

Washington Planning Board

Meeting Minutes - Draft

December 5, 2017

0.0 Assembly: 6:30PM, Camp Morgan Lodge

0.1 Members present: Crandall, Hatch, Dulac, Schwartz and Williams

0.2 Alternates present: Kluk

0.3 Members and Alternates Absent: Terani and Russell

0.4 Visitors: Craig Gebo

Crandall called the Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1.0 Minutes:

November 7th meeting – Hatch made a motion to approve as written, Dulac seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

November 14th working meeting – Dulac motioned to approve as written, Crandall seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

November 28th site walk – Hatch motioned to approve as written, Schwartz seconded the motion and four voted in favor with Williams abstaining.

2.0 New Business:

2.1 **Craig Gebo - Charlie Fields' property discussion** – Craig Gebo came in to speak with us about the property he is interested in buying. He wanted to know what the issues were with the sand pit area and the driveway. There are 5 small (.93 acre) lots and the larger pit area that is 15.4 acres, making 6 buildable lots with a common drive. Schwartz said she looked into the sand pit and the town tax card considers it abandoned and naturally reclaimed, so it was believed that a buyer would not need to restore the area. Any new excavation would need to be newly permitted. Gebo asked about building in the pit site and Schwartz said that would not be considered an excavation, if the digging were the size of a foundation. Gebo asked if there was an entity in town that would have a say in this. Williams said that he feels that the BoS would have a say whether the pit area was abandoned or not. Hatch asked Gebo if the question was whether it was buildable or not. Gebo said that is a separate question. Schwartz said that she couldn't find a permit for the excavation in the property file; it was initiated before 1972 and has been abandoned since 1973 or so. Gebo asked about the driveway and whether it was adequate for the lots. Williams said that we wouldn't approve a driveway to service more than 2 lots so the road would need to be brought up to a road standard. Gebo said that the existing lots are on a plan and they are drawn to touch the driveway on the plan so he thinks it is grandfathered. Schwartz said that there are life safety issues that would need to be considered. Gebo argued that there are existing driveways in town that don't meet the standards of today. It was pointed out that the existing "driveway" is merely a logging road into the property, not an existing driveway. Schwartz said we have driveway standards for steepness, also. Williams suggested that Gebo hire his own lawyer to figure out what is legal. Kluk pointed out that a non-conforming use that has been discontinued for 2 years then would have to come into conformity with the LUO. Gebo said he hoped this would be cut and dry. Williams said that it isn't cut and dry. Hatch said the LUO, as written, is intended to answer the questions, there is no doubt that the lots were drawn on a map (they

are lots of record) but the property is unimproved so he will have to now meet the LUO regulations and state regulations. Gebo said he thought he would be under scrutiny if he was creating a new subdivision and it would be subject to the LUO, but he wants to know if he is subject to the regulations with a previously done subdivision. Williams pointed him to LUO section #402.1, which he feels supports what we have said. Gebo thinks that 6 lots are ridiculous and would like to do 3 lots and approach an abutter about some land that would correct the driveway slope. Schwartz suggested he could merge the lots and start over from scratch. Gebo thanked us for the information.

2.2 **Parking requirements in the LUO** – Kluk gave us some background, there has been an issue coming up lately with parking for businesses on non-conforming lots. We looked at the section #300 and proposed a few changes to better deal with these issues. She is proposing to insert an exception for home businesses and combine some of the similar categories for parking requirements to simplify the section. Kluk looked at several other towns and their LUO to see how they handled the issue. She found they all had multiple zones or districts, whereas we have only one. She met with past PB chair Jack Sheehy to discuss what previous boards had done and about the amount of detail in the section. A nearby town had large setbacks in some districts but nothing about numbers of space required. Crandall pointed out the change in #300.2, which gives us flexibility. Hatch commented that the conversation is headed toward a change of requirements or zoning for the Town center. He says there is lots of new activity there including businesses and the idea of the Town Center Visioning will bring focus to the area. Williams thinks that at the end of the day there is an existing mechanism for dealing with parking on non-conforming lots through the variance process with the ZBA. He thinks we are being reactionary and he feels the more pressing issue is non-conforming lots and the setbacks and we haven't done anything about that. Crandall acknowledged that non-conforming lots are an issue but what order we deal with these issues doesn't matter. Kluk said she is looking at it as the board being business friendly and encouraging economic development. She feels it behooves us to do this. She feels that a lot of research needs to be done on non-conforming lots before we make a decision on that. Williams stated that he would vote no. Dulac made a motion to bring the parking regulations, as written, to a public hearing and then to Town Meeting for a vote. Hatch said he would second the motion and hopes that we can speak at Town Meeting about the issue and the Town Center Visioning subcommittee. Four voted in favor with Williams voting no. The motion passed.

