



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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PLANNING BOARD APPROVED MEETING MINUTES October 8, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Cottrill (Chair), Peter Bianchi (Board of Selectmen's Representative), Emma Crane (Conservation Commission Representative), John Tilley, Michele Holton, Bill Helm (Alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Hollinger (Vice-Chair), Paul Gorman (Secretary), Deirdre Sheerr-Gross (Alternate), Michael Doheny (Alternate)

STAFF: Lucy St. John (Planning and Zoning Administrator), Kristy Heath (Recording Secretary)

Chair Cottrill called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. In the absence of Jeff Hollinger, Bill Helm (alternate) was asked to sit in as a voting member.

Colby-Sawyer College – 541 Main Street, Tax Map 085-033-000. Building Signage on Campus.

Steve Jesseman and Lynn Walker discussed the project on behalf of the College. Ms. Walker said in the spring the Fire Department requested that they identify the streets on campus for emergency service purposes. In July, Amy Rankins and Richard Lee assigned numbers to each building on campus. She presented to the Board an illustration of the proposed building address signage.

Ms. St. John explained that the proposed building signage is essentially for identification for emergency response, like a residential house number. She referred to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, regarding signage in the Institutional District, Article II, General Provisions, # 10 Sign Regulations, page 10, which state, "Because of the size and unique needs of the institutional uses, the size, number and location of all permanent signage shall be subject to approval by the Planning Board through the Site Plan Review process." She noted that New London hospital had previously received approval from the Planning Board in June for the changes to the signage on their site, including the signage on the hospital building façade.

Referencing those provisions, she suggested that Colby Sawyer College could discuss their proposed signage with the Board and let the Board determine if site plan review would be required. Ms. St. John explained that the Zoning Ordinance includes a list of signs that don't require a permit, including traffic and pedestrian control and safety signs. Because the ordinance specifically includes a section on the institutional district, she asked the College to discuss this with the Board for clarification, and that it would be the decision of the Planning Board if they required Site Plan Review for the proposed signs.

Chief Lyon said they had a 911 review done by the State and part of their recommendations to the Town was to name the streets. The college was always referred to as 541 Main Street but it is a complex campus now and specific areas should be identified. He felt the signs were similar to house numbers and thought they would help emergency services to locate buildings more efficiently.

After brief discussion, the Planning Board agreed that the design and size of the signs were fine. Chief Lyon thought the College did an outstanding job getting their streets named and their buildings identified.

IT WAS MOVED (Michele Holton) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) that site plan review for the placement of signage on the campus buildings was not required, and to approve the signs as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Conceptual Site Plan Discussion for Flying Goose Brew Pub and Grille. Tax Map 122-001-000.

Ms. St. John explained that this is a conceptual discussion only, not binding on any party. She noted she had received some comments from Public Works and the Health Officer, these comments were provided to the applicant. She read into the record the emails from Richard Lee and Deb Langner, Health Officer.

Ms. St. John said that Mr. Stevens has submitted a site plan application yesterday for consideration at the October 22nd Planning Board meeting. The property is zoned ARR. She referred to the list of permitted uses identified in Article VI, Agricultural and Rural Residential District of the Zoning Ordinance, explaining that neither a restaurant nor a brewing is identified as a permitted use. She also referred to Article XX, Nonconforming uses and structures. She noted that she had not reviewed the files regarding the past history of this property at this time. They may require approval from the ZBA, but until she completes her review of the application and files, she is just bringing this up as part of this conceptual discussion.

Ross Stevens from Steven's Engineering was there with Tom Mills, owner of the Flying Goose. He said they would like to build an addition and associated site improvements. The addition would be built on the left-hand side of the current building, towards Andover. The parking areas would be expanded and lighting is proposed. They have planned for sufficient handicapped spaces as well.

Mr. Stevens noted the sewage disposal system was large enough to handle the addition which they envision to be a 50-seat function room. The site plan shows widening the easterly entrance to allow large trucks deliveries and pick-ups. He explained that detention basins would be constructed to help with the drainage, noting there is limited drainage infrastructure on the site.

Mr. Mills explained that the expansion will be where there are currently outside coolers and a retaining wall. The outside storage will be housed in the basement level of the new addition. They will lose a couple of parking spaces in that area but have added 11 new spaces overall. They will do landscaping and walkways to get people from the lower to the upper portion of the lots. Their goal is to improve their parking in general, not just to add seats. The ordinance requires .3 parking spaces per seat.

Mr. Stevens said that Pierre Bedard did the surveying and the setbacks are delineated on the plan. Ross Stevens noted that they are under 40' distance from front setback and the parking lot is the same distance from the State right of way line as it is now, but not any closer.

Chair Cottrill asked if there were any plans coming forth to show screening to the neighboring house. Mr. Mills said he plans to talk to the Surprenant family to see about buffering. Chair Cottrill suggested that this be hashed out with the neighbor prior to the next meeting so they are aware of what is going on.

Mr. Mills said they may landscape a nice walkway to allow patrons to enter the restaurant without walking through parking lot traffic.

Chair Cottrill was concerned with the setback. Ms. St. John said setbacks in the ARR zone are 50' in the front, 25' from the sides, and 50' from each right of way. Chair Cottrill said this is a non-conforming building and they have dealt with this issue before when expansions have been made (bump-out in the bar area). Mr. Tilley identified the porch in front of the new addition was what brought their distance to the setback less than 50'.

