

**MINUTES  
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD  
JANUARY 3, 2012**

Members Present: Robert Frizzell (Chair); Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair); Steve Neill (Ex-Officio); Andy Jellie, Pat Royce, Rose Smith-Hull, Roger Thibodeau

Alternates Present: James Jenkins

Staff Present: David Edkins – Planning & Zoning Administrator  
Regina Borden – Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER & SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** Mr. Frizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He noted that the full Board is present therefore there is no need to call on the alternate members present. The meetings are tape recorded so Mr. Frizzell asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 20, 2011 MEETING:**

**Mrs. Francis moved to approve the Minutes of the December 20, 2011 meeting with the following changes: on page 2 fourth paragraph, change “Mrs. Francis wrote” to “Mrs. Francis suggested”. In that same paragraph, third line, change “when the location” to “when the sign location”. On page 3 under Zone D – change “and is limited to” to “and the signs should be limited to 25-square feet”. Mr. Thibodeau seconded the motion with the above changes. With five members in favor, the minutes were approved as corrected. Mrs. Rose Smith-Hull and Mrs. Pat Royce abstained as they were not present at this meeting.**

**LIFE FELLOWSHIP FOURSQUARE CHURCH – Request for Extension of Site Plan Approval – 85 Wheeler Rand Road – Map 213, Lot 11 – Zone E (Mixed Use):** Mr. Edkins reported that the Foursquare Church is requesting another one year extension of their Site Plan Approval; this is the second extension that they have requested. It is just a question of their fundraising for this project. Mr. Frizzell mentioned that the regulations have not changed since this was approved.

**Mrs. Royce moved to approve the request for an extension of the Site Plan Approval for the Life Fellowship Foursquare Church until December 15, 2012. Mrs. Francis seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Neill abstained from the vote.**

Mr. Jellie stepped off the Board for the following Agenda item. Mr. Jenkins assumed that seat.

**COLD RIVER CYCLES, LLC – Sign Permit – 26 Sullivan Street – Map 118, Lot 94 – Zones B (Business) & E (Mixed Use):** Mr. Edkins advised that the applicants decided that the best location for this new sign would be on the over-hang over the carport. The two “Coming Soon” signs would be removed as they were approved as temporary signs. It would just be the

one sign on the carport. A sketch of the sign in color was passed around for the PB members to see. Mr. Thibodeau asked where the fluorescent light will be as this is not shown on the sketch. Is it just an open tube or will it be covered. Mr. Edkins pointed out that the application states that it will be on only during the open hours. There was a question of the open hours being 10:00 am to 8:00 pm or 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. The hours are not shown on the sign. Mrs. Francis felt that the way this sign is positioned on the building it is for viewing from Main Street. For this reason she would prefer to see one or the other of the bottom two lines but not both of them; either the motorcycle or the parts line but not both. Mr. Edkins said there are low vehicle speeds on Sullivan Street. He spoke to the owners about parking beside the building but they advised that they agreed to not allow customer parking there but feel they have a right to park their own company vehicle there because it is their property. Mr. Frizzell noted that the PB members have a concern that the light will reflect on the neighbors as it does not say it is shielded. Mr. Neill would like to see the new sign go up but there is the question on the lighting.

**Mr. Neill moved to table this Sign Permit for Cold River Cycles, LLC until the next meeting. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion.**

Mrs. Francis asked if she is the only PB member that is concerned with the amount of lettering on the sign. Mr. Frizzell felt that the traffic is not that fast in that area and they want people to see it on Main Street. Other members concurred with Mr. Frizzell.

**Vote on the Motion: With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.**

Mr. Jellie came back as a regular PB member. Mr. Jenkins resumed his alternate position.

Mr. Frizzell opened this Public Hearing at 7:23 PM.

**PUBLIC HEARING – Proposed Zoning Amendment – Section 8.6 “Signs”:** Mr. Edkins pointed out that this Public Hearing was advertised in the Eagle Times and the notice was posted in the usual 3 public places around Town. The PB has revamped the existing sign regulations in Section 8.6 Signs in the Zoning Ordinance to make them easily read and navigated. It was noted that two residents were in attendance.

At the last meeting a few significant changes were discussed as follows:

Section 8.6.2 – Permit Required – (e) – Mr. Edkins pointed out that this is a new provision: “Standard off premises directional signs provided by the Town at the applicant’s expense, not to exceed 6 square feet in area, relating to a business operated in the Town of Charlestown. Directional signs for any one enterprise shall not exceed one in any two mile length of road excluding those to indicate a change of direction. Multiple directional signs at a single location shall be placed on a common post. The placement of off premise directional signs requires the permission of the landowner or if located on public property the approval of the Selectboard.”

Mr. Edkins pointed out that a permit will still be required for these signs. All the material before (e) is in the existing ordinance but might have been changed around a little. Mr. Frizzell mentioned that the State has jurisdiction over anything along the State roads. Mr. Thibodeau felt that this wording should be included as people need to know that they would need to go to the State for a sign on Route 12. Mr. Edkins will change “public” to “Town” property. The first

sentence will be changed to: “Standard off premises directional signs provided ‘*and installed*’ by the Town”.

