

Granby Planning Board Minutes March 21, 2011

Date & Time: 03/21/11 at 7 p.m.

Location: Granby High School

In Attendance: E. Evren, J. Trompke, P. Desjardins, C. Maheu, K. Brooks – G. Boyle

Emre Evren called the meeting of the Board to order at 7:05 p.m. (ET).

7:05pm Marcos Marrero, PVPC – Language for Green Communities as-of-right requirements

Mr. Marrero wanted to meet with the Board to gather the members' feedback regarding the proposed zoning bylaw changes to allow, by-right, R&D and manufacturing facilities in the Industrial district I in order to meet requirement 1 of Green Communities designation process.

Board members reviewed the proposed language for the zoning bylaw amendments. Board members are in agreement with the language pertaining to R&D and manufacturing facilities in the industrial zone. However, there was still concern about the large-scale photovoltaic installations bylaw. Board members believe that, although such installations would be suitable for various sections of the town and be beneficial for economic development, a special permit should be kept as part of the process. Particularly if such installations will be allowable in districts other than industrial, including residential, special permitting may be critical.

The Board informed Mr. Marrero that they would like to proceed with a focus on the solar power. Overall, they agree with the language for first two proposed amendments that include renewable energy R&D and manufacturing facilities. The Board will contact Mr. Marrero with its decision regarding the photovoltaic installations.

7:30pm CVS Site Plan Review and Special Permit Decision

The Board has received a response from the Town Attorney, Ed Ryan, regarding Mr. Ryan's interpretation of the Granby Zoning Bylaw, Section 5.52, item 1a. The Board's question was to clarify the aforementioned section as to whether a message board, as proposed for the CVS project, is allowed per Granby zoning bylaws. Mr. Ryan informed the Board that, in his opinion a message board was part of the "other matter" described in the accessory sign definition, which is not allowed per the bylaw. Mr. Ryan, also in response to the Board's inquiry, stated that the numerical restrictions listed in Section 5.55.2.c. entitled "Additional Regulations Regarding Accessory Sign Standing Signs" were not to be exceeded, even through a special permit. The said section states that "that no such sign shall exceed sixty-four (64) square feet in area, the bottom of any such sign shall be no more than twenty (20) feet above grade level and no such sign shall be located within ten (10) feet of any side and front boundary line."

The Board then proceeded to discuss its decision with regards to the proposed CVS project. Members were in agreement that, other than the pylon standing sign, CVS, through its representative engineering firm VHB has responded to the Board's requests for modifications satisfactorily. There were items mentioned during the public hearings that were not yet included in the final submitted plans. Such items were to be documented as conditions in the Board's decision.

With regards to the pylon standing sign, E. Evren explained that with the Town Attorney's legal opinion, the message board should be removed. In addition, Board members had agreed that they wanted to keep the roof on top of the sign. E. Evren explained that he would be agreeable to approving the sign after those changes.

J. Trompke said that he would approve the proposed sign after the removal of the message board. He agreed that the roof should be kept.

K. Brooks countered that the sign was still too high and too wide. He would like to keep the roof. He also added the total area of the sign was too large for its location. He would like to reduce the size of the sign, reduce the height by the height of the now-removed message board, to a total of 16' 4" from the ground to the top of the roof. Additionally, he requested that the brick footing of the sign be removed and the width of the supporting poles to be reduced to 16". He said CVS could install a smaller sign similar to those in other locations, which were presented to the applicant during the public hearing.

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J. Maheu agreed with K. Brooks' requirements. He added that the sign was too large. He explained that the Board had informed VHB many times that the sign was important for the Board and that it had to be suitable for the Five Corners location. He added that there are examples of CVS signs that are smaller all over the region.

E. Evren explained that, while he understands and agrees with the objections of Messrs Brooks and Maheu regarding the sign in principal, he believed that CVS has complied with many of the Board's requests, the differences in size are not large, and that, if CVS withdrew the project, it would be an economic loss for the town. Messrs Brooks and Maheu posited that CVS would not withdraw the project simply because of the sign issue, since they already have better-sized, smaller signs elsewhere and they would not want to lose the opportunity to enter another market. J. Trompke also added that the project was a good investment for the town and he would not want to lose it over the sign.

E. Evren asked K. Brooks whether he would agree to simply reducing the height of the pylon sign by the height of the removed message board, keep the roof and not change the supporting poles and the brick base. K. Brooks responded that he would agree if the total height is no more than 16' 4" and total sign area is reduced. J. Maheu offered that the sign area should be limited to 45 square feet maximum, in addition to the height requirement K. Brooks stated. E. Evren and J. Trompke agreed to the renewed conditions.

K. Brooks made a motion to approve the CVS project at the southwesterly corner of State and Pleasant Streets, at the location known as Five Corners, with conditions including a standing pylon sign to be 16' 4" high from the ground to the top of the roof, a sign area not to exceed 45 square feet in total and without a message board. Motion approved 4-0-1. P. Desjardins could not vote as she was not at one of the public hearing sessions.

G. Boyle will draft a Site Plan Review and Special Permit Decision based on the decision at this meeting, findings from the public hearing and submitted plans and documentation.

9:20pm Draft Sign By-law Review

Board members agreed to postpone the discussion on the draft sign bylaws to the next meeting, scheduled for March 28, 2011.

K. Brooks inquired whether the Board sent a letter to Pioneer Valley Chapter 8 following their earlier visit. G. Boyle responded that a letter was sent. An as-built is expected from them as mentioned at the earlier Planning Board meeting. P. Desjardins told the Board that she heard that the state was going build sidewalks on the side of Rt. 202 where the PV8 is located.

E. Evren mentioned that PVPC has sent a proposal to provide the Granby Planning Board assistance by assigning a part-time professional planner to work with the Board and the Town of Granby. The Board is interested in the proposal and would like to get further details about the proposed planner.

Motion was made to adjourn at 9:25 p.m. by Pam Desjardins and seconded by Jim Trompke. Motion carried 5-0-0.

I, Emre Evren, certify that these minutes are true and accurate minutes from the March 21, 2011 Planning Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Emre Evren
Chairman, Planning Board