

Present: Terry Spilsbury - Chair; Sharon Francis; Alan Putnam; Dick Lincourt

Zoom: Doug Neill - Vice Chair; Gabe Bailey;

Alternates: Jeremy Wood; Rosie Smith-Hull

Absent: Jeff Lessels - Ex Officio; Patricia Chaffee – Alternate; Sarah Davis - Secretary

Public: Alissa Bascom; Peter Plunkett; Eldred & Kristine Westney; Bill Rescsanski

Employees present: Liz Emerson

Terry Spilsbury called the meeting to order at 7pm and reviewed the agenda. No new Task Force is ready to present at this time.

Dick Lincourt had requested everyone to wear masks at the last meeting. He apologized for the statement made. He said Planning Board members do care greatly about the Town and the people in it.

Minutes of Planning Board Meeting November 17th:

Motion by Dick Lincourt to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 17th, seconded by Alan Putnam.

Changes: Sharon Francis: p.1, para. 9, line 2, change the word "His" to the property owner's name. Continuing on to the next sentence- change the whole sentence "Minus Annex A..." to "The plan is that .46 acres are annexed from Map 118 Lot 165 and given to Map 118 Lot 164." p.1, para. 9, line 5, add a period after "100 years ago" remove "and" add "He". p.1 para. 11 line 3 "164 and 165 on the drawing" add a period after "drawing" capitalize "This". p.1, para. 11, line 5 " would clean up the shapes of the lot" add a period after "lot" capitalize "The". p.1, para. 11, line 6, "removed as this is not live, purely decorative." Change "this is not live" to "it is". p.2, para. 2, line 3 add a period after "164 to lot 165" Capitalize "It". p.2, para 2, line 3, correct which lot the land is being taken from. p.2, para. 9, Line 1, add "of the housing section" to read "is close to completion of the housing sections with the exception". p.2, para. 10, – clarify "how they are recorded..." sentence to read "multi-family dwellings in town, and how the actual amount of units differ from the amount on the tax card and which properties came before the Planning Board and which have not for approval of those changes." p.3, para. 6, Line 1, "solar development behind the South Main Street park now being operational" change to read "solar development off South Main Street now being operational" p.3, para.6, line 3, add "of" to read "of agreement last week." P.4, para. 2 & 3, change all "Hudd" to "H.U.D." p.4, para. 3, line 1, change to read "Sharon Francis said the 1976 date in Charlestown's regulations refers to the HUD change of requirements and the reason..." p.4, para. 7, add "public opinion" to read "time for a new public opinion survey would be".

Dick Lincourt: p2, para. 3, change "completeness" to "about the application" p. 3, para. 2, line 3, "section 13.4 and change" add "suggested to" to read "section 13.4 and suggested to change"

Terry Spilsbury: p.2, para. 8, add "recent" to read "there has been no recent progress" p.3, para.7, add "of hearing" to read "issue a Public Notice of hearing to the Town of Charlestown" p.3, para.8, add " " around p and cup to read to change ""p" to "cup" for small commercial" p.4, para. 3, line 3, change "last Master Plan" to "first Master Plan". p.4, para. 9, line 1, change to read "Terry Spilsbury agreed that getting ordinance amendments before voters by March 2021 is not the anticipated Master Plan time table, so any Task Forces wishing to accelerate a proposal would have to make their cases for any changes at the December 1st meeting"

Motion by Dick Lincourt and second by Alan Putnam to approve the minutes as amended. Roll vote called: All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Sharon Francis questioned the Finance Committee meeting minutes being sent instead of Planning Board Minutes. Liz Emerson said the correct Planning Board Minutes will be sent to all Planning Board Members as well as posted on the website.

Terry Spilsbury introduced case **2020-ANFP-004: Eldred & Kristine Westney and James & Betty Thompson (Owners) Eric Peabody (Agent)** request final review of an annexation splitting Map 107 Lot 016 evenly between Map 106 Lot 33 & Map 107 Lot 015 resulting in .269 acres added to both parcels and is located at 30 & 64 Emile Avenue in the Rural Residential (A-1) Zoning District.

Eldred Westney explained the plan. Lot 016 had been for sale for a while. They purchased the property to divide between he and the Thompsons to keep the wooded barrier between their properties.

Dick Lincourt asked about the waiver for the topographical markings on the map and if there are any drainage issues. Eldred Westney explained there is water that comes down and into a run off ditch, but there are no current drainage issues. Liz Emerson noted there appears to be a 50' elevation change from the West side of the properties to the East side. The applicant is asking for a waiver on the topographical marks since there wouldn't be many lines and it may lead to confusion. Dick Lincourt said he is comfortable with not marking the topographical changes as there are no existing drainage issues. Terry Spilsbury said he is comfortable with not marking the topographical changes as well because the applicant is taking a buildable lot and splitting it up and adding it to the current lots. There will be no physical changes, just a change in ownership.

