

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
JULY 2, 2013**

Members Present: Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair); Steve Neill (Ex-Officio), James Jenkins, Pat Royce, Rose Smith-Hull, Roger Thibodeau

Alternates Present: John Bruno

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

CALL TO ORDER: In the absence of Chairman Bob Frizzell, Mrs. Francis, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Robert Frizzell, regular member, and Richard Lincourt, alternate member, were not present. Mrs. Francis called upon Mr. Bruno, alternate member, to sit on the PB in place of Mr. Frizzell. Noting that meetings are tape recorded, she asked that anyone wishing to speak identify themselves for the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2013:

Mrs. Royce moved to approve the Minutes of the June 18, 2013 Site Visit, as written. Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion. With five members in favor, the Minutes were approved. Mrs. Francis and Mr. Thibodeau abstained because they were not present.

Mrs. Royce moved to approve the Minutes of the June 18, 2013 regular meeting, as written. Mr. Neill seconded the motion. Mr. Thibodeau referenced the motion in middle of page 4; he felt that “students” should be changed to “children” as it is not a school. Also, on page 3, second motion, change “students” to “children”. On page 2, fourth paragraph, eleventh line, Mr. Jenkins pointed out that he is “not as concerned” rather than “not concerned” with the traffic. Mrs. Francis noted that on pages 3 and 4 there are “Votes in Favor of the Motion” but no follow-up with the “Votes Opposed to the Motion” or as “Abstained”. Mrs. Royce and Mr. Neill accepted the corrections to the Minutes. With six members in favor the Minutes were approved as amended. Mr. Thibodeau abstained as he was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Edkins completed the motions on pages 3 and 4 as follows:

Page 3 – “Vote Opposed to the Motion: Mrs. Francis, Mr. Neill, and Mrs. Smith-Hull”.

Page 3 – “Mr. Jenkins moved to take another vote on the motion. There were no seconds.”

Page 4 – “Vote Opposed to the Motion: Mrs. Francis, Mr. Neill, Mrs. Smith-Hull, Mr. Jenkins.”

EDWARD LAWRENCE, Cont’d. – Home Day Care – 60 Bridge Street – Map 117, Lot 50 – Zone E (Mixed Use): Mrs. Francis thanked Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence for their patience. With reference to the motion made by Mr. Jenkins on page 4 of the previous meeting minutes, the revised plan indicates the following: 1) the maximum number of children on the premises at any one time will be “17”; 2) the maximum number of employees on the premises at any one time

will be “3”; 3) the maximum number of cars on the premises at any one time will be “6”. The sketch indicates the correct width and length of the driveways, and the access(es) for the children out of the playground area.

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

With reference to consideration of the Site Plan, Mrs. Francis pointed out that the application consists of the application and the drawings. Mr. Edkins noted that Mr. Lawrence asked Police Chief Smith to take a look at the driveway and parking situation; a copy of his letter was enclosed in the PB packets. Mrs. Francis mentioned that Chief Smith has some cautions and reservations. His concerns would be the number of patrons of the daycare and their times of use. His suggestions would be to stagger the drop-off/pick-up times so that every patron would be able to utilize the driveway for short-term parking and that the number of patrons be limited so that a “stacking-up” does not occur. Mr. Lawrence felt that in the beginning there might be six children so it will not be a problem but as they grow they will monitor the traffic times.

Mr. Jenkins asked how they would enforce the pick-up and drop-off times; there is a shorter window in the mornings. It is a safety issue. Mr. Lawrence does not see a parent putting their child in danger by dropping them off in the street. About 25% of the children will be picked-up at any one time and the rest will be staggered. The employee’s cars would be in the garage or out back.

Mr. Jenkins mentioned that the revised plan indicates that they are back up to 17 children. Mr. Lawrence responded that there might not be that many but the question was what was the maximum and that is the number the State approved them for. Mr. Jenkins said he cannot support 17 children.

Mrs. Smith-Hull thinks they did the right thing when they asked other daycares. Parents will be watchful of other kids. She probably would vote “yes” because they are aware of the safety issue. The applicants do not feel they would have the full number of children; it would probably be a lesser number.

Mrs. Royce is okay with the application as presented and was glad to see that Chief Smith feels it was doable and not a hazard to the children. There are other daycares on busier streets and there have been no issues. She has no reservations with this daycare.

