

**Ashland Planning Board Public Hearing and Meeting
Minutes
November 5, 2014
Ashland Elementary School Library**

Members Present: Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox, Fran Newton

Members Absent: Liz Cody, Gordon McCormack Jr., Miriam Brown (absent with notice)

Others Present: Norm DeWolfe, Kathleen DeWolfe, Eli Badger, David Toth, and 2 others

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:48 pm by Chairman Susan MacLeod.

1) To amend the definition of “Wetland” in the Town of Ashland Subdivision Regulations, to be in conformance with RSA 482-A:2 X -- *“Wetlands” means an area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions does support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.*

Comments:

- Any municipality that uses the term ‘wetland’ or ‘wetlands’ in any ordinance must use the revised definition, as per legislation passed in 2005
- The proposed Land Use Assistant would be able to keep town ordinances up-to-date with new regulations and legislation
- Norm DeWolfe suggested that, in the meantime, the Planning Board should review land use ordinances to identify other obsolete wording
- The natural resources assessment and smart growth report prepared for the Planning Board contains a matrix identifying compliance/non-compliance issues; the Planning Board needs to continue the review process.
- The Land Use Oversight Committee has also identified the need to review land use ordinances

2) (a)To amend the fees for Site Plan Review and Subdivisions; and (b)To amend the applications for Site Plan Review and Subdivisions -- *the application fee will increase from \$90 to \$100; the fee per abutter/professional notification will increase from \$6.49 to \$10 to cover processing and administrative costs; revisions to the applications include ‘office use only’ box for Case #; check boxes for zone selection; contact and meeting information for the Planning Board; new defined section for listing professionals referenced on the plan; footer with page numbers and revision date.*

Comments:

- A suggestion was made to add a note on the application that the applicant may also submit an electronic (digital) version of the plot plan, in addition to the required paper plot plan. Proper storage and printing of electronic plans would need to be implemented by management.

The public hearing was closed at 7:01 pm.

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chairman Susan MacLeod.

Disposition of Minutes

A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (Cox) to approve the minutes of October 29, 2014. The motion passed unanimously (3-0) in the affirmative.

Old Business

Case 2013-02, Walsh Trust Condominiumization: This item was tabled to December, as Attorney Jack McCormack has notified the Chair that he has not had time to finalize the matter.

New Business

A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (Cox) to accept the amended definition of “Wetlands” as presented in the Public Hearing. The motion passed unanimously (3-0) in the affirmative. It was noted that the amendment will not go into effect until the amendment is certified by the Planning Board and it has been filed officially with the Town Clerk. Susan MacLeod, Fran Newton, and Cheryl Cox signed the approval of the amendment.

Correspondence

Chair MacLeod received, from Patsy Tucker, a form entitled “Planning Board Departmental Review.” Eli Badger explained that when he was the Town Planner, he used a process that allowed each Town department to review and comment on applications. However, he utilized a simple check list, rather than the form presented. Fran Newton suggested that this ought to be discussed at the Land Use Oversight Committee – to improve communication and documentation and to ensure that all relevant departments (e.g., Water/Sewer, Fire, DPW, Electric, Health Officer, Conservation Commission) are informed of land use applications.

Chair MacLeod cited a process example that needs correction – an existing business has obtained all necessary permits to convert barn space to expand their current floor space. Does he need to come to the Planning Board? This is likely a change of use and the Building Inspector will need to inform the business owner that he has omitted a step and must come before the Planning Board.

Fran Newton updated the Planning Board on the recent scoring of Ashland’s TAP grant presentation by the LRPC. While the Ashland grant proposal did not receive the topmost score among our region, the scores were all close; this score only represents 6% of the total score. She noted that, even as newcomers, Ashland has gained visibility, credibility and experience by going through the process. The proposal will now go forward for further scoring by the DOT. Notification of grant awardees will be in late December.

Ashland has also submitted a DES grant proposal to conduct a Brownfields assessment on a portion of the mill area (Scott Heath property).

Other Business

Budget Update: A separate line has been created in the 2015 budget to track all revenues and expenditures related to applications. Chair MacLeod will also maintain a spreadsheet to track revenues and expenditures related to applications.

The next Planning Board Work Session is scheduled for November 19. The Conservation Commission is also meeting on November 19. Locations for both meetings will be clarified.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger