

Winsted to Air Proposed Rule on Building Decks

By RUSSELL KLINE

WINSTED—The Planning and Zoning Commission on Monday set a hearing for Oct. 22 to get residents' input on proposed regulations that would tighten the current ordinance so as to further limit construction in homeowners' yards.

The commission recently gave an opinion that there was no rule that prevented homeowners from building decks that reached to their property lines, quickly adding that this was their assessment of what the current ordinance allows, not an endorsement of its soundness. They said they would look into rule changes immediately, but community advocate Chantane La Voie told them Monday they were not moving fast enough. "It's really becoming a

problem and many citizens are discouraged and disappointed over it," she said, adding that many were complaining to her about people taking advantage of the rule to build decks reaching far into their yards.

Zoning enforcement officer Paul Carey, however, replied that his office had not gotten numerous complaints on this issue and commissioner Thomas Carey added that residents have generally had unclear ideas about restrictions for building decks. He said he doubted the situation was now any worse than it has been all along.

Chairman Mark Swobkin said the draft of proposed regulations by consultant Dennis Brown, which also include restrictions on structures such as swimming pools, may provide an answer

that residents will be more comfortable with.

The board also continued to Oct. 9 a hearing on a new regulation that would require proposals for 15 or more multifamily houses or apartments to meet the more stringent of the town's two sets of rules on multifamily applications if they are outside the area defined as the central city on the zoning map.

Mr. Swobkin explained that the commission wanted to stop giving developers a chance to choose the easier rules when they wanted to. He pointed out, however, that he also realized that the more difficult requirements would be impossible to meet for anyone who wanted to build 15 or more houses or apartments inside the city limits. That's because the de facto requirements are stricter there, he explained.