

Haverhill Planning Board Minutes Oct. 27, 2015

Draft Subject to Review, Correction, and Approval at Following Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Chairman Don Hammond

Planning Board members present:

Don Hammond

Mike Bonanno

Tom Friel

Mike Simpson

Tara Krause was excused.

Clerk Ed Ballam was present

Members of the public included: Tom Smith and his toddler-age son, Brayden.

2. Designation of Alternates

No alternates to designate

3. Agenda Approval

Mike S. made a motion approve the agenda, with the adjustment to consider the new business, a public hearing on an application first. The motion was seconded by Mike B. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

In keeping with the vote, the board considered item number 9 on the agenda, an application for a lot line adjustment submitted by Dawn Patneau and Bernice Shutt and Robert and Judith Savoy, Boomhower Road, Woodsville, NH Tax Map 402 Lots 60 and 61.

Ed B. said the abutters had been notified, the hearing had been warned in the newspaper and posted at three places and everything appeared to be in order. The public hearing on the application was opened at 7:05 p.m.

Tom S. explained the two properties in question were on Boomhower Road in Woodsville, off Goose Lane, near Cottage Hospital.

Mike S. said his employer was Cottage Hospital and the properties under consideration are direct abutters. As such, Mike S. said he thought he ought to recuse himself from discussion. Ed B. said it wasn't necessary and other board members agreed that there was no conflict. Mike S. said he felt comfortable continuing to discuss the matter.

Tom S. said the Savoy's want to sell their home and in making arrangements to do that, they learned that a portion of a pool and a deck are on the Patneau/Shutt property. The two parties came up with a financial arrangement to fix the problem and they want to have it approved and the lot line adjustment recorded.

Tom F. had a question about why the lot wasn't squared off. Tom S. said the agreement was between the two owners and it actually works and looks better as it presented.

The board had no questions about the application. The board voted to close the public hearing at 7:10 p.m. on a motion made by Mike B., seconded by Tom F.

Mike B. made a motion to declare the application complete, seconded by Tom F. With no addition questions or discussion, Mike S. made a motion to approve the application for the Patneau/Shutt and Savoy property. It was seconded by Mike B., the vote was unanimous.

The mylar was present and the payment for the Grafton County Registry of Deeds had been received. The mylar was matched up with the paper copies that had been received and signed by Don H.

4. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mike S. made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 22 meeting, seconded by Mike B. The vote was unanimous.

5. Scheduled Public Appearances previously scheduled.

None

6. Correspondence/Communications

Ed B. reported the North Country Council will be holding a meeting in Haverhill, at the town office building on the topic of containing highway costs. It will be on Nov. 3 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

7. Reports of Committees

None

8. Pending Business

The board resumed its discussion of the regulations, starting on page 21. 4.1.4, regarding lot sizes. Tom F. said it has not typically been an issue. Don H. said he thought the board needs to address existing lot sizes, especially in Woodsville. There was some discuss about the Savoy property discussed during the public hearing. The lot was increased from .14 to .19 which is still less than two tenths of an acre. Don H. said the ordinance should say something like the minimum lot size does not pertain to existing lot sizes, as of a date specific, perhaps today's date as the time it was reviewed. The minimum lot size is now .69 and lots on town water and sewer can be reduced to .46 acres of useable land. Don H. wondered how many square feet in an acre. Ed B. said he thought it was about 44,000 square feet. The internet said 43,560 feet. Don H. asked that the square feet in an acre, 43,560, be multiplied by .69 the number is 30,056. He said that 30,056 was the amount of useable space required for a home in a subdivision. Don H. said wetlands and slopes greater than 25 percent shouldn't be used to make up the 30,000 square feet.

Don H. said there should be language in the ordinances that exempts existing lots from the regulations. Ed B. said that existing lots are usually considered grandfathered and necessarily exempt from any changes in ordinances. Ed B. asked if an exemption for existing lots is really needed. Tom F. said it was not necessary.

Don H. said if existing lots are grandfathered, if changes are made to the lots, they're no longer grandfathered. There was agreement to that statement. Ed B. said the applicants would have to

follow the latest, or newest regulations for guidance. Don H. said thought that would be the case and suggested that no words needed to be added regarding existing lots.

