

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
FEBRUARY 15, 2011**

Members Present: Robert Frizzell (Chair); Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair); Andy Jellie, Eric Lutz, Pat Royce, Roger Thibodeau

Alternates Present: Herb Greenwood

CALL TO ORDER & SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Mr. Frizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He noted the absence of Ex-officio member Steve Neill and alternate member James Jenkins.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 21, 2010:

Andy Jellie moved to approve the Minutes of the December 21, 2010 meeting as printed. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With four members in favor, the minutes were approved. Mr. Lutz and Mr. Thibodeau abstained as they were not present at this meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2011:

These Minutes were passed-over due to the lack of a quorum of those members present at this meeting.

CHARLES CLOUGHERTY d/b/a ABACUS AUCTIONS – Sign Permit – 3607 Claremont Road – Map 205, Lot 64 – Zone E (Mixed Use): Mr. Edkins reported that the sign will be black-and-white. The intent is to put this panel in the existing sign frame. Mr. Thibodeau mentioned that the sign frame now has panels for the fabric store, an “OPEN” panel, Christie’s Auto plus one more panel. It seems that the “OPEN” panel will have to be removed to make space for this sign. Mrs. Francis commended Mr. Clougherty on his sign as it does not have so much information on it that one cannot read it as you drive by at 50 MPH. Mr. Edkins noted that the phone number will be different. It is not a lit sign and will be 8 feet off the ground. Mrs. Francis suggested that Mr. Edkins write a letter to the landlord, on behalf of the PB, stating that they approved this sign but, recognizing that there are several signs on the post, they would recommend that the “OPEN” sign be removed for this panel. There were no comments from the public.

Mrs. Francis moved to approve this Sign Permit for Charles Clougherty d/b/a Abacus Auctions contingent on the “OPEN” panel being removed. Mr. Thibodeau seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

ESTATE OF JAMES SAUCHUK and JOHN DAVIS – Boundary Adjustment between Existing Lots – 132 & 112 Nichols Lane – Map 232, Lots 45 & 46 – Zone D (Watershed): This agenda item was scheduled for the February 1st meeting but that was

cancelled due to the weather. Travis Royce from Landmark Land Surveying and Permitting, LLC represented the applicants. This property is located on Nichols Lane which is off the Old Acworth Stage Road. This adjustment is to rectify an existing problem. The property was originally subdivided in the early 1970s. The home, garage and most of the septic system for Mr. Davis were placed on the abutting Sauchuk property. Over the years it had been discussed. The owners became aware of it a few years ago. Both sides had their properties surveyed and even though there were some variations it was clear that a majority of the Davis house, garage and septic were on the abutting property. They are swapping land so both lots will remain exactly the same size. The Sauchuk property is 4.84 acres. Both lots are pre-existing prior to Watershed regulations that now require five acres. Davis will now be on the same lot and meet the set-back requirements. He purchased the property about ten years ago; the home was there at that time. Mr. Edkins mentioned that this adjustment brings the smaller lot more into compliance because additional frontage is being added. Mr. Frizzell stated that these lots are grandfathered; this improves the Davis frontage so it seems to be the way to go. No abutters were present at this meeting.

Mr. Thibodeau moved to accept the application as complete. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

Mr. Thibodeau moved to grant final approval for this Boundary Adjustment for the Estate of James Sauchuk and John Davis on Nichols Lane. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

LIFE FELLOWSHIP FOURSQUARE CHURCH – Request for Extension of Previously Granted (12/15/2009) Site Plan Approval – 85 Wheeler Rand Road – Map 213, Lot 11 – Zone E (Mixed Use): The Life Fellowship Foursquare Church is requesting an extension of their Site Plan Review approval or an expansion of the church which was approved by the PB in December of 2009 but expired on December 15th, 2010. Mr. Edkins advised that they are still in the fundraising mode but expect to proceed with construction by late spring or early summer. They have complied with all the regulations. No abutters were present at this meeting.