Mr. Tilley asked if it would be a "for rent" function space or a new dining space. Mr. Mills thought it would put too much pressure on the kitchen they have now if they opened it up for added dining space. It would be intended for functions like rehearsal dinners and meetings. Additionally, they would get the benefit of cold storage for the brewery, with the new basement area.

Chair Cottrill asked about snow storage. Mr. Stevens said below both parking lots are wide open, grassy areas. Mr. Mills said they have the parking lots bucket-loaded (removed from the site) on a regular basis when they have a heavy winter.

Chief Lyon said he would need to review plans in detail and would only be concerned with means of egress and the standard issues he would have with any other structure.

Chair Cottrill asked for more information regarding the frontage and setback. Mr. Mills wondered if the portion that was within the setback was changed to canvas instead of a porch (which would match the one currently in the front of the building) would that be ok. Mr. Tilley asked if the awning was a structure. Chair Cottrill referred to the definition #148 – structure on page 33 of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Stevens said they could add the dimension for the awning to the plan. The applicant explained that they had previously been to the ZBA for variances. Ms. St. John explained that she would need to review the files, regarding past ZBA actions on this property.

Mr. Bianchi noted they will be adding impervious surface in the back of the restaurant. He wanted to make sure there were details on the plans showing how the extra storm water would be managed. He thought these details should show drainage calculations. Mr. Stevens said those were possible to calculate but per the site plan regulations wasn't sure it was required and that it would increase the cost for his client to present the calculation. Ms. St. John read from the site plan regulations noting that drainage calculations were required.

The discussion then focused on the provisions of Article XX- Nonconforming, particularly A. (2) Change or Expansion of a nonconforming use and B. (2) Nonconforming Buildings and Structures, page 82 of the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. St. John explained that there are two issues related to the non-conformity- the use and the structure. She asked the Board if the issue of the brewery operation has previously been discussed or if a determination had been made as brewing operations are not specifically identified in the Ordinance as a permitted use. The Planning Board discussion reflected that the use had not changed but that it is proposed to expand both the use and the structure and the applicant may need to apply to the ZBA for a use variance. She noted that she had not reviewed, the past ZBA and Planning Board actions.

Mr. Stevens said if the Planning Board determined that they needed to go to the Zoning Board, they want to know very soon, as this could delay their project. Mr. Bianchi replied that the Planning Board will review the application and determine if it meets the zoning, and if no they would need to go to the ZBA. During the preliminary review the Board will decide one way or another. Mr. Bianchi said he would like to review the plans for the next meeting and didn't want to be pressured to make any decisions about whether or not Zoning Board intervention was needed at a conceptual review.

Ms. St. John explained that a formal site plan application was submitted on Monday, Oct 7th. The standard process is to circulate the plan to the departments for comment, and present these and her comments and include this in the staff report. The abutter notification process, 65 day review period and building permit process was explained.

CIP Process Update

Ms. St. John said the Budget Committee would be meeting the following night. The CIP committee from last year included two budget committee members- Doug Homan and Jeff Wheeler. Once the Budget Committee appoints who they want to include on the CIP committee, she would like to call a meeting. Chair Cottrill, Jeff Hollinger and Michele Holton were the Planning Board representatives last year. Ms. St. John inquired if the Planning Board members currently on the CIP committee would continue in this role, or if the Planning Board was going to change the membership. Ms. Holton said she would like to participate in the CIP process again. Chair Cottrill said he would ask Mr. Hollinger to see if he would like to participate again. Mr. Cottrill asked if any one else would like to participate and Emma Crane expressed interest.

Ms. St. John explained that she had conducted a meeting with some of the department heads to solicit input on the CIP process and to share examples from other communities. Her discussion questioned the need to establish a base threshold minimum dollar value to be included in the CIP, developing an evaluation process for rating the projects and whether the format is user friendly and helpful,. She explained that during last year's CIP process some of projects included were thought to be more of a maintenance project as compared to actual capital projects. Ms. St. John will provide a copy of the CIP (adopted 2012) to the Planning Board, and some points for discussion.

Tree-Cutting Request

Ms. St. John explained that a property owner along Pleasant Lake informed Town Staff of dead trees located in the town road public right of way. She circulated photographs taken this afternoon, when she and Richard Lee, Public Works Director visited the locations.

IT WAS MOVED (Peter Bianchi) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to approve the tree-cutting request presented by Town Staff for (4) four dead trees located on the lakeside of Bunker Road in the public right-of-way as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Other Business

Ms. St. John referred to the attached list of correspondence which includes State application received. The Board will review applications that exceed the 20% impervious, per Article XVI, Shoreland Overlay District, (L) (2).

Ms. St. John said she has been working with the group reviewing the water ordinances. They would like to ultimately present their findings and suggestions to the Planning Board in October or November. Participants have included Emma Crane, June Fichter, Dave Hennig, John Wilson and others.

Staff was asked about the follow-up of the Marshall/McChesney issue. Ms. St. John said a memo would be coming forth from the Town Administrator.

Ms. St. John reminded the Planning Board of the Regional Planning Commission's meeting on Thursday night at 5:30pm at Tracy Library.

Review of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (John Tilley) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to approve the minutes of September 24, 2013, as amended. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 22, 2013 at 7:00pm.

**IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to adjourn.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London