. **Planning Department Staff:** George Meservey, Elizabeth Jenkins and **Secretary:** Karen Sharpless. **Also Present: Board of Selectmen Liaison:** Mark Mathison.

Planning Board Clerk LeStage read the legal ad into the record. There were 27 people present at the meeting and 6 people attended via Zoom.

4:00 PM - PUBLIC HEARING - "AMENDING THE ZONING MAP AND CODE OF THE TOWN OF ORLEANS, GENERAL LEGISLATION CHAPTER 164 ZONING TO ESTABLISH A NEW ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT, THE DOWNTOWN HOUSING OVERLAY DISTRICT, TO PROMOTE AFFORDABLE AND ATTAINABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOWNTOWN ORLEANS AREA"

Jenkins showed a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Downtown Housing Overlay District Public Hearing" dated September 30, 2025.

Utile Speakers:

- Lauren Rapport
- Courtney McCracken
- Tim Love

Using a PowerPoint presentation the speakers held a discussion with Planning Board members and public hearing attendees regarding form-based zoning. Among the topics discussed were building height, style and setbacks. Utile speakers showed Planning Board members and attendees the pros and cons of Form-based Zoning Frameworks offering design flexibility and noted the tools that are going to drive building form with the new zoning.

Meservey stated the intent of the proposed bylaws is to build housing without tax money. Meservey noted that the existing bylaws are not providing the adequate housing needed. Meservey stated that the proposed bylaws are consistent with town goals and allows exploration of form-based zoning.

COMMENTS

- Tim Brady (Baker's Pond Road) questioned if form-based zoning has been used in any other towns and Jenkins responded in the affirmative.

- Jasmine Valdes (45 West Road) stated her opinion that year-round workforce housing is needed for the "missing middle" workers.

- Walter North (178 Barley Neck Road) questioned the number of units to be provided. Meservey responded that zoning is a living document. Meservey stated that 350 units are to be constructed per Select Board edict, but less than 10 units were provided in one year.

- Walter North opined that it seems like it "works in theory, not in practice" and if it is presented at town meeting he will move that it be "indefinitely postponed".

- Mark Mathison stated the need to start the process is important and noted the vast reduction of students in the elementary school and noted that the future of the town lies with young families with children working in town. Mathison stated that zoning incentives need to be created to encourage year-round housing.

- Judith Bruce (26 Towhee Lane) questioned the process to provide year-round housing. Elizabeth Jenkins responded that the town could provide an Attainable Housing Bonus which would require 10% deed restricted, year-round affordable and workforce housing.

- Tim Brady suggested making the percentages to be required higher.

- Alisa Magnotte (Housing Assistance Corporation) (12 Oak Lane) reiterated the need for year-round housing and noted the need for a funding stream.

- David Currier (Baker's Pond Road) stated he will submit comments in writing due to a personal time conflict. [Note: No comments were ever received]

- Gerald Mulligan (16 Ewing Drive) stated the need for a vibrant downtown as a priority.

- John Lipman (67 Arey's Lane) stated the need for people to work in local businesses and the importance of moving forward.

- Rob Brennan (Housing Assistance Corporation) stated that the town can require year-round provision in the overlay.

- Paul Niedzwiecki (Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce) suggested that Planning Board members note his concerns in a letter entitled, "Support for Proposed Zoning to Advance Workforce and Missing Middle Housing" dated September 30, 2025.

Planning Board members agreed to leave the public hearing open to receive additional comments for the Planning Board special meeting on October 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On a motion by **Debra Oakes**, seconded by **Maria LeStage**, the Board voted to adjourn this portion of the public hearing at **5:43** p.m. to be continued at the special Planning Board meeting on October 2, 2025.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously by roll call.

SIGNED: *Maria LeStage, Clerk* **DATE:** 10/28/25

All information discussed at Planning Board meetings is kept on file in the Planning Department.

LIST OF HANDOUTS:

- Legal Ad

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