

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
SEPTEMBER 2, 2014**

Members Present: Robert Frizzell (Chair), Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair), Steve Neill (Ex-Officio), Richard Lincourt, 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 & SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Mr. Frizzell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The full Board was present therefore there was no need to seat an alternate. He advised that meetings are tape recorded and asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2014:

Mr. Thibodeau moved to approve the Minutes of the August 19, 2014, meeting, as printed. Mr. Lincourt seconded the motion. Mr. Thibodeau noted on page one, at the bottom there is a typo, “Zaremba Proram” should be changed to “Zaremba Program”. Mrs. Francis pointed out on page 4, Planning and Policy Issues, under “Stumps”, they are covered in the Excavation Regulations. With six members in favor, the minutes were approved as corrected. Mr. Neill abstained as he was not present at this meeting.

ANGELICAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD – Directional Sign Permit – 187 Main Street – Map 118, Lot 110, - Zone B (Business): Father David Moody, Associate Rector of the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd, introduced Scott Chase, the Junior Warden of the church. Also present were members: Aare Ilves and Gary Freeman. Father Moody advised that this is a small church and they occupy a Historic building that was the former Connecticut River Bank. They have been concerned about maintaining the historic integrity of the building. They hung a modest sign on a bracket on Summer Street to announce that it is a church and there is a sign on the side of the building on the parish hall. A part of the problem in growing is to be able to direct people to their church. At this time their best direction is to indicate the building behind Ralph’s Market. It is great if you know the Town but most of their people are coming in from neighboring communities. They are seeking a way to direct people from Main Street up Summer Street. A universal sign that is used throughout the United States for their denomination “The Anglican Church of America” was displayed. It has an arrow on it for Sunday services. Building owners on Main Street had a bracket on their building that was not being used so they approached the owners who said it was okay to use the bracket. It hung there for almost two years with no complaints however the wind blew it down. They have three parking spaces on their property that are often used by people going into Ralph’s Market and the old Town Hall and they have no objections. They thought about many options including having a sign in front of the church but it might take up one of the parking spaces and it would not look very nice due

to the architecture of the building. They are looking for guidance as to how they might be able to direct people from Main Street to their church.

Mr. Edkins advised that when the PB re-did the sign regulations they made provisions for directional signs that would be standardized, maximum six square feet, and they were looking in terms of the same type of directional signs seen on state highways. It might not have been the right decision. Perhaps a sign on a building would be better than having a blue and white sign post across the street in the Main Street green space which would be permitted.

Father Moody noted that a blue sign pointing up the street would be more visible but their existing sign would do and that is what their request is for.

Mr. Lincourt had no objections to the sign, it is an attractive sign but it does not fit the regulations; he wondered if this was a matter for the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). Mr. Edkins feels that is the cleanest way to handle it.

Mrs. Francis looked at the Sign Ordinance regarding directional signs; the purpose is to avoid proliferation and clutter; they are to be well maintained. She read a portion of the Ordinance; the intent being that a directional sign is not to be an advertisement or promotional sign but say “Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd”. Charles Baraly, an owner of the Main Street building, was present. He said they did not have any objections to the sign as the bracket was there for years but a one sided sign attached to the building is visible only if one is heading north. Mr. Edkins clarified that they envisioned the sign as being the standard Department of Transportation (DOT) sign similar to other directional signs in Town. Mrs. Francis does not feel this is a directional sign but rather a Welcome to the Anglican Church sign.

Mr. Ilves has seen similar signs in other towns pointing the way from Main Street to a church. There are no standards for this type of church sign. Mr. Lincourt stated that whether this sign is promotional or not it is a directional sign, off premises, that needs to go to the ZBA. Mr. Edkins pointed out that an option is to talk to the Road Agent about getting a standard directional sign. They could have a two-sided sign to go on the Baraly’s building. Father Moody explained they would be happy either way. They would be willing to pay a reasonable fee for the directional sign and to have it installed.

Mrs. Francis moved that the Planning Board approve a directional sign for the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd to go on the bracket of the Baraly property and it be of a design that is strictly a directional sign to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Administrator.

Mr. Moody would rather go to the DOT or the Town for a sign in their respective rights-of-way. Mr. Bruno’s concern is that they do not end up having a proliferation of signs along Route 12 in the Village Historic District as it takes away from the aesthetics.

There was no second to the motion.