There was a brief discussion about the need to change the language regarding minimum lot size to read that no lots could be reduced to less than .69 acres to encourage people to think about slightly smaller lots if possible.

There was some discussion about the roads and the specifications. Ed B. reminded the board that Tom F. brought in documentation from the state of New Hampshire Highway Department regarding roads. Ed B. also reminded the board they had wanted to have Haverhill Highway Advisory Committee members Bob Maccini and Howard Hatch come in to talk to the board about road needs. Mike S. said he recalls that conversation. Don H. said he brought up the topic, but mentioned that Maccini and Hatch had “gotten themselves into a pickle,” by meeting without any plans to review and by meeting on its own without a proposal to consider and without the town manager and the road agent. Don H. said he thought the road ordinances were ok as written.

Ed B. asked if everyone was ok with 4.5.1 and the road layout ordinance. The board, by consensus said they were OK with those two ordinances.

The board discuss the requirement of 500 feet and ultimately decided they were all ok with 4.5.1.2.

There were also no changes to page 22, rights of ways and easements, and no changes on page 23, regarding traffic volume, alignments and related road. Mike B. had a question about the verbiage that regarding dirt roads intersecting with paved roads. After some discussion, it was determined that dirt roads that cross paved roads need to have at least some pavement on both ends. Don H. used County Road and Brushwood Road for an example, on the west side of County Road, about 100 feet of it is paved, while all of the east side is paved.

There was some discussion about road grade and the need to pave step grades. The board searched for the clause, but could not immediately find it. Don H. asked the board to keep moving on with the review and the board would revisit the grade issue later. Ed B. said the board should consult the DOT books for pavement and grade.

Mike B. asked that a reference be added to page 24. Tom F. said slope of road is on page 24. There was discussion about slope of road and the need for pavement. The board decided to end review of the regulations on page 24 with discussion to resume on road slopes.

9. New Business (Applications)

See above

10. Other New Business

None

11. Public Appearances (Not Previously Scheduled)

None

12. Comments of the Clerk

None

13. Comments of the Planning Board

Mike B. said the board needs to put the word out that it needs more members. It is down one and Tara K. has been absent often taking care of family needs. Mike S. said Tara is an excellent board member and he understands family has to come first, but the reality she's been absent three or four meetings and the board needs members to conduct business.

Ed B. said the board, operationally, is skeletal because if one person is absent and another has a conflict, there will not be enough voting members to conduct business. There was some discussion about how many constitute a quorum, as a seven-member board, at least four people need to participate.

Don H. said a quorum only applies to the number of board members appointed, not how many are supposed to be on the board. Ed B. said he thought a quorum was supposed to reflect the number of people that are supposed to be on the board, not how many are actually serving. Ed B. said that just leaving vacancies would be a way to circumvent the rules by which the planning board was to operate. Leaving vacancies would mean fewer people would have to consider applications. Ed B. said he would defer to the chairman's opinion.

Don H. said the town needs to run ads to get new planning board members. Ed B. said the selectboard is well aware of the need for more volunteers on a variety of boards, including the zoning board. The topic comes at nearly every selectboard meeting, Ed B. said, noting that Tom F. is the selectboard's representative to the planning board.

Tom F. said the selectboard is aware of the problem. He mentioned the selectboard recently appointed Bill Daley to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mike B. said the town needs to advertise the vacancies. Ed B. asked if the board wanted him to mention it to the selectboard. The planning board said the selectboard should know the board wants the town to advertise the vacancies.

Mike S. said the town should routinely keep the vacancies filled, or make a decision reduce the number of members needed. Ed B. said the townspeople at a town meeting would have to make the decision to reduce the board size. Ed B. said there was a time when the board meet twice monthly with a lot of business to conduct, so it would be important to have a number of people to meet when needed.

14. Other

15. Adjournment/Next Regular Meeting

Tom F. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm which was seconded by Mike B. The vote was unanimous.

The next meeting is on Dec 22, 2015: REMINDER, There are five Tuesdays in December

Respectfully submitted,
Ed Ballam, Planning Board Clerk