Terry Spilsbury called for any other questions about the completeness. Liz Emerson said there is an easement on the West side of lot 33 for the Central Vermont Public Service Corporation not marked on the plan before the Board. Eric Peabody, the land surveyor has put the Right of Way on the plan and will be bringing the updated plan into the office on Friday.

Terry Spilsbury called for a motion for the completeness of the application.

Motion to accept the application as complete made by Dick Lincourt seconded by Sharon Francis.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor, motion approved unanimously.

Terry Spilsbury called for any questions from anyone on zoom. Hearing no further questions or comments he called for a motion to approve the lot line adjustment.

Motion to approve the application made by Dick Lincourt, seconded by Alan Putnam.

Roll Call Vote: All in favor, motion approve unanimously.

Terry Spilsbury stated we don't have a Task Force in front of the Board tonight and gave a rundown of what the schedule for the next few meetings will look like.

December 15th meeting – A site Plan Review for Mervin Martin (Granite State Auto) and the Transportation Chapter

January 5th meeting – Public Utilities & Energy Chapter

January 17th meeting – Housing Chapter

Dick Lincourt gave an update on his task force. They have completed the data collection for the break even analysis. They want to meet with the building inspector to talk about different types of housing and that will about wrap up their Housing Chapter.

Terry Spilsbury expressed he would like to see all of the Task Force members present when their chapter is being presented. It's great for the Planning Board to see who has been doing the behind the scenes work as well as bouncing questions on the entire Task Force, not just the Chairperson. Terry continued that once all the chapters are in it is going to take some time for editing and making sure all the chapters flow nicely together.

Dick Lincourt shared with the Board; if anyone would like to project their chapter that he has a projector they may use.

Liz Emerson gave an update of what she has been working on. On November 30th she and Mandy Wright (the Health Officer) completed the inspection for the Claremont Christian Academy Life of Fellowship School off Route 12. Everything was in order and the school has the green light for another three years of operation. She continued on updating the Board about potential projects coming to the Board. Cobb Services LLC being one of the potential projects. They are looking to put a 30x30 addition onto their current building.

Liz Emerson has sent out letters to a few properties on Ox Brook Road as there have been complaints about the whole area.

Sharon Francis asked about what further actions can be taken and a possible time frame.

Liz Emerson said the time frame differs from case to case. A trash case has a very short window; 7-14 days. Junk vehicles have a 30-60 day window to remove the violation.

Terry Spilsbury interjected that he endorsed increasing the legal services line by \$10,000 to the Finance Committee so Liz Emerson can move forward with legal action where it is needed. The Town made an investment to hire Liz and we need to back up that investment now. A firm enforcement will send the message to the community that the Town is willing to enforce regulations and ordinances when needed. Terry continued that the Finance Committee has agreed to increase that line.

Liz continued to update the board on other violations. This includes 186 Breakneck Hill and Dollar General. Terry Spilsbury said to clearly state in the letters; why you're getting this letter, how to fix the issue, in what timeframe you have to fix it and if you don't this is the action that is to follow.

Jeremy Wood asked how fines are applied. Liz Emerson stated that is the lawyer's responsibility. She has seen an average of \$250/per violation and additional fees for every subsequent violation. Terry Spilsbury said Liz's letters are to tell the property owner in order to avoid legal action, something needs to be done. The letters won't have specifics on how much a fine would be.

Terry Spilsbury continued that it is difficult to anticipate how much each case will cost. It is not as simple as plugging in a meter and watching it run. It's often the case that a letter from an attorney with attorney's letterhead is enough to spark action in a property owner.

Sharon Francis asked about legal fees being reimbursed. Liz Emerson confirmed that when the lawyer goes to court they word their petition so any legal fees incurred during the process are to be repaid as well as any fines.

Bill Rescanski asked for clarification on how the fines are applied. Liz Emerson stated through RSAs the lawyers go to court for the Town and with court approval, the fines are applied.

Sharon Francis brought up questions on banners. Are these banners temporary or should they go through the sign permit process. Terry Spilsbury asked for the Land Use Task Force to evaluate the signage.

Terry Spilsbury asked if there were any questions or comments from anyone present. Being none, he called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn made by Sharon Francis; Alan Putnam seconded.

Roll call vote: Motion to adjourn, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Liz Emerson
Planning & Zoning Administrator