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Hyde Park board to revise zoning rules

'Discrepancies' to be remedied

By John Davis
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HYDE PARK — The Democratic-led town board is preparing to correct what it says are discrepancies in zoning laws passed under the previous administration.

The previous Republican administration enacted zoning and subdivision ordinances in September. Years in the making, the laws were passed by a 3-2 vote, with two Democrats dissenting.

Some residents and town officials say there are contradictions that leave the planning board without clear guidelines for reviewing and approving new developments.

"They do point to a number of absolute conflicts," Supervisor Pompey Dela-field said.

Councilman Robert Lin-ville said one example can be found in two sections dealing with minor subdivisions, which are housing developments of five lots or fewer.

Lot sizes vary

In rural areas, those lots must have an average minimum lot size of two acres. In non-rural neighborhoods, as many as two homes per acre are permitted. In neighborhood cores and in hamlets, as many as four homes per acre are allowed.

But another passage of the regulations appear to be in conflict with the previous one: It simply states "all minor subdivisions" are required to have average lot sizes of at least two acres.

"Why does it say that?" Linville said of the discrepancy.

With a number of major projects before the planning board, town residents are urging the town board, which took office in January, not to delay in correcting the inconsistencies.

"I would rather hear sooner rather than later," Richard Marx of Route 9 said at a recent town hall meeting.

Some have called on the board to shelve the new ordinances and adopt the zoning a previous Democratic administration drafted but the board failed to approve.

"I urge you to pass the 2003 zoning," Denise Dunn of Hyde Park said.

Delafield voted for the zoning in 2003, but said it is not necessary to do so now.

"The intent of the board is not to radically change the 2005 zoning," Delafield said. "We are not going to go out wholesale and do it all over again."

Linville, who voted ag-ainst the zoning in September, said the board will find itself faced with opportunities to improve the land-use rules.

The board plans to create a committee to identify conflicts and advise changes. The board would like to receive an initial committee report at its April 10 meeting.

The town board must vote to make any revisions.

"Certainly by the end of the summer we would like to get most of this done," Delafield said.

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