Mr. Bruno pointed out that they spelled out the employee parking be by the shed and/or in the garage. There will be no parking on Bridge or Northwest Streets. All the pick-up and drop-off of the children will be in the driveways. He would like to go back to the 12 children that was offered at the last meeting but it is with the understanding that if everything is working out fine that, at some later date, they could come back to the PB to request an expansion for the other five. There would be no more than six vehicles there at the same time for drop-offs and pick-ups. With those issues he could support this application. Mr. Neill advised that he could support Mr. Bruno’s statement.

Mr. Thibodeau asked if they will have to get a Driveway Permit for that back parking area. Mr. Edkins noted that it is not a formal driveway; it is unpermitted. Mrs. Francis said a lot of people park on their lawns.

Mrs. Francis would prefer to approve 12 initial children and have the applicants come back for approval of the other five children.

Mr. Jenkins had stopped to talk to Chief Smith who confirmed that other daycare centers have about the same parking situations. Chief Smith has not had any complaints or incidents.

Mr. Bruno moved to approve the application for Edward Lawrence for a Day Care Center with the following conditions: 1) there shall no more than 12 students/children on the premises at any one time. The applicant may apply for more than 12 children in the future when the adequacy of pick-up/drop-off parking is established; 2) all employee parking shall be either in the rear of the property or in the garage; 3) there shall be no parking to pick up or drop off children on Bridge Street or Northwest Street. All pick-ups/drop-offs shall be in the existing paved driveways; 4) timing of pick-ups/drop-offs shall be scheduled in such a matter that no more than 6 vehicles will be in the driveways at any time.

Mr. Neill seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Jenkins was opposed to the motion as he does not feel this is an appropriate location.

PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:

Enforcement: Mr. Edkins reported that the new person that will be working full-time in the office, doing assessing work and code enforcement work was hired and will be starting on Monday, July 8th. Her name is Patricia Chaffee. They received about 30 applicants for the position. They interviewed seven and whittled it down to three who were all qualified to do this job. He and Miss Dennis felt Ms. Chaffee was the best fit for the entire position.

Mrs. Francis asked if Mr. Edkins has a list of violations that the PB had previously discussed. Mr. Edkins does have a list. There are some that rise to the top but they will be prioritized.

Several PB members mentioned the following possible violations: 1) a recreational vehicle that has been parked in a driveway for quite some time. Another member felt it is just plugged in as the owners are getting ready to use it. Mr. Edkins will check on it. 2) A lady almost got hit on Sullivan Street as she could not see around the vehicles parked alongside the road when they should not have been parked there.

Sign Regulations: Mr. Edkins advised that at the last PB meeting they got through about two-thirds of the slides; 77 out of the 113 slides. There was a consensus of the members to take the time to finish going through them at this meeting.

It was noted that a part of the challenge of enforcing signage violations will be determining if a non-conforming sign is grandfathered or not. It will take some time doing research on many of the signs.

Mrs. Francis pointed out that the PB members had talked about sending a copy of the Sign Regulations to the various businesses and inviting them to attend a meeting. Mr. Bruno said the question then becomes are the members prepared to follow through because it might not be inexpensive. If they start enforcement then they have to do them all. Mr. Edkins added that some questions are not easily answered. Mrs. Royce recommended that they start with the ones that are “cut-and-dry”. Mrs. Francis thought they might eventually want to amend the peripheral sign regulations. Mr. Bruno asked if it would be worth looking into other town’s ordinances. Mr. Edkins has some in his office. Mr. Neill felt they need to clean-up the Sign Ordinance and get it so that it works better than it is and go forward. Mrs. Francis said they have one more meeting in July so they could review a few Sign Ordinances to see what they might want to consider. Mr. Edkins will copy and email a few of them out.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

Letter: Copies of a letter that Mr. Edkins received from a woman from Massachusetts that visited Town and had comments regarding several of the historic buildings was included in the PB packets.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 16, 2013, at 7:00 PM. Mr. Edkins received an application from Tom Dombroski for the subdivision that he discussed with the Board during a preliminary consultation two meetings ago

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business, Mrs. Smith-Hull moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. Bruno seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved. The time was 8:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 07-09-13

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the minutes of the July 16, 2013, Planning Board meeting.)