

PLANNING BOARD

JANUARY 16, 2020

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes until approved by the Board.

Planning Board members: Kevin Lee, Chairman; Darrin Patten, Ken Jacques, Peter Keene, Michael Howard, Ex-Officio, George McCusker; Alternates Tim Bray and Dan Saulnier.
Absent: Bryan O'Day.

Others present: Whit Smith, Zoning Compliance Officer; and Steve Schneider, Circuit Rider, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Planning Commission

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes of December 19, 2019: Motion made by Darrin to accept the minutes as written, seconded by George. All voted in favor except Michael and Dan abstained.

The Board had a general conversation about Site Plan regulations and the checklist Kevin had drafted.

Dan stated he read the Site Plan Review Regulations and compared them with the checklist. There are things included in the regulations that he hasn't seen on some of the applications that have been before the board since he came on. He suggested reviewing the regulations and perhaps an update is needed to reflect more in line with what the board has been requiring. Ken noted it is typical for a Site Plan to be proposed before a new business operation begins, with additional requirements based on the regulations. Over the past 6 months, those residents who have businesses without a site plan are being asked to establish a Site Plan. In doing so, because these businesses are existing, some of the requirements have been relaxed. There typically is a reason to waive some of the requirements. Ken cautioned against making too many changes in the site plan criteria. Tim recommended when an applicant requests a waiver is requested, they should provide a good explanation why, so as not to set a precedent.

Whit noted his concern regarding the degree of specificity that is going to be required, resulting in situations where someone comes in with a plan they believe is done, and then they are sent away to do more work and have to keep coming back. Many times, this creates a hardship and delay for those preparing their own plans. Ken noted it is unusual for someone to walk in and get site plan approval at their first visit. The applicant should be made aware of the potential for more than one visit. Tim noted the applicant has the responsibility to provide the board with complete plans.

Steve Schneider stated Springfield's Site Plan Review regulations are very detailed from what he has seen in other towns. Some towns define major and minor site plans. It all depends on what is appropriate for the community. The Board could make a distinction between the two categories and define requirements accordingly.

Whit stated there are many non-compliant businesses and before he starts the “ball rolling” again on those applications, he would ask the Planning Board to make the judgement as to specific requirements. His goal is to help applicants meet requirements to keep the process moving.

The Board suggested the following process.

1. Applicant makes a first visit to the Planning Board to see if they need Site Plan.
2. Applicant makes a second visit for consultation to see if their plans are adequate.
3. Applicant files for a Site Plan Review hearing, and hopefully would be approved.

At any point, an applicant can make a choice to hire a professional to do their site plan mapping.

Kevin noted some of the confusion with dealing with the “as-built” businesses, is the Board deals with what is happening currently, but has asked the applicant to consider what they may want to do in the future. Often, this causes difficulties for the applicant in thinking that far forward.

The checklists for existing and proposed data was reviewed, and suggestions were made for clarification. Kevin will clean up the draft. Kevin suggested the Board look at the Site Plan Regulations and consider discuss changes at next month’s meeting.

The budget for 2020 was reviewed. The Master Plan update was discussed with Steve Schneider. The Board noted they need to begin work on preparing a survey. Steve commented that marketing and publicity are key. Board members agreed the existing budget is adequate for 2020. Peter moved to recommend the Planning Board budget to the Budget Committee. The motion was seconded by Darrin and unanimously approved.

There was no miscellaneous business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts,
Administrative Assistant