Mr. Lutz moved to grant the Life Fellowship Foursquare Church the extension as requested for another year from December 15, 2010 to December 15, 2011. Mrs. Francis seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION – Construction of Two 20' Yurts and Adirondack Style Lean-To – 689 River Road – Map 207, Lot 2 – Zone E (Mixed Use): Mr. Lewis Shelley attended a PB last December to advise that the SCA was looking to modify the Master Plan by requesting permission to construct two 20-foot diameter yurts that will sit on decks no larger than 28' x 28' and to construct an Adirondack-style lean-to that will be 12' x 16'. The yurts will provide additional lodging space during their training sessions. The lean-to will be used for the storage of training

goods, back-packs, etc. The Building Inspector has seen the design of the yurts, they meet all Code requirements for temporary lodging and he has given verbal approval. Mr. Lutz expressed concern with the possibility of the Connecticut River flooding. Mr. Shelley noted that there are two small drop-offs. The yurts would be set-up on the higher bank in the field that is visible from the road (12-A). There is a small line of trees in that area. Mrs. Francis advised that the Connecticut River is heavily managed by the Corp of Engineers and the Power Company so it would take something like a 500-year flood to go over its banks; it is exceedingly controlled. The yurts will have electricity, a ceiling fan and either a pellet stove or a propane heater for year-round use. They have two doors and two windows. These are temporary structures so can be moved. Their life is about 10-years but they can last up to 20-years. They picked colors that will blend in. He displayed samples of the materials that will be used. It is rated for heavy wind and snow loads that were approved by the Building Inspector. The lean-to will be a wooden structure with metal roofing. It will be built on skids and therefore moveable. It will be open ended, face the building and the pitch of the roof will face the river. Mr. Edkins talked with Mr. LeClair, Building Inspector, about these structures and Mr. LeClair confirmed that they will meet the codes. Mr. Shelley noted that the lower field has been used for tents in the summer. They plan to put up one of the yurts in the spring, put up a deck in March, and the yurt would arrive in mid-April so they hope to have it set up for the first week in May when they begin spring training.

Mrs. Francis moved to accept the application as complete. Mr. Lutz seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

Mrs. Francis moved to grant final approval for this application from the Student Conservation Association for the construction of two 20-foot yurts and Adirondack Style Lean-To on the River Road. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:

Subdivision Regulations: Mr. Edkins explained that Mr. Crocker brought this to the PB. Mr. Larry Crocker had submitted a lot of information to the PB on proposed wording and placement within the Subdivision Regulations. He wants to back it up so the PB has the authority to make some changes and to show where the wording that he used came from. He presented six different proposals for changes in wording. Mr. Thibodeau mentioned that he submitted quite a few proposals that included a 300-foot set-back from any river, stream, brook, etc. If they were to do this it would take away a lot of property. Mr. Crocker explained that this was just for future subdivisions but not intended to go backwards. The 300-foot vegetated buffer was proposed for culverts. It was an increase for vegetated buffers along streams now. The intent was to create wildlife corridors. Mr. Crocker provided CDs for all the PB members that include the Stormwater Management Manual. Mrs. Francis thanked Mr. Crocker for all the material he submitted. She felt the PB should take a little time to talk about the six items proposed by Mr. Crocker.

No. 1 – “Additional maps for all subdivisions showing the Natural Resources on and around the parcel”. Mrs. Francis felt this makes sense for major subdivisions. The maps could show buffers based upon the other natural resource values. It would give landowners a sense of knowing if this is a corridor for wildlife. There might be an interesting plant community, vernal pools, etc. Mr. Frizzell thinks we need more rules on major subdivisions. Mr. Edkins mentioned that anything more than two lots is considered a major subdivision. Mr. Crocker would like to see more information on the maps that are submitted in terms of natural resources. Applicants could begin with the Granit Mapping System, a free service, where they could locate several sources, wildlife, topo, soils, waterways and maps of the same area and create overlay maps. It is a general guide but one cannot always assume it is completely accurate. Mrs. Francis feels this might be beneficial to have in the major subdivision regulations otherwise the applicant will not address it at the time of submittal. Mr. Jellie mentioned that there have not been many major subdivisions in the last few years. The PB has the authority now to ask for specific information. There was discussion relative to the number of maps this would require. Mr. Thibodeau questioned how this would all be presented and gathered in one spot. Steven Dumont of the Conservation Commission believes they can find everything that Mr. Crocker is looking for in the Conservation Commission’s recently completed Natural Resources Inventory. It is as accurate as they will have. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission was paid by the Conservation Commission to develop the Natural Resources Inventory and it was fine-tuned by local people. Mr. Edkins mentioned that the current regulations require that the plans show wetlands and topo lines. The Town regulations now have four pages of submittal items plus any other additional reports or studies deemed necessary by the PB to make a decision.

No. 2 – “Specific wording on premature or scattered subdivisions”. Mr. Crocker noted that they talked about this when he was here before. It is a defense mechanism.

No. 3 – “Preservation of existing features to include reference of Master Plan and NRI”. Mr. Crocker stated that if they do not have maps to show natural resources on a major subdivision then they do not know that so they have to point that out.