Father Moody felt they could take off the “Welcome”. Mr. Ilves mentioned that many directional signs along the highway have an individual symbol. Mr. Frizzell pointed out that the State does those signs. They should be able to put that sign back up but they should go to the ZBA. Mrs. Francis feels it is a mistake for the PB to say let’s send it to the ZBA because the PB has a Sign Ordinance that is clear about directional signs. Their sign does not have to say “Sunday at 9:00 AM”. A little symbol is okay. She agreed with Mr. Bruno about putting the sign on Main Street. Mr. Bruno noted that the sign meets the six square foot size. Mr. Edkins is hearing that the PB does not want the “Sunday at 9:00 AM”, the “logo” or the “Welcome”; just the “Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd” with an “arrow”.

Mr. Lincourt suggested that the applicant meet with Mr. Edkins and the Road Agent to work on the directional sign or go to the ZBA.

Mr. Lincourt moved to deny this Sign Permit as submitted because it does not meet the Sign Ordinance regulations. Mrs. Royce seconded the motion.

Mr. Thibodeau recommended that they up-date the map as presented and put some street and building names on it because this has to be understood by everybody including anybody that looks at it maybe five years down the road. Mr. Bruno added and to add a photograph of the building with the bracket showing.

With seven members in favor, the motion was approved.

ANGELICAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD – Sign Permit – 20 Summer Street – Map 118, Lot 209 – Zone B (Business) and E (Mixed Use): Mr. Edkins advised that this Sign Permit is for a banner sign on the fence to the south of the building facing Main Street. Father Moody explained they got this banner for a parade and then hung it on the fence. Later they realized they needed permission to have it there. They understand they can get permission from Mr. Edkins to have it there as a temporary sign for up to two weeks for a special event.

Mrs. Francis pointed out that the church has two signs on the building now. The regulation says one sign per business attached to the building and one free-standing sign per building so it is already non-confirming plus there is the banner. Mr. Edkins clarified that the one sign on the corner of the building with the logo was approved however the sign on the rear never received a permit. Father Moody clarified that the sign on the side of the building was originally to the right of the door in 1996 when they moved into the building and it stayed there for many years. When they got the bracket sign they put the other sign on the side as it was made by the husband of their Treasurer therefore they wanted to continue to use it. Father Moody asked if they put the side sign on a pole set out from the building would that qualify under the regulations. Mr. Edkins confirmed it would. He suggested they put the sign on a post behind the fence that the banner sign is on now, it would be visible and comply with the regulations. Mr. Bruno recommended that the applicant come back to the PB to tell them what they want to do; either withdraw the banner sign and put the sign on a post, or make the banner sign their free-standing sign and come back to the PB. It is their decision.

Mrs. Francis read Section 8.6.3(F) of the Sign Ordinance. She feels the banner should be used for special events. Father Moody and Mr. Chase agreed to withdraw the application for a banner sign. They will come back with a new application.

PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:

Jiffy Mart: Responding to a question from a member, Mr. Edkins talked to Mr. Wamsganz again and he was going to be in touch with their Transportation Manager. Mr. Edkins asked if the backing of tractor-trailer units into the facility and/or backing out onto Route 12 is still happening but the PB members were not sure. Members recommended that the PB receive a letter from Mr. Wamsganz about what they are doing to resolve it. There needs to be something that becomes a part of the Site Plan file. Mr. Edkins will take care of this.

A member looked back at the July 15th meeting minutes and read the section pertaining to the CAROD property and seven parking spaces they were going to allow the Jiffy Mart to use. Mr. Edkins clarified that in July he presented plans showing the creation of seven additional parking spaces but that was a miscommunication in that Mrs. Clark agreed to lease seven existing parking spaces to the Jiffy Mart. There is no physical change to the site. PB members discussed that the Site Plan has to show if there are sufficient parking spaces for the businesses on the CAROD property and Jiffy Mart employees. It was suggested that Mrs. Clark come to a meeting to explain these changes to her Site Plan. Mr. Edkins was asked to obtain a copy of the lease agreement. A member noted the other concern is the sign in front of the restaurant that has to indicate that patrons cannot exit onto Main Street as mandated by the State; that is happening all the time. Maybe a letter has to be written to the State to have them enforce their mandate.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

Enforcement Issues:

- There have been complaints about welding being done as late as 10:45 PM on the Old Claremont Road in the Stoddard building. Mr. Edkins advised that Charlestown does not have a Noise Ordinance but, at that time of night, people can call the Police to report that somebody is creating a nuisance which can be enforced by State Statute.
- Recently on the Borough Road it sounded as if somebody was doing target shooting but instead it was exploding targets going off which were extremely loud.

Procedural Changes: Mr. Edkins advised that the revised draft for the Procedural Changes will be ready for the next PB meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business, Mrs. Smith-Hull moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. Lincourt seconded the motion. With seven members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 09-08-14

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections, if necessary, will be found in the Minutes of the September 16, 2014, Planning Board meeting.)