

**MINUTES  
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD  
OCTOBER 1, 2013**

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

Alternates Present: Richard Lincourt

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Frizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He advised that a full Planning Board is present therefore there is no need to call on the alternate members. Alternate member, John Bruno, was not present. Noting that meetings are tape recorded, he asked that anyone wishing to speak identify themselves for the record.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2013:**

**Mr. Thibodeau moved to approve the Minutes of the September 17, 2013, meeting, as written. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion. Mrs. Royce noted that on the top of page 2, second sentence, the word “made” should be inserted; change “They a major effort” to “They made a major effort”. Mrs. Francis mentioned that on the top of page 5, first paragraph, change “Mr. Murray” to “Mr. McClammer” and in the second paragraph change “Mr. Murray” to “Mr. McClammer”. On page 8, last paragraph, second sentence, change “We do not get this turn-out to all *their* meetings” to “to all *our* meetings”. With six members in favor, the Minutes were approved as corrected. Mr. Jenkins abstained as he was not present at this meeting.**

**CHAMPLAIN OIL COMPANY, INC. – 4 Sign Permits – 104 Main Street – Map 118, Lot 92 – Zone E (Mixed Use):** *Mr. Neill stepped off the PB during the discussion of Champlain Oil Company, Inc. due to a potential conflict of interest.* Mr. Edkins advised that originally there were four Sign Permit applications but one for the CITGO sign on the canopy is being withdrawn. This is the result of the condition that the canopy has siding and a peak roof. Mr. Wamsganz confirmed this.

The PB discussed the free-standing sign near the road. This sign will have the wording “CITGO” – “Regular Unleaded” – “Diesel” and “SUBWAY” on it. Mr. Wamsganz explained that most people understand that “mid-grade” and “premium” are priced higher. All the prices are displayed on the pumps. To meet the criteria for the signs this is what they want to do. Mr. Wamsganz pointed out that the application states that the location will be in the “southeast corner” however it will be moved to the “northeast” side of the driveway because the large tree on CAROD’s property would block the visibility of the sign.

**Mrs. Francis moved to approve the Sign Permit application for the free-standing sign as presented. Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.**

The PB discussed the “Jiffy Mart” sign on the gable end of the building over the entrance. Mr. Edkins advised that they do not have to add up the square footage because each individual sign is looked at by itself as this is in Zone E.

**Mr. Thibodeau moved to approve this Sign Permit application for the “Jiffy Mart” sign as presented. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.**

The PB discussed the “Subway” sign on the East Face of the building; it faces Main Street. Responding to a question by Mr. Lincourt, Mr. Edkins stated that the regulations say there can be one building mounted sign per business in the building; they have two separate businesses so can have two separate signs plus they are allowed one free-standing sign per building. The two signs are well within our size regulations. Mr. Jenkins asked for an explanation of the two businesses; the relationship of Jiffy Mart and Subway. Mr. Wamsganz advised that they are two separate entities. They own both of them but they are two separate corporations. They purchased the right to own a franchise with Subway. This sign will be internally illuminated. They are open 5:00 AM to 11:00 PM. The only light that will be on when they are not open is the soft light over the door. Mr. Wamsganz said the top of that sign is slightly higher than the fence but there is landscaping. The sign itself is not bright and is facing Route 12. Following a discussion, Mr. Wamsganz agreed to lower the sign so it would be mounted no higher than the fence.

**Mrs. Francis moved to approve this Sign Permit application for the “Subway” sign as presented with the amendment that the sign be lowered so it will not be mounted higher than the top of the fence. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.**

Mr. Frizzell felt this would be a good time to talk about peripheral signs. Mr. Edkins explained that they have had a real issue lately with signs like Blue Rhino Propane, Ice, and 99-cents Sale for Coke-a-Cola, etc. Those signs are permitted if they are on the inside of the windows only. They are trying to get away from having all kinds of signs on the outside of buildings. Directional Signs, No Loitering signs are OK. Mr. Edkins feels the PB needs to zero in on some of their definitions. They need to ask if some signs are objectionable; should they be regulated or prohibited, etc. Some more work needs to be done on this. Mr. Wamsganz pointed out that they had kind of let it go at this location but they are trying to make it cleaner here. His goal is to try to keep these places looking better. They want to work with the PB but need to know what the regulations are. Mr. Frizzell noted that they need to treat everybody the same. Mrs. Francis said they are talking about product but not safety. Mr. Frizzell summarized by stating that he believes that Mr. Wamsganz understands where the PB is coming from on the peripheral sign issue.

Mrs. Francis asked about having a directional sign that would say “Exit to River Street”. Mr. Wamsganz advised that it is on the plan that was approved; however “River Road” will be changed to “River Street”.

