

DATE: October 27, 2011
TIME: 6:00 P.M.
PLACE: Fire Station
FOR: Regular Meeting
PRESENT: Jonathan Hankin; Suzanne Fowle Schroeder; Richard Dohoney;
Brandee Nelson, Associate Member
Chris Rembold, Town Planner

Mr. Hankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Dohoney had not yet arrived so Mr. Hankin elevated Ms. Nelson to a voting member.

FORM A'S:

There were no Form A's presented.

MINUTES: OCTOBER 13, 2011

Ms. Schroeder made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Ms. Nelson seconded, all in favor.

Mr. Dohoney arrived.

SPECIAL PERMIT: 32 SUMNER STREET

Attorney Susan Smith was present on behalf of Edward Lucas, Linda Lucas and Jennifer Lucas who have filed a special permit application with the ZBA for a proposed addition to a pre-existing non-conforming structure. The proposed addition would have no kitchen or plumbing.

Mr. Hankin said the bylaw had been modified to limit the number of cases that would have to go before the ZBA. Had the addition been totally conforming the Building Inspector could have issued the permit, but the first 10 inches of the addition do not meet the sideyard requirement therefore,. Ed May, the Building Inspector, interpreted the bylaw absolutely right.

Ms. Schroeder said the abutters would not even see the addition; there would be no impact on the abutters.

Mr. Dohoney made a motion to send a favorable recommendation to the ZBA, Ms. Schroeder seconded, all in favor.

FEES:

Mr. Rembold said there has been discussion of the fees by various town boards. The fees controlled by the Planning Board primarily deal with subdivision fees that were reviewed and revised during the update a couple of years ago. It would be best to wait to see how the other boards deal with the special permit fees. That leaves the site plan review fee that is currently set at \$75.00.

The Board discussed how to raise the fees such as basing the fee on the square footage of the project. Mr. Rembold provided information showing how much money the Town would have received based on a couple different fee calculations. The fees were minimal.

Mr. Hankin said he did not think it was the Board's mandate to raise money for the Town. He said he felt it was more important to get applicants to come before the Board with their projects so there can be input into what is going on. He said he was concerned about increasing the fee and potentially discouraging applicants from filing for the site plan review.

Ms. Nelson said she thought \$75.00 is low.

Mr. Rembold said yes it is low but this is a new process for us. He said even a by-right project could be impacted by site plan review. We want applicants to come in to discuss their projects. The potential revenue from a higher fee is not that great.

Mr. Hankin said increasing the fee could have a deleterious impact on our image. We don't want to be seen to create hurdles. Perhaps the extra revenue would come back in taxes.

Mr. Dohoney agreed. He said there are many people who object to our existence. We do not want to be an impediment; we want to encourage people to come before us. This is not going to be a significant revenue generator.

Mr. Hankin said he is happy to leave the fee alone. He said it seems foolhardy to raise the fee in this economy.

Mr. Rembold said there is no need to take a vote. If there is a general consensus a memo can be prepared. He said he would indicate that the Board would be in agreement to raise special permit fees as deemed appropriate by the other special permit granting authorities.

TOWN PLANNER REPORT:

Mr. Rembold said it would be good to prepare the zoning items for the Annual Town Meeting. He said the contextual setbacks language needs to be put back in the bylaws.

The Board agreed.

Mr. Rembold said there are two issues on the horizon. The Board should consider zoning language to deal with solar or wind energy. Solar energy cannot be prohibited, but towns can control some things such as setback requirements.

The other issue that should be considered is uses accessory to agricultural uses such as roadside stands and barns for weddings and parties. This is an issue that is percolating. Williamstown is dealing with it now.

Ms. Schroeder asked if there were any tools available to the Board to prevent another situation like the one we dealt with on Hurlburt Road.

Mr. Dohoney said the bylaw could require bigger lot requirements.

Mr. Rembold said the frontage could be controlled so the lots cannot be Form A'd as easily.

Ms. Schroeder asked if the State offers anything to protect farmland. She said more and more people indicate that they want more agriculture in the community. Agriculture is where people see hope for the future.

Mr. Dohoney said it would be good to encourage agriculture, but to do it we need to change lot size requirements.


Mr. Hankin reminded the members to complete their ethics training.

Mr. Hankin said he and Ms. Schroeder attended a meeting for the redevelopment of the mills. The meeting was hosted by Nick Kelley. He said it is intended for there to be a presentation to the Selectmen at their meeting of November 1.

Mr. Hankin said Board of Selectmen chairman Sean Stanton asked that the Planning Board review the Town Charter and comment to the Board of Selectmen prior to their November 13 meeting.

Mr. Dohoney made a motion to adjourn, Ms. Schroeder seconded, all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,


Kimberly L. Shaw
Planning Board Secretary

