

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 18, 2012**

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

Alternates Present: James Jenkins

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Frizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He noted that regular member Roger Thibodeau, and alternate member, Eric Lutz, were absent. Pat Royce would be a little late. He called upon Jim Jenkins to sit on the board for Roger Thibodeau. Noting that meetings are tape recorded, he asked that anyone wishing to speak identify themselves for the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2012 AND NOVEMBER 20, 2012:

Mrs. Francis moved to approve the Minutes of the October 16, 2012, meeting as printed. Mr. Neill seconded the motion. With five members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Jellie abstained as he was not present at this meeting.

Mrs. Francis moved to approve the Minutes of the November 20, 2012, meeting as printed. Mr. Neill seconded the motion. With four members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Frizzell and Mr. Jenkins abstained as they were not present at this meeting.

PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:

PERIPHERAL SIGNS – Mike McCrory, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC): Mr. Edkins asked Mr. McCrory, Planner with the UVLSRPC, for assistance in dealing with peripheral signs. One side of this issue is the enforcement and the other side is how to regulate with it. Signs on the inside of windows technically do not require approval in accordance with the town's regulations. Signs on the outside are ambiguous. Mr. McCrory is aware of the enforcement issue with one of the businesses in town. Peripheral signs are not an issue in many towns. Many times the Zoning Administrator will talk with a commercial property owner about a violation and they will just take care of it. When you run into a situation where someone says "well, you are enforcing me but you are not enforcing all these other folks"; Mr. McCrory's opinion would be that the other properties that the person feels are not being enforced are not really relevant to their conversation and that proceeding with enforcement on a case-by-case basis would be necessary. (*Pat Royce came into the meeting*). Enforcement can be continued up to the Superior Court. The PB can take a look at the regulations and decide if they want to enforce them for every single property or see what is reasonable. Either way it will be a fair amount of work. In some circumstances it will just continue to be an issue. Both Mr. Edkins and Mr. McCrory will take another look at the town's regulations.

Mrs. Francis pointed out that the Board revised the regulations last year. There has to be a way to make it clear that these are not anti-business. We realize that a business has to advertise but not advertise all the products they sell. Sale signs change every week. There is a safety concern about signs that distract driver's attention as they go by. There must be a sense of proportion.

Mr. Edkins has looked at other town's regulations and some state that signs can only cover a certain percentage of the façade of the building. He felt that might be one way to approach it.

Mrs. Royce did a survey in the business district on the number and kind of signs that are there. There is a desire to be the small town we have always been and to have the exterior advertisements in a certain proportion.

Mr. McCrory stated that from the town's perspective they could educate the business owners. Put together a poster or flyer to mail out advising that there are Sign Regulations and that they want to keep this town beautiful. Have a campaign to maintain the character of this town. Just remind the business owners of this. This might be a way to take care of the issue without enforcement. He would also like to look at the enforcement process that the town has in place. There is not any easy answer to regulating signs. His parting comment is to remind folks about the revised regulations and that there is a certain character that they would like to maintain. Tomorrow morning Mr. Edkins will email Mr. McCrory the up-dated regulations and a copy of the letter that started this situation.

WHELEN ENGINEERING CO., INC. – 30' x 60' Addition to Existing Warehouse – 99 CEDA Road – Map 106, Lot 3 – Zone F-1 (Business/Industrial): Travis Royce, Landmark Land Surveying and Permitting, reported that Whelen Engineering is planning to add a 30' x 60' addition to an existing warehouse. Right now the warehouse is climate controlled and there is some equipment in it (snow plows, etc.) that do not need to be there therefore Mr. Olson would like to store them in the addition. It was incorporated into the plan for the State. This shed is set back from Route 12. The existing warehouse had received a Variance to the setback requirement from Route 12. Mr. Edkins explained that it is the Town's set-back but the State has it's Right-of-Way that is 200-feet in that area. Mr. Olson noted that the addition will have sliding doors but will be fully enclosed. They do not store anything outdoors. Mrs. Francis asked how close the proposed maple trees will be from the Old Claremont Road. She would rather not see the trees die. Mr. Royce estimated about 25-feet away. Maples are more attractive than evergreens but there is a row of them also. Mr. Neill pointed out that there are no abutters present. Mr. Edkins stated that all abutters were notified but nobody inquired about this application.

Mr. Neill moved to accept this application as complete and to approve it as an amendment to the previously approved Site Plan. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.

Whelen Engineering Co., Inc. Complex: Mr. Olson advised that, as of today, they have a signed agreement to buy the Corning building when they vacate the building in the spring. He has no current plans to use it. They have put up about 1,000 trees around their facility so they will take care of them along the Old Claremont Road. Road salt and other diseases hurt the maples; there are serious concerns about the maple trees in this area.

DAGMAR CONGDON – Preliminary Consultation – Re-Location of Previously Approved Home Day Care – 801 Meany Road – Map 243, Lot 11 – Zone E (Mixed Use): Mrs. Congdon advised that her Day Care has been on the Connecticut Heights Road since 2000. They have been building a new house on the Meany Road. They did not anticipate that their home on the Connecticut Heights Road would sell so quickly so now she has to re-locate the Day Care to her new house soon. The closing on this property is this Friday at 8:00 AM. The State will be coming in next week on December 27th to do their inspection of the new facility. Mr. Von Ahnen has been checking on their new home about once a week therefore Mr. Edkins will talk to him. Mr. Edkins has also talked to Mr. LeClair. They have an alarm system and everything else that a new dwelling should have. Mrs. Congdon called Mr. Edkins last week to tell him about the move but he could not get an application on the Agenda for this meeting for Site Plan Review. Mrs. Congdon spoke to the State and they said they are all set as long as she is working with the Town. Mr. Edkins said the septic system is approved for the number of bedrooms and the Day Care. The Site Plan will have to show where the driveway is, the outdoor play area, etc. Mrs. Congdon indicated that her State license covers ten children but some are there for only about two hours. The whole downstairs of the house (about 900 square feet) will be for the Day Care. Mrs. Congdon is on vacation next week so there will be no children at the new location until after the State has done their inspection. Mr. Edkins summarized this discussion by stating that assuming that Mr. Von Ahnen tells him that everything is okay with the construction of the house he will send her a letter stating that she has to come in for a Site Plan Review.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

Next Planning Board Meeting: The next regular meeting date would ordinarily be Tuesday, January 1st, 2013, but because this is New Year's Day Mr. Edkins assumed that the PB would not meet until Tuesday, January 15th.

Mr. Jenkins moved that the next PB meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday, January 15th, 2013. Mrs. Francis seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.

Finance Committee and the 2013 Proposed Budget: Mr. Edkins reported that there have been several requests for new positions: a full-time EMT, a full-time Director for the Recreation Department and a full-time person in the office. Miss Dennis would like to add an assessing/land use clerk. They feel this person should be able to dedicate about 3-to-5 hours a week doing some Code Enforcement work as well. Miss Dennis has been short a full-time office person since Mrs. DeCamp retired and her replacement went out on sick leave a few months after being employed. This person would report to Mr. Edkins and to the Selectboard with regard to enforcement issues. The proposed budget is up about 4.6% or about \$170,000. The Finance Committee would like to see it go down to about 2% which means they would have to cut about \$97,000. As of now, Miss Dennis has incorporated the Code Enforcement into the assessing/land use clerk position.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business, Mr. Jenkins moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved. The time was 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 12-26-12

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the January 15, 2013, Planning Board meeting.)