No. 4 – “Minimum vegetated buffers established and increased at stream crossings”. Mr. Crocker feels this seems like an important thing to look at and evaluate; how do we protect them. Mr. Dumont questioned the 300-foot set-back as the Town does have set-backs for every water body in Town. Mr. Crocker said a set-back is different than a buffer. The reason for a wider buffer at a crossing is for wildlife. Mr. Frizzell advised that the Town has a buffer of 25-feet. Mrs. Francis does not favor having specified mandatory buffers but she would like to see Nos. 1, 3 and 4 combined; leave it to the applicant to delineate those buffers depending on the NRI. Every piece of property is different. Mr. Crocker noted that he took this out in the second proposal for the same reasons.

No. 5 – “Drainage regulation to include post development BMP and reference updated NH Stormwater Manual?” Mr. Crocker noted that there are references and newer manuals so people do not drain water from their property into the nearest stream or

adjacent property. Since there have not been many major subdivisions, he would ask the Conservation Commission to look at how much the newest manual has changed. Mr. Jim McClammer suggested that they could create a sub-committee to work on this and take their report back to the PB. A lot of this work is technical. Mr. Frizzell noted that the PB is not that busy right now so it seems they can work on changes a little at a time in meetings.

Mr. Lutz suggested continuing to work on this as time permits. The PB members can look at the CD and go back to the Conservation Commission document. It should not all be done in one meeting.

Mr. Thibodeau thought a sub-committee sounds good. He is concerned about how it will fit in with everybody without being too wordy.

Mr. McClammer said there have been some significant changes within the State in the past few years. There are new alteration of terrain rules going toward Best Management Practices. He suggested they review the Alteration of Terrain rules. Mr. Edkins felt that if the State is already regulating that is it something that the Town needs to re-invent in the Town's regulations? Mr. McClammer felt there is increased concern with run-off; it is something to think about.

No. 6 – “Con Com review on all major subdivisions.” Mr. Dumont advised that this will require a vote by the CC members. He will bring this up at the next meeting.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

Next Meeting – March 1, 2011: Mr. Edkins reported that there are no new applications for the next meeting. Mr. Frizzell suggested that they work on Nos. 1, 3 and 4 and study the Conservation Commission's Natural Resources Inventory before the next meeting.

NH DOT Ten Year Improvement Plan: Mr. Edkins reported that they are starting another cycle in the Ten Year Transportation Plan. There are numerous projects on the plan; one in Charlestown. The funding is there for the Route 12 Project from North Walpole to the under-pass. Plans are to start moving the railroad in 2012 with the rest of the project being done in 2013 and 2014. The State doesn't have enough money to carry out all the projects on the plan now. This time they will consider a limited number of safety concerns or projects in the out-years of the Ten Year Plan. They are asking for input from the towns. Two suggestions were: 1) Route 12 from the under-pass to the Charlestown Village; and 2) the curve on Route 12-A by the Ferland property. There was a fatal accident there and numerous other accidents. Mr. Edkins will be talking about this with the Selectboard tomorrow night.

Preliminary Consultation: Mr. Edkins was approached by a local resident who is interested in purchasing the Heritage Restaurant property on Main Street. Their intent is to re-open the restaurant but not the bar. They are not planning to make any substantial changes except renovations. The question is if the PB would require them to come in for a Site Plan Review to re-open the restaurant which would be the same use. The Building

Inspector will deal with the inside improvements. They are going to change the name of the business so will come in for Sign Permits. Mrs. Francis felt it would be well to give them copies of the previous approved permits for the entrance and the exit. There was a consensus of the PB that as long as it re-opens as a restaurant and there is no change of use the new owners can proceed.

Preliminary Consultation - Beaudry Property: Travis Royce came before the PB in December for a subdivision for Robert Beaudry who retained the five acre parcel. It is mostly zoned Industrial. Mr. Beaudry thinks that a residential use is more appropriate as it would be similar to the adjacent properties. Mr. Edkins advised that a zoning change would have to go to a Town Meeting but Mr. Beaudry could go to the ZBA for a Variance to allow a different use but the property would continue to be zoned Industrial. Following a discussion there was a consensus that the PB members did not object strenuously to a change.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business, Mr. Lutz moved for adjournment. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion and, with all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 9:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 2-17-11

(**Note:** These are unapproved minutes. Correction, if necessary, will be found in the minutes of the March 1, 2011, Planning Board meeting.)