

**Ashland Planning Board Meeting  
Minutes  
January 7, 2015  
Ashland Elementary School Library**

**Members Present:** Susan MacLeod, Cheryl Cox, Fran Newton

**Members Absent:** Gordon McCormack Jr.

**Others Present:** Norm DeWolfe, Kathleen DeWolfe, Barry Gaw, Attorney John J. McCormack

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Chair Susan MacLeod.

**PUBLIC HEARING on Proposed Amendments to the Town of Ashland Zoning Ordinance**

- **In *Article 3.4, Obnoxious Use*, adding wording to include screening of garbage containment areas and dumpsters;**
- **In *Article 3 General Provisions, Section 3.5a* and *Article 10 Definitions* amend the definition of junkyard.**

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:35 pm by Chair Susan MacLeod.

Norm DeWolfe had two questions and suggestions:

- Is the “Obnoxious Use” section the most appropriate section to include screening of garbage areas? He suggested making it Article 3.4a, with a title such as “Aesthetic Requirements” or “Aesthetic Consideration.”
- Where did the word “cordage” come from? Cordage has 2 meanings in the dictionary, i.e., cord wood or rigging of a ship. He suggested finding a substitute term for cordage, such as waste wood or scrap wood. There is no intent to restrict homeowners from stacking their heating cord wood outside.

Chair MacLeod reviewed input from the Land Use lawyer. She questioned why we were adding the screening of garbage areas to the zoning ordinance when it already exists in site plan review. Susan clarified that the site plan review regulations only apply to commercial and non-residential; putting it in the zoning ordinance also ensures that it applies to residential areas. The lawyer also suggested to delete the definition of junkyard from the definition section (Article 10), because the full definition is in the body of the text already (Article 3.5a).

The public comment portion of the hearing was closed at 6:48 pm.

**A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (MacLeod) to accept the changes as discussed in the public hearing and put them in the final warrant article: replace ‘cordage’ with ‘scrap wood;’ create a new section 3.4a for the visual screening of garbage collection areas; and delete the definition of ‘junkyard’ from Article 10. The motion was approved unanimously 3-0.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Case 2013-02 Walsh Trust Condominumization**

Chair MacLeod spoke to an Ashland resident who had a few questions regarding the Walsh Trust property, specifically whether the lot (1.1 acres) could be subdivided or whether a third building could be built at the end of the lot. She advised the resident to review all zoning ordinance regulations, including minimum lot size (2 acres), percentage of impervious surface (max 30%), minimum building size (750 sq. ft.), overlay and setback requirements, common area requirement, etc. She also advised him to consult with Tony Randall, the surveyor of record for that property.

Attorney McCormack presented the updated plot plan for the Walsh Trust condominiumization containing the requested changes as corrected by Tony Randall (from November 6, 2013, meeting: Page 2 of plan revised to meet requirements of RSA 356b to show interior floor plan and deck detail, revised notes & certifications; page 1 to delete references to units and amend the certifications). The primary change of the plan is the enlargement of the LCA (limited common area, which surrounds the buildings themselves); some of the common area was taken to increase the LCA with cleaner division lines.

The mylars and paper copies were signed by Susan MacLeod and Cheryl Cox.

**A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (Cox), being that a conditional approval was made on November 6, 2013 on a plan showing a proposed condominium conversion to be known as LBC Retreat, a condominium in the town of Ashland NH, and therefore to accept that the conditions have been met and to grant final approval. The motion was approved unanimously, 3-0.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **EHFAR Bond Adjustment**

Barry Gaw updated the Board on the progress within Squam River Landing. The Planning Board received a request for an adjustment to the bond, to represent the remaining work estimated at \$175,000.00. The detail listing of work remaining was forwarded for review to all Planning Board members, and to other applicable town departments for their input. Water & Sewer Department indicated that they had no issues with the project; there was no response from Public Works. Barry Gaw indicated that the bonding company needs a letter from the Planning Board to accept the reduction of the bond, and that the letter needs to be received before the current bond matures.

The top coat will be done on Leavitt Hill in the spring, while the top coat within the development will be done later.

**A motion was made (Newton) and seconded (Cox) to write the letter to revise the bond as requested. The motion was approved unanimously, 3-0.**

## **Design Standards Research**

The Planning Board members discussed some preliminary ideas about design standards. Some issues to be considered include:

- where design standards should be included in regulations;
- how we should approach standards when we already have a mix of eclectic designs in the downtown area;
- how general or detailed should design standards be for Ashland;
- how design standards should be handled for existing vs. future buildings;
- how to address business vs. apartment on first floor in downtown area.

Examples from Alton, Weare, Milford, Antrim and Windham were mentioned. In some towns, there is a general reference paragraph introducing the idea of design standards in the zoning ordinance, with expanded details in the site plan review regulations or a stand-alone document. Typical topics which may or may not be included in design standards include green space, parking, architecture, natural features, setbacks, landscaping, building orientation/form/height, pedestrians, roof lines, windows, entrance, signage, traffic access, etc.

Some points made relative to Ashland include: Ashland already has a height requirement; we are a pass-through corridor with no stopping; we have 4 discrete areas to consider (Lower Village, central Main Street downtown area, area near I-93, mill area). Other areas to consider in relation to future use and design standards include Cedar Lane, existing empty lots, existing residences within commercial areas, papermill/pond area, etc.

Additional discussion and research on design standards will continue throughout the year. Other documents which should be reviewed include previous master plans (e.g., 1984), enterprise plan (1992), etc.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Reminder:** Financial Forum, January 8, 2015, 7:00 pm at the Elementary School Cafeteria.

**Next meeting:** Work Session, January 28, 2015, 6:30 pm at the Town Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

*Minutes submitted by Mardean Badger*