

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
MARCH 15, 2016**

Members Present: Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair); John Bruno, Richard Lincourt, Douglas Neill

Alternates Present: Patricia Chaffee, James Jenkins, Duane Wetherby

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

CALL TO ORDER & SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Mrs. Francis, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. She noted that meetings are recorded and asked that anyone wishing to speak identify themselves for the record. Mrs. Francis noted the absence of regular members, Mr. Frizzell (Chair) and Mrs. Smith-Hull, and asked alternate members, Mr. Jenkins to sit in for Mr. Frizzell and Mr. Wetherby to sit in for Mrs. Smith-Hull. Mr. Steven Neill (ex-officio member) is also absent but an alternate member cannot be seated in his place.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – 2016-17:

Mrs. Francis pointed out that considering two members are not present they could postpone the election of officers until the next meeting.

Mr. Lincourt moved to postpone the election of officers until the next meeting. Mr. Bruno seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2016:

Mr. Bruno moved to approve the Minutes of the February 16, 2016, meeting as printed. Mr. Lincourt seconded the motion. With five members in favor, the Minutes were approved. Mrs. Francis abstained as she was not present at this meeting.

CAROD PROPERTIES – Sign Permit – 122 Main Street – Map 118, Lot 91 – Zone B (Business): Mrs. Carol Clark advised that the current zoning only allows for temporary signs ten (10) times a year for seven (7) days each time. They find that the best way to let people know what is going on is on Facebook and also by displaying a sign. They would like to put a plastic changeable letter board attached to wood backing with 8” plastic letters at the bottom of their existing sign. The letters would be black, numbers red with up to four lines of text. They could put something special on it such as an event. Mr. Edkins mentioned that Mrs. Clark is very good about requesting the Temporary Sign Permits but she is now at seven (7) for the year; they talked about how she could advertise special events without putting out the sandwich board. This would still be below the 100 square feet of signage that was granted to this applicant by a Variance. Mrs. Clark would also like to put a flat sign on the building just where people normally enter; it would be an historic sign. Mr. Edkins does not feel this sign requires a permit.

Mr. Bruno moved to approve the Sign Permit application for Carod Properties. Mr. D. Neill seconded the motion.

Responding to a question from Mr. Jenkins, Mrs. Clark feels this is the only place to put this type of a sign. Mr. Jenkins suggested dropping down the salon sign. Mrs. Clark did not feel this would go over very well with her tenant.

Mr. Jenkins amended the motion by making its location at the discretion of the owner as long as it has the same verbiage. Mr. Bruno accepted this amendment.

Mr. Lincourt said it seems what they would be approving is a permanent temporary sign. He does not expect Mrs. Clark to put up anything inappropriate but would be more comfortable if this permit expired if Mrs. Clark gave up ownership of the restaurant or have somebody else managing the business. Mrs. Clark has a manager now but does not expect to give anybody full management while they own the building. As a member of the Historic Commission Mr. Wetherby does not like the sign but the Historic Commission does not have an ordinance; this sign just does not seem to fit this site. He would rather have the sandwich sign. Mr. Edkins pointed out that this is a marquee type sign with an external light on it. Mr. Lincourt just wants to be sure Mrs. Clark retains control.

Mrs. Francis was thinking about a sign with two lines and they could be interchangeable. For example: first line “Live Music” and second line “Saturday 7:00 PM”. It would be aesthetically in tune with the Sumner House. Mrs. Clark does not see a big difference on the number of lines. They are trying to attract people’s attention as they go by. Mr. Wetherby is worried that the same notice will be there for too long a period of time and the sign will be white. Young people can go by and change the letters so the words are not appropriate. Mrs. Clark noted that people want to know who will be performing there.

Mr. Bruno withdrew his motion until they have a resolution and Mr. D. Neill withdrew his second.

Mr. Bruno asked about having a brown background with white letters rather than a white background so if they have nothing special going on the sign would be dark. He suggested they have a hinged cover (clear plastic over the top with a lock) that would solve the concern over changing the letters by unauthorized people. With these recommendations he does not have a problem with a four line sign. Ms. Chaffee’s concern is the closing time and lighting. Mrs. Clark said they usually close by 11:00 PM except when there is a special event they might be open until 12:30 AM. Mr. Bruno would consider a condition that the sign only be used for upcoming special events. Maybe start to advertise a week before an event.

Mr. Bruno moved to approve the Sign Permit for Carod Properties as applied for with the following conditions: 1) the background be brown, similar to the color of the existing sign and the letters be white; 2) some cover or access to this sign be protected so that the letters could not be moved around or stolen; and 3) that the letters be limited to seven (7) days prior to the event and if there is no event being advertised that the letters be removed. There were no seconds.

Mr. Lincourt suggested Mrs. Clark look at designing the sign to be more harmonious with the other signs and come back to the PB. Mr. Jenkins' concern with the above motion is the seven days prior to the event as, in the past, Sumner House has maintained a certain date/time with their sign stating when an event is coming in. Mr. Bruno would accept this change.

Mr. Bruno moved to approve the Sign Permit for Carod Properties as applied for with the following conditions: 1) that the background be the brown color of the existing sign and the letters be white or the same color as the existing sign; and 2) that there be some cover or access to this sign to protect it so the letters could not be moved around or stolen; and 3) this sign will be for events at the Sumner House. Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion. Mr. Lincourt amended the motion to include that the sign only exists as long as Carod Properties owns the property. Mr. Bruno and Mr. Jenkins accepted this amendment.

Mr. Lincourt is uncomfortable approving this motion when they do not have a sketch of the exact sign. Ms. Chaffee explained that putting the conditions in makes Mrs. Clark responsible to come back to show the PB that she meets the criteria. Mrs. Clark agreed to do research and will bring something in to Mr. Edkins before Mrs. Francis will sign off on the permit.

Vote: With six members in favor the motion and amendment were approved.

SHILO WHITE – Sign Permits (2) – 14 Wheeler Rand Road – Map 213, Lot 59 – Zone E (Mixed Use): Mr. Edkins advised that there are two Sign Permit applications for Shilo White. Ms. Heather Magoon was present on behalf of the applicant. One application is for the “JEMS” sign on the garage building. Ms. Magoon said they are withdrawing this application as they will be taking this sign down. She will come back with another application. Mr. Edkins pointed out that the second application is to add a 2-foot by 8-foot panel underneath the existing approved sign that will state on the first line “Complete” on the second line “Oil Change” on the third line “& 29 Point Inspection” and on the fourth line “Starting as low as \$22.95”. They would also like to include that the sign has external illumination; 3 bulbs, 75 watts – outdoor light strip staked into the ground. Hours of illumination will be “Sunset to Sunrise”. Responding to a statement by Mrs. Francis, Mr. Edkins pointed out that the Sign Ordinance was amended for signs along Route 12; this complies with the regulations. The lighting is on the ground facing up toward the sign. Mrs. Francis questioned the Inspection Station sign. Ms. Magoon replied it is on the building. Mr. Edkins said that sign is exempt from their regulations as the applicant is required by State law to have that sign. There was discussion about the verbiage on the existing sign but Mr. Edkins confirmed that the PB approved that sign on November 18, 2014. Ms. Magoon said signage is needed for advertising the business. When people come in they realize that this not just a garage but it is a complete station. Customers do read the sign.

Mr. Bruno moved to approve this Sign Permit application for Shilo White to add a 2-foot by 8-foot panel to the existing sign that will state “Complete Oil Change, 29 Point Inspection, Starting as low as \$22.95”. Mr. D. Neill seconded the motion.

Mr. Lincourt feels if they approve the added verbiage it is against the Zoning Ordinance. He would have no objection to the lighting.

Vote: With four members in favor (Mr. Bruno, Mr. D. Neill, Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Wetherby), the motion was approved. Opposed: Mrs. Francis. Abstained: Mr. Lincourt.

JOHN T. & JANE E. COLLINS, TRUSTEES, COLLINS FAMILY 2015 REVOCABLE TRUST – Voluntary Merger of Three (3) Adjacent Lots – 19, 27 & 29 Fairbrother Ave. – Map 111, Lots 8, 9 & 10 – Zone A1 (Rural Residential): Mr. Edkins advised that John and Jane Collins live on Fairbrother Avenue. At auction they bought two small lots adjacent to their property with two mobile homes on them. It is their intent to move the mobile homes off the properties; one will be demolished and the second will be moved off the lot. They want to combine the three lots together. The only issue is they would like to get that done by April 1st because that is the beginning of the tax year. His recommendation would be that the PB approve this Voluntary Merger but it not be recorded at the Registry of Deeds until the mobile homes are removed.

Mr. Lincourt moved to approve this Voluntary Merger of three lots on Fairbrother Avenue for John T. and Jane E. Collins, Trustees, Collins Family 2015 Revocable Trust but that it not be recorded until after the mobile homes have been removed. Mr. Bruno seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the motion was approved.

PLANNING & POLICY ISSUES:

Next PB Meeting: Mr. Edkins noted that there is no new business to-date for the April 5, 2016 PB meeting however because of the time period an application could still come in before the deadline of March 21, 2016. The next PB meeting might not be until April 19, 2016.

Ordinances: Mr. Edkins will up-date the Zoning Ordinance and the Drinking Water Protection Ordinance to reflect the changes that were recently voted in and get them to the PB members prior to the next meeting.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

There were no new Administration issues or Correspondence to come before this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business, Mr. Bruno moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. D. Neill seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 03-23-16

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Any corrections will be found in the Minutes of the next Planning Board meeting.)