3.0 **Old Business:**

3.1 **Robert and Marian Blackwell** – Business Permit application for a retail antique doll and dollhouse business at 34 South Main Street. Hatch mentioned that the Blackwell's have no intention of starting the retail business until spring and it is going to be seasonal. He feels the issue is not urgent and they are applying for their federal tax ID. We held our site walk on November 28th and they are now filling out the site plan review application and will make a map indicating the new proposed parking area. Hatch suggested we review the application at our January meeting and schedule a public hearing in February if it is complete.

3.2 **David Barkie** – Hatch reported that David Barkie visited the ZBA at their meeting to ask questions about the plan he proposed to the PB at our last meeting. It was an informational meeting. Hatch said that the ZBA agreed with what we said at our last meeting and told him what he was trying to do was very

complicated, requiring 4 actions to get it done. He has now changed the location of the proposed building and got approval for a 3 bedroom septic system. The abutter was not in attendance but he stated that the original location for their garage was a spot with ledge so the new location was more desirable. Hatch said that they would still need a variance to build in the proposed location. Barkie suggested doing an easement to the abutter but the town wouldn't approve a building permit on an easement. Hatch said the ZBA didn't think there was hardship and felt they couldn't approve variances.

- 3.3 **CIP** – Schwartz said she would be passing copies of the finished CIP the BoS on Thursday. We looked over the document one last time to review the last round of changes. She said that the LCHIP grant was approved for the Town Hall windows and doors so the town will need to approve a matching amount at Town Meeting. She said congratulations are in order for the grant writers, Lynn Hendrickson and Jean Kluk; the town is fortunate to have received the grant through their efforts.
- 3.4 **Town Center Future Vision** – Schwartz noted that there is \$3K in the CIP for this planning project. She hopes that the BoS will put in a warrant article to ask for this amount. She thinks PB members need to go in and discuss this with the BoS, so they have a better grasp of what we are trying to accomplish with this subcommittee. Williams thought it was a good idea to meet with them to discuss. We discussed the need for a handout for Town Meeting and we figured we could use Kluk's document. Hatch suggested we go in January to discuss with them.
- 3.5 **Municipal Buildings project update:**
Williams said that the Meetinghouse is back down on its new foundation and the floors are more level now. Kluk said the plaster in the building held up really well. Williams said the annex will start being framed soon and the hope is to get some pictures to show off at Town Meeting. They hope to be back in the building in April or May. Budget-wise they are in good shape with no big surprises so far, there is one section of sill to replace but things are going along well.
On the F/R safety building, the roof is on and the siding is going up, they are still fleshing out the connector and who will do the work on it and when. The cistern is filled and the pump house is going up on Friday. They hope to get the building closed in soon and the sprinkler work will happen in January. Things are moving along nicely and the project is favorable in terms of budget and there are no big challenges. Schwartz said they now have a usable bathroom in the station.
Dulac asked about the Meetinghouse and whether the shaft is going in for the lift. Williams said that prep work for the LULA is being done (shaft and pit for mechanicals) along with stubbing upstairs for the electrical and plumbing. They are stopping at that and need to flesh out the next step; when and how it will be done. Kluk said that at the LCHIP ceremony Langdon's meetinghouse was receiving its 5th LCHIP grant; they phased their project over years and used smaller grants for specific phases. Williams said we could do that. Kluk would like to wait a year and then apply again for another grant.
On the OSH the BoS are looking at upgrading the electrical system. Schwartz asked about the sharing of services with the Meetinghouse. Williams said they want the 2 buildings to stand on their own and he may do some work towards that this year. Hatch asked what happens if we don't spend all the money allocated to the projects. Williams said that we could spend some money to do further renovation, give some money back to the taxpayers, pay down the bond or repurpose the money at Town Meeting. He said there would be no decision at the

coming Town Meeting if the projects are still on going; it is an "if this then that" situation.

- 3.6 **LUO Changes to RV section and Building Permit Issue** – Schwartz said the newest version was sent out with the agenda. Hatch went over the documents and said that we went with months instead of days for the permitted periods and refined the language. He said it is ready to go to a hearing and then put it on a ballot for Town Meeting. Crandall said it all makes sense and we don't need a vote because it was approved to move forward at the working meeting. Schwartz will notice the hearing and post documents prior to the hearing. On the Building Permit section Hatch said we flipped the order of the first paragraph and removed any reference of interior. Hatch made a motion to bring the changes forward to a public hearing and then to Town Meeting, Dulac seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
- 3.7 **Master Plan** – this is a placeholder.
- 4.0 **Driveway Permits:** None
- 5.0 **Mergers:** None
- 6.0 **Communications:**
- 6.1 Copy of Survey for TM 24-49 & 58, from Peter Mellen.
Hatch mentioned that the survey was done to aid in a decision of the ZBA about an existing lean-to that was very close to a property line (it was suspected to be over the line but was found not to be. They qualified for an equitable waiver.
- 7.0 **Meeting date for next Planning Board meeting,** January 2, 2018, at 6:30PM at Camp Morgan Lodge (CML). Public hearing will be scheduled for 6:00PM
- 8.0 **Adjournment:** Time: 8:15PM
Motioned by Crandall, seconded by Hatch, all voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nan Schwartz