Mr. Ilves questioned the off premises signs. Mr. Frizzell explained that these will be uniform signs that will be ordered and erected by the Town but paid for by the business/person. They would be directional signs and not the old “Burma Shave” signs. All these signs would have to be approved by the PB. Mr. Ilves feels this is a good idea. Mr. Neill advised that it is not their intent to add signs to buildings. Mr. Jellie did not see where they are required to have a sign on a post. Mr. Thibodeau felt they need some language on how the signs will be put up. Mr. Edkins will add that the Town will put the signs up at the owner’s expense. If the signs were on a post the Selectboard would have the jurisdiction over them.

Section 8.6.3 – Sign Design Guidelines – Mr. Edkins advised that all of this language is in the existing ordinance but the Sign Design Guidelines are basically the PB’s advice to the applicants as to what they would like to see. It previously used the word “should” but that is changed to “shall”.

Section 8.6.4 – Sign Design Criteria - These are more the dimensional requirements for the sign. Section (b) has been broken down into districts. They added Zone G-1 and Zone D. Under Zone E – Mixed Use Zone the following conditions were added:

- a. The sign is located at least 150 feet from the centerline of the roadway;
  - b. The sign shall identify the name and nature of the business only and shall not contain excess or unnecessary verbiage;
  - c. The Planning Board determines that it is necessary to adequately identify the business given its location and the speed of passing traffic.
- (c) Illumination – this language is the same as the existing ordinance.
- (d) Maintenance – this is also the same language as the existing ordinance. Mrs. Francis felt there should be a time frame on this. Mr. Edkins advised that when something is in disrepair he sends them a notice that it needs to be corrected within, what he believes to be, a reasonable length of time.

Section 8.6.5 – Permit Not Required: This is all in the existing ordinance with the exception of (o) – This pertains to political signs.

Mr. Edkins has the State’s packet for permitting signs in his office. It is geared mostly for tourist oriented businesses.

Section 8.6.6 – Existing Non-Confirming Signs: This is the same as the existing ordinance.

There was discussion relative to non-historic signs that people feel are worthy of preservation from an historic preservation standpoint. Mr. Ilves likes the Springfield – Charlestown sign at the former railroad station indicating that Charlestown still has a railroad station yet the station no longer exists.

Section 8.6.7 – Temporary Signs – This is the same as the existing ordinance with the exception of taking out the charitable or community events which they have taken out and treated a little

differently. Mr. Edkins authority over temporary signs only extends to signs that are proposed for two weeks. If he or Mr. Weed feels a sign obstructs visibility the owner will be asked to move it. Mr. Edkins will add a sentence that says it will not be placed so as to impede visibility or traffic safety.

Section 8.6.8 – Prohibited Signs: This is the same as the existing ordinance.

Mr. Edkins summarized the changes:

1. Page 1 – Off Premises Signs - add language to the first sentence: “Standard off premises directional signs provided ‘*and installed*’ by the Town”.
2. Change “located on public property” to “located on Town property” and add a sentence referring to the State’s sign program along the public right-of-way.
3. Under Temporary Signs add a sentence that says they shall not be placed to impede traffic, safety, visibility, etc.

Mr. Edkins advised that they have made clarifications but have not made any substantive changes. There was a consensus of the PB that a second Public Hearing is not required.

Mr. Frizzell declared the Public Hearing closed at 8:12 PM.

**Mrs. Francis moved to approve this Sign Ordinance for submittal to the voters subject to the editorial modifications that were made at this Public Hearing. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.**

#### **PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:**

**Wetlands Permit:** Mr. Edkins received a Wetlands Permit that was submitted to the DES by Whelen Engineering in connection with their building expansion plans. The Conservation Commission felt this was the best option for Whelen Engineering for the impact to a wetlands area of 2.6 acres.

#### **ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:**

**Borough Road:** Mrs. Francis asked if the Building Inspector has looked at the Borough Road property that still has the partially demolished trailer on it. Mr. Edkins will check with Mr. LeClair.

**Fall Mountain Water Testing Building:** Mr. Neill questioned if any Building Permit was issued for Foster Contracting as there is a business sign there. Mrs. Smith-Hull stated that he knows he has to come in to the office. Mr. Edkins advised that the contractor has been coming in for the owner. They are trying to establish the boundaries as they are wondering what to do with the building. Mr. Edkins will call him regarding the sign on the building.

**Knight Property:** Mrs. Smith-Hull noticed in the Our Town that Gary Knight received a Building Permit. Mr. Edkins advised that this matter is under review now. The problem is that there is nothing that establishes where the boundary is. He has done a lot of research. It appears that the property line runs down the center of the driveway on Sullivan Street. Mr. Poisson disagrees with Mr. Edkins determination and may appeal it to the ZBA. Travis Royce went back

200 years and could not find anything; there are no surveys. The old Deeds do not have dimensions.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**There being no other business, Mrs. Francis moved to adjourn this meeting. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.** The time was 8:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 1-12-12

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the January 17, 2012, Planning Board meeting.)