

## MINUTES OF THE DARE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MEETING

The Dare County Planning Board held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, August 10, 2020. This meeting was held in the Dare County Board of Commissioners meeting room located at the Dare County Administrative Building, 954 Marshall C. Collins Drive, Manteo, NC.

The meeting was streamed live on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/KO5Hx7yaDyY>.

**CALL TO ORDER**                      6:00 pm

**MEMBERS PRESENT**            John Finelli, Chairman  
   Michael Barr                      Beth Midgett (remotely)  
   Terry Gore II                     David Overton  
   David Hines                        Buddy Shelton

### MEMBERS ABSENT

-None-

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a correction to the minutes of the August 10, 2020 meeting of the Dare County Planning Board. The correction was made to the last sentence of the second paragraph on page four. The words "and steps" were removed, such that it reads: Chairman Finelli said decks will be included in the 900 square foot requirement. Terry Gore made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Buddy Shelton seconded this motion.

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous

### PUBLIC COMMENT

John Robbins, III, of John Robbins Construction and Planning provided email comments to the Board regarding the Travel Trailer Park Ordinance Draft. Mr. Robbins comments were read aloud to the Board by Planning Director, Donna Creef, as requested by Mr. Robbins. A copy of Mr. Robbins comments is available upon request.

### OLD BUSINESS

-None-

### NEW BUSINESS

-None-

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### ***Continued Discussion of Travel Trailer Park Ordinance***

Chairman Finelli asked the Board to confirm they had the August draft of the Travel Trailer Park Ordinance (TTPO) in front of them. Chairman Finelli said he wanted to go through the draft page by page but recommends the Board first address the draft's two big issues: (1) Limitations on the size of cabins and alternative units; and (2) the mix within a park.

Chairman Finelli said there is no magic number for cabin size. He said the Board started out with a 400 square foot requirement for camping cabins, which after several discussions evolved to a 900 square foot requirement. The Chairman said it will be up to the Commissioners to decide what the requirement will be but the Board needs to make a recommendation.

Chairman Finelli asked each Board member for their opinion on the size requirement for camping cabins and alternative camping units.

David Hines said when he thinks of a campground he thinks of a smaller scale and thinks 900 square feet may be too much. Mr. Hines said he could get behind 700 square feet.

David Overton thinks 900 square feet is too much and added he is more in agreement with 600 square feet.

Buddy Shelton agrees with Mr. Overton that 600 square feet is a good number and serves the intent of what the Board is trying to do.

Beth Midgett said she agrees with smaller rather than larger and agrees with Mr. Shelton and Mr. Overton that 600 square feet is appropriate.

Michael Barr agrees with 600 square feet but wants to know if that includes decks or will there be an allowance for decks over the 600 square foot requirement. Chairman Finelli asked Mr. Barr what would be his recommendation. Mr. Barr said he is not opposed to 600 and 300.

Terry Gore said the 600 square feet of enclosed area with 300 square feet of decking is probably the best compromise overall.

Chairman Finelli is in favor of the 600 square foot maximum size on the enclosed area of a cabin or an alternative camping unit. He said he'd like to keep the enclosed area at one number and decks at another; not combine them into one.

Chairman Finelli asked each Board member for their opinion on the size requirement for decking for camping cabins and alternative camping units.

Terry Gore said a ratio keeps sticking in his mind. He said if 49 percent of the enclosed space could be deck space and if you were to build a 500 square foot unit you couldn't have more than 240 square feet of deck spacing because it needs to be proportionate to what you build.

Michael Barr agrees with Mr. Gore the size of the deck should be proportionate to the size of the enclosed space of the camping cabin.

Beth Midgett said the unit should be proportionate to enclosed space versus decking and recommends a one-third ratio. Chairman Finelli clarified if you have 600 feet of enclosed area you could have 200 square feet of decking.

Buddy Shelton thinks it's equally important to have outdoor space as it is to have indoor space. He agrees with having a proportional sized deck to the amount of indoor space. He added that the 900 square foot doesn't bother him as a footprint but the 900 square foot of living area is beyond what he envisions camping to be.

David Overton agrees the size should be proportionate to the size of the structure itself. Chairman Finelli asked Mr. Overton if he had a preference over one-third or one-half. Mr. Overton said he would be more likely to go with one-third than one-half.

David Hines said he is good with 600 and 300 as long as it is in the footprint as Mr. Shelton indicated.

Chairman Finelli said he doesn't have a preference but if he had to pin it down he'd go with one-third but is also okay with one-half.

The Planning Board voted on the proportion of the decking size requirement for camping cabins and alternative camping units.

