



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON PLANNING BOARD

Minutes

Monday, January 23, 2017

PRESENT: Paul Gorman (Chair), Bill Dietrich (Vice Chair), Tim Paradis, Michele Holton, Jeremy Bonin, and Joseph Kubit (Alt)

ABSENT: Marianne McEnrue, Casey Biuso, Janet Kidder, Liz Meller

Chair Gorman appointed Joseph Kubit to replace regular member Liz Meller.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Fred Mansfield, Karen Mansfield, Jack Sheehan, Steve Root, Ben Barton, Jim DeAngelis, Craig Howe, and Frank Anzalone.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Gorman called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES:

- ✓ **Motion to APPROVE the minutes of the regular meeting of the Planning Board on January 3, 2017.** It was MOVED (Bill Dietrich) and SECONDED (Michele Holton) to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT: The Chair may allow public comment for items not listed on the agenda and may limit the amount of time for public comment. No comments.

Public Hearing on proposed Zoning Amendments – refer to the posted public hearing notice

Chair Gorman commented that the public hearing is to solicit input from the public on the proposed zoning amendments. He noted that there has been active public participation in the discussion on the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) including the NH State law on ADUs which takes effect on June 1, 2017. He commented that the amendments to the Sign provisions are to address the US Supreme Court decision regarding content-neutral signs. He noted that a petitioned amendment was submitted to rezone an area of Main Street, and the other amendment is a general housekeeping amendment.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)- Attached Only**

Chair Gorman read the Proposed Amendment to the public. The following members of the public spoke regarding this Proposed Amendment:

- ✓ Jack Sheehan stated that felt obliged to come tonight because he was involved in the Subcommittee Meetings, and that he supported the Proposed Amendment for the following reasons:
 1. It meets the state requirements.
 2. Focuses on attached ADUs and did not include detached ADUs.
 3. Keeps definition of living space and living area as simple as possible to avoid confusion and future debate, as we go forward.
- ✓ Steve Root indicated that he supports the Proposed Amendment, thanked the Planning Board, and pointed out a couple of typographical errors which should be corrected including: capitalize Conditional Use Permit and hyphenate Single-Family.

Lucy St. John agreed that there were a couple of typographical errors that she noticed, as well, that will be corrected: Single Family; Conditional Use Permit and Dwelling Unit.

- ✓ **Motion to ACCEPT the Accessory Dwelling Units Proposed Amendment as presented and submit it to the Town for voting.** It was MOVED (Michele Holton) and SECONDED (Bill Dietrich) to accept the ADU Proposed Amendment, as presented and submit it to the Town for voting. The motion was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- **Signs**

Chair Gorman read the Proposed Amendment to the public. The following members of the public spoke regarding this Proposed Amendment:

- ✓ Ben Barton inquired regarding the definition of content neutral.

Chair Gorman provided a brief explanation of the US Supreme Court (Reed vs. Town of Gilbert, Arizona) decision on signs, noting signs must be content- neutral, as this is a freedom of speech issue, as signs can be regulated but the message can't be. He cited the current zoning ordinance provisions regarding signs for non-profits which are different than that for a business. He further noted that provisions were included to allow greater flexibility for the uses in the Institutional Districts in Town as under the current provisions these Institutions need to go through the Site Plan process for signs, which is a time and cost issue.

- ✓ **Motion to ACCEPT the Signs Proposed Amendment, as presented and submit it to the Town for voting.** It was MOVED (Jeremy Bonin) and SECONDED (Tim Paradis) to accept the Signs Proposed Amendment, as presented and submit it to the Town for voting. The motion was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- **Petitioned Zoning Amendments**

Chair Gorman explained that a petitioned amendment to rezone an area of Town from Residential to Commercial was submitted, referring to the map. The Planning Board

following the public hearing must decide whether to support or non-support it, and that their recommendation will be included on the ballot for voting.

The following members of the public spoke regarding this Proposed Amendment:

- ✓ Frank Anzalone made the presentation to the Board. He stated that the request was to convert the four properties on Main Street, across from Spring Ledge Farm, that abut commercially zoned property, from residential to commercial. He provided a brief history of the use of each property. He noted that it is not practical or reasonable to think that the barn will ever be used to house livestock, and the best use is to try and preserve the barn by using it for something like offices.
- ✓ Fred Mansfield and Karen Mansfield, neighbors of the property in question, spoke in support of the Proposed Amendment, stating that it would be an improvement to the neighborhood. Commented that the house was previously occupied by college students, which had parties, and an office might be quieter, and it is better than rentals.
- ✓ Ben Barton noted that he is life-long resident. He commented that it is important for Main Street to be a pleasant and uplifting experience. He supports the amendment. He provided a brief history of his property and his plans to expand the current use of the property such as adding some conference room space and some office space for his bookkeeper. He just needs more space to operate his business.
- ✓ Craig Howe provided a brief history of the house, as his family used lived there. The barn used to be an art studio, and his intention to protect the architectural integrity of the property, notwithstanding any commercial renovations to make the space usable. The house will be used for rental property, and this makes sense from a business venture.

Board comments:

- ✓ Paul Gorman commented on the issue of “commercial creep” along Main Street, and the various changes over the years of converting residential uses to commercial uses. He asked- What do we want Main Street to be? What does the Town want Main Street to look like? He commented that Main Street continues to change. He then stated that the Board needs to keep in mind the Master Plan, noting this is one of several issues the Planning Board will discuss more in the coming year.
- ✓ Questions the size of Lot 46, and how access is granted to the site.
- ✓ Asked if the intent is to merge Lot 46 and Lot 47.
- ✓ Commented that there may be tax abatement for Barn Preservation, and suggested the owners look into that.

Frank Anzalone commented that the intent is not to merge the lots at this time.

- ✓ **Motion to SUPPORT the Petitioned Zoning Amendment as presented.** It was MOVED (Michele Holton) and SECONDED (Tim Paradis) to support the Petitioned Zoning Amendment, as presented. The motion was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Other housekeeping measures (no substantive changes) zoning amendment. Chair Gorman commented that the housekeeping amendments is to change the current, Article II, General Provisions # 8 “Sanitary Protection” to Individual Sewage Disposal System, and this is not a substantive change.
 - ✓ **Motion to ACCEPT the Zoning Amendment, as presented.** It was MOVED (Bill Dietrich) and SECONDED (Jeremy Bonin) to accept the Zoning Amendment, as presented. The motion was APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Gorman noted that all four amendments will be submitted for voting and that a 2nd Public Hearing on Monday, Feb 6, 2017 is not needed and the Planning Board meeting of Feb 6th is cancelled (was previously listed as tentative only).

FUTURE MEETING DATES: Refer to the Planning Board Meeting Schedule and the Town’s website for updated meeting information. Next meeting scheduled for January 24, 2017.

MOTION TO ADJOURN the meeting at 7:06 PM. IT WAS MOVED (Jeremy Bonin) AND SECONDED (Tim Paradis) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria O’Connor
Recording Secretary
Town of New London, NH