

**Ashland Planning Board Work Session
Minutes
September 24, 2014
Ashland Town Office**

Members Present: Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox, Fran Newton, Miriam Brown (alternate)

Members Absent: Liz Cody (absent with notice); Gordon McCormack Jr.

Others Present: Norm DeWolfe

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairman Susan MacLeod. The Chair appointed alternate Miriam Brown as a voting member for the duration of the meeting.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

August 27, 2014 – **A motion was made (Cox) and seconded (MacLeod) to approve the minutes of August 27, 2014. The vote was 3 (MacLeod, Cox, Brown) to 0 in the affirmative, with 1 abstention (Newton).**

September 3, 2014 – **A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (Cox) to approve the minutes of September 3, 2014. The vote was 4 to 0 in the affirmative.**

NEW BUSINESS

Pre-Application Consultation with Kevin French for Brian Young, construction of pole barn at self-storage business

An informal pre-application consultation was held with Kevin French, representing Brian Young, for the Exit 24 Storage business at 62 West Street. The proposal is to build a 38' x 80' pole barn as an RV storage building. A retaining wall will be located at the back of the building and it will not encroach on the setback. Brian Young originally thought it would just require a building permit; Sue MacLeod indicated this would require a site plan application for additional construction (expanded use) within an existing commercial site. Kevin French will find out how many RV's it will hold, will identify West Street and abutters on the site plan, and will include the surveyor on the list for notices. The application will be submitted for the November meeting.

Chair MacLeod noted that she found no documentation (site plan or building permits) for the storage unit business in the building inspector's property file. The current building inspector has been reviewing all the files. There might be additional information in the Assessor's file or other files downstairs.

OLD BUSINESS

TAP Sidewalk Grant

Fran Newton updated the Planning Board on the completion and submission of the TAP grant proposal. The proposal, for \$296,000 (80%-20% match), is for the construction of ADA-compliant sidewalks and crosswalks from the length of Gordon Street to the Dollar General store on Main Street. The need is supported by the road safety audit, the Master Plan, and the charrette. Letters of support have been included from the Board of Selectmen, the Economic Development Committee, the CIP Committee, the Planning Board, the Budget Committee, the Elementary School, and the Garden Club. The grant application will be hand-delivered to the NH Department of Transportation on Friday, September 26. The decision on the grant will be made at about the end of the year. If approved, the first year would include the engineering design, with construction during the second year.

Dollar General Store

Discussion is continuing between Fire Chief Steve Heath and the Dollar General project manager regarding installation of a fire alarm system. While the original plans indicated a fire alarm system, Dollar General has since decided to eliminate the system. Chair MacLeod reviewed the letter from Steve Heath to Dollar General citing a list of reasons for including such a system in the building construction. The State Fire Marshall may be involved if the issue is appealed.

Fire Chief Heath has recommended that the Planning Board consider an ordinance that would require fire alarm systems in such projects and businesses. It was noted that Dot's Bread'n'Butter, Dunkin Donuts and the TCCAP building all have fire alarm systems installed.

CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER BUSINESS

Chair MacLeod will be ordering 7 copies (at \$9 each) of the new land use law reference manual for members of the Planning Board.

The Lakes Region Planning Commission has requested confirmation of an Ashland representative to the LRPC. **A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (MacLeod) to appoint Cheryl Cox as the LRPC representative from Ashland. The vote was 4-0 in the affirmative.** The Town Administrator will be notified of the selection and asked to submit Cheryl Cox's name and email address to the LRPC.

Chair MacLeod reviewed an article from the September/October 2014 issue of the *New Hampshire Town and City* – “*New Requirements, Deadlines for Town Meeting Season.*” A new law, effective immediately, makes a significant change to the notice requirements for hearings on proposed zoning amendments (especially in relation to boundary changes in zoning districts). In addition, several small procedural changes were made for official ballot referendum (SB 2) towns. The article is available on the NH Municipal Association website at <http://www.nhmunicipal.org/TownAndCity/Article/587>.

Selectboard Chair Norm DeWolfe stated that information was shared at last night's Electric Commission meeting that a California-based holding company has recently purchased NH

properties for establishment of mini-apartments; one property in Ashland (reportedly the Winn trust property) was included. Further information needs to be sought and confirmed. Ashland currently has a nearly 100% occupancy rate on subsidized/low-income rentals and a very low occupancy rate on the higher end/luxury rentals.

Cheryl Cox presented an amended “*Application for Site Plan Review*” incorporating the changes previously discussed. It was suggested to add the Planning Board email address to the form. Chair MacLeod will make the same changes on the subdivision application. The forms will be finalized for immediate use with the current fees and postage rates, until a decision is made regarding changing the fees. The Board also approved of the illustrated flow chart for the site plan review process.

Further details on the workings of the non-lapsing accounting line for fees will be obtained. A public hearing will be needed for amendments to the site plan review regulations (including fees) and updating the definition of wetlands. The goal is to hold the hearing with the November meeting of the Planning Board.

Cheryl Cox mentioned the next meeting of the Economic Development Committee on October 14 [*later changed to October 21*] at 6:00 pm at the Ashland Fire Station. The Committee has discussed focusing on the downtown area for immediate impact that will benefit the merchants and establishing a separate group to look into cooperative efforts for the mill area.

The next meeting of the Land Use Advisory Committee is Friday, October 3, at 9:00 am at the Town Hall.

Fran Newton attended the Grafton County Economic Development Council annual meeting, where she mentioned the formation of the Ashland Economic Development Committee and the planning of the first ‘business after hours.’

A group also recently did a walk-around of the mill area, to view the layout and conditions of the buildings and to brainstorm some future directions. Among those who attended were Fran Newton, Dave Toth, Eli Badger, Mark Scarano (Grafton County Economic Development), Beno Lamontagne (NH Division of Economic Development) and Senator Jeanie Forrester. Jeanie Forrester and Beno Lamontagne will assist us in connecting with state historic preservation resources (Scribner mill building), contacting Taylor Caswell of CDFA, contacting DES for brownfield information, and considering a design charrette focusing specifically on the mill property.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger