

Planning Board Recommends Adoption of Kennel Ordinance

By Carolyn Webber, Planning Board Member

Windham Residents will have an opportunity to vote for the adoption of the town's first ever ordinance regulating Kennels at this year's Town Meeting in March. The Planning Board has endorsed the adoption of a Kennel Ordinance by a vote of 4-2-1. The Ordinance will be **Amendment #11 on the Ballet**.

The ordinance is intended to provide regulations for protecting the welfare of dogs and other animals as well as the public's health. It will govern both commercial and home occupation kennels and does not apply to veterinary establishments licensed by the state of New Hampshire.

A commercial kennel is intended and used to keep or care, breed, groom, handle, train, sell, or board on a short or long term basis, five (5) or more dogs or other household pets belonging to customers, patrons, or others, or lost or stray animals, for compensation or humanitarian gesture.

Commercial kennels are permitted only in the Commercial A or Limited Industrial Districts. They shall be required to obtain site plan approval from the Planning Board.

Any kennel operation with four (4) or fewer dogs or other household pets and is a commercial enterprise may be considered a Customary Home Occupation and will require the securing of a Customary Home Occupation/Conditional Use Permit.

The ordinance contains provisions that minimize the impact of kennels on neighboring property owners by regulating noise, security fencing and screening, and setbacks of the kennels from property lines and neighboring structures.

In order to encourage a healthy environment for the animals, the ordinance sets a minimum size for kennel space, proper waste disposal, and states vaccination requirements for cats and dogs.

For more information about the proposed Kennel Ordinance, including a full text version of the document, visit the town website www.windhamnewhampshire.com/. Copies of all materials are also available at the Community Development Department.