*Mr. Neill resumed his position on the PB.*

**PUTNAM FARMS, INC., cont'd – Four (4) Lot Subdivision – Morningside Lane – Map 208, Lot 10 – Zone E (Mixed Use):** Mr. Edkins advised that the only question that came up at the last meeting was the driveway locations. On the plan Travis Royce showed one existing driveway and one proposed driveway that he had discussed with Mr. Keith Weed who had approved it verbally but had never written a permit. The driveways on the other two lots Mr. Weed basically said it did not matter where those driveways were located given the straightness and flatness of the road. Mr. Weed told Mr. Edkins that he would approve a driveway in any location on those two lots that are furthest to the north; Lots #1 and #2. Mr. Royce said the only change on the plan is the note that states: “Based on an on-site meeting, the Charlestown Road Agent (Keith Weed) determined that Lots 1 and 2 could have safe driveways located anywhere along their road frontage. Lot 3 driveway access should be located as shown on the plan and Lot 4 has an existing driveway as shown on the plan”.

**Mrs. Royce moved to grant final approval for the Four Lot Subdivision for Putnam Farms, Inc. as presented with the notation on the driveways. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Jenkins abstained because he was not present at the last meeting therefore did not hear the first presentation on the application.**

**JS AUTOMOTIVE – 15' x 58' Addition to Existing Auto Repair Garage – 892 Old Claremont Road – Map 108, Lot 19 – Zone E (Mixed Use):** Mr. Edkins reported that Joel Stoddard is planning to purchase the Charlestown Garage, Gary Bascom's auto business on the Old Claremont Road, and is looking for approval to put a 15' x 58' addition on the south side of the building that would accommodate some additional office space and parts storage. He will keep the same roof pitch. The bathroom will not change. Mr. Frizzell mentioned that they do not want any outside storage. Mr. Stoddard confirmed that nothing will be left outside. Mr. Edkins advised that the abutters were notified by certified mail. Mr. Harry Ryan, an abutter, stated that he is okay with the addition as long as Mr. Stoddard does not fill up the property with junk. Mr. Jenkins asked if there are floor drains. Mr. Stoddard responded “no”. Hours of operation will remain the same; 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM week-days and Saturday by appointment. Mr. Edkins pointed out that Mr. Stoddard will need to get a Building Permit from the Building Inspector if this application is approved.

Mrs. Royce asked if this should be considered as a minor site plan review. The abutters are not shown on the plan itself. Mr. Edkins felt this should be considered a minor site plan; we have the tax map and a list of the abutters, with map and lot numbers, however a copy was not given to the PB members.

Mrs. Francis mentioned that one of the sketches of the view of the front of the building shows “JS Automotive” on it but he knows that he will have to come in with a Sign Permit application. Mr. Edkins pointed out that Mr. Stoddard submitted a Sign Permit application but it does not give a good indication of what the sign will look like. He plans on moving the same sign he has on the existing business to this new location. He suggested that it wait until the next meeting when they have a more formal application.

**Mrs. Royce moved to accept this application for J.S. Automotive as complete. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved. Mr. Jenkins was opposed as the abutters should be listed on the plan.**

Mr. Edkins advised that they can put the abutters on the plan for the next meeting. Mr. Neill asked Mr. Stoddard if this needs to be carried over does it present any problems for him. They usually consider applications over a two meeting process. Mr. Stoddard was agreeable.

**PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:**

**Next Meeting:** Mr. Edkins reported that there are two new applications for the next meeting. There will be a Boundary Adjustment application between the Jiffy Mart and the CAROD property. The other application is for a small addition and a new building on the Liberty Utilities property on South Main Street. The Dollar General people are anticipating that they will submit an application in early November. They are working with the Department of Transportation on the Driveway Permit.

**Zoning Issues:** Mrs. Francis advised that this is the time of the year when the PB needs to consider if they want to make any zoning changes because that would need to go before the voters at Town Meeting. A lot of people were interested in the Jiffy Mart and want to safeguard their historic Main Street if they can do that. After the last meeting she looked at the definitions in the zones. Looking at the map they might consider expanding Zone B on the west side of Main Street up to the Jiffy Mart and Sumner House. They also might consider a new Zone A on both sides of North Main Street up to Bridge Street; it would be Residential. Mr. Edkins asked if it would be helpful if he brought a map to the next meeting so they could see how it would layout. The members felt that was a good idea. Mrs. Francis read the regulations for Zone A including the special exceptions section. Mr. Edkins reminded the PB that when they allow a use by special exception it is the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) that grants it not the PB. A special exception use is one that says “okay, we will allow this but only under the following conditions”; the conditions are spelled out in section 8.10 of their ordinance. Mrs. Francis suggested that they get the ZBA involved. Mr. Edkins recommended that they take a look into Zone A-1, Rural-Residential, that includes the Beaudry Development, Scenic Hill Development and most of the Riverview Park area. He will put together a map of the north end of Town so the PB can see what uses are already there and bring it back to the next meeting.

Mrs. Francis asked Mr. Edkins how the compliance work is going. Mr. Edkins advised that Ms. Chaffee and he put together some letters on hazardous and dilapidated buildings and sent out letters to some property owners with junk cars that were observed. Those letters went out today. They plan on taking a tour tomorrow to look at some other properties. They have not as yet worked on sign issues.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**There being no other business, Mr. Thibodeau moved to adjourn this meeting. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 10-08-13

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