Vote: One-third - 3 - Shelton, Overton, Midgett  
One-half - 4 - Gore, Barr, Hines, Finelli



The Board discussed a requirement for adjoining camping cabins and deck space. The Board agreed that a developer can adjoin two units by a deck but not more than two units.

The Chairman confirmed the Board agrees no more than 600 square feet maximum of enclosed space. Decking will be allowed up to fifty percent of the enclosed space size. A 600 square foot unit will be allowed 300 square foot of deck not including the stairs. Two units may have decks adjoined.

The Board discussed the mix within a park and whether a developer can build a park full of camping cabins and/or alternative camping units or if a percentage of the park will be for travel trailers.

David Hines said developers should have the option to decide what works best for the parcel and land. He said camping has evolved and we should be a little open-minded to it regardless of our personal opinions of what camping should be.

David Overton said 60 percent travel trailers and 40 percent camping cabins comes to mind.

Buddy Shelton said 50 percent travel trailers and 50 percent camping cabins because this is a Travel Trailer Park Ordinance.

Beth Midgett said she is ok with a 60 to 40 percent mix or even a 50 to 50 percent mix and agrees with Buddy Shelton that this is a Travel Trailer Park Ordinance.

Michael Barr said he is good with a 50 to 50 percent mix.

Terry Gore believes a developer or owner should be able to do whatever percentage they feel is best for their unique piece of property for their unique clientele. Mr. Gore said he is in agreement with David Hines on this issue.

Chairman Finelli explained this is a Travel Trailer Park Ordinance but it is also a campground ordinance. He added he does not see anything negative about having all cabins and he does not think it would drive travel trailer parks out of business. He further stated he is okay with having all cabins if that is what a developer wants to do.

Chairman Finelli said based on comments of the Board there are four members who favor a 50 percent travel trailer mix to 50 percent camping cabins. Three members are okay with 100 percent camping cabins or alternative camping units.

Donna Creef asked the Board if the language for 100 percent camping cabins and alternative camping units should be taken out of the ordinance. Chairman Finelli suggested it be taken out because that is what the majority of the Board has stated.

The Board discussed lot coverage for camping cabins. Buddy Shelton asked if there is a 50 to 50 split between travel trailers and camping cabins then there will be a 60 percent lot coverage requirement. Donna Creef said yes, it is considered a commercial use. Mr. Shelton asked if a park full of camping cabins would have 30 percent lot coverage like residential structures. Donna Creef stated that is how it is drafted in the ordinance.

The Board discussed a time limit requirement for campgrounds. Beth Midgett said there is an 89 day restriction on vacation rentals. Beyond 89 days you turn into a full time rental and are no longer considered a vacation rental. Donna Creef added that is State Law. Terry Gore said one of the key differences between being a long term rental or an over 90 day rental versus an 89 day or less rental is permanency of address. Mr. Gore added you cannot declare your vacation rental as a permanent address, you cannot have mail sent there and you cannot put that on a driver's license. You have to have a separate full-time residence. He said that should apply here as well. The Chairman said there appears to be consensus there should be a limit. Terry Gore said he likes 89 days. Beth Midgett says 89 days is commensurate with vacation rentals. Donna Creef agrees that is what the language needs to be.

Ms. Creef will add language to the TTPO draft stating occupancy of any units that are located in an approved campground shall be occupied consistent with the North Carolina Vacation Rental Act.

Donna Creef recommended one last draft copy of the TTPO be presented to the Board for discussion at the next Planning Board meeting.

The Planning Board indicated consensus with having one more final discussion of the TTPO draft at the Planning Board meeting dated September 14, 2020.

The Board discussed safety measures of camping cabins and alternative camping units. Beth Midgett is concerned about the safety of camping cabins and alternative camping



units during storms. She would like to know if there can be an enhanced warning system for campgrounds. Donna Creef said Staff reached out to the North Carolina Department of Insurance after a request from KOA was received for adding eco-tents. Ms. Creef said wind codes need to apply to camping cabins and alternative camping units and they need to demonstrate compliance. Ms. Creef added it may be appropriate for a site specific review at a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to have the developer provide an emergency operations plan for their campground especially if it's a campground that features eco-tents.

The Board discussed housing for managers and employees. Chairman Finelli said the current draft allows for one unit for the park manager. The Chairman added that additional housing for employees may be allowed at the CUP level. Buddy Shelton and Beth Midgett agree. Donna Creef said she will write language that gives flexibility to address staff housing during a site review process.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Dare County Planning Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Terry Gore and seconded by Buddy Shelton.

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Andrea DiLenge  
Planning Board Clerk

APPROVED: September 14, 2020



John Finelli  
Chairman, Dare County Planning Board