

CAMDEN PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 4, 2012

PRESENT: Chair Chris MacLean; Members Richard Householder and Jan MacKinnon; Alternate Member Sid Lindsley; Don White, Select Board Liaison to the Planning Board; and CEO Steve Wilson

ABSENT: Members Kerry Sabanty and Lowrie Sargent

The meeting of the Planning Board of October 4, 2012 was convened at 5:00 pm by the Chair.

1. PUBLIC INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

No one came forward to speak.

2. MINUTES

September 6, 2012:

MOTION by Mr. MacLean seconded by Mr. Householder to approve the Planning Board Minutes of August 16, 2012 as drafted.

VOTE: 4-0-0

3. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Mr. Householder reporting: Mr. Sargent had given the Select Board the Minutes of August 16, 2012, and the *Recommendations for Staffing* in advance of the meeting; the Select Board had reviewed the material and had very few questions. Mr. Sargent explained the procedure the Comprehensive Plan Committee had agreed upon to update of the Comp Plan; and he informed the Select Board of the uncertainties at the State level regarding the timeframe to approval and the process of approval. The Committee believes the update is not due until 2016, but they think it is best to get the final draft to the voters by 2015; the Select Board agreed. Mr. Sargent explained the need for finances to pay for help with the more complicated chapters; the Select Board suggested there “would not be an obstacle” if the Committee were to ask for, say, \$5,000 to \$10,000” for this purpose. Mr. Sargent explained Jean Freedman-White’s offer to serve as a liaison between the Committee and the Working Groups; that offer was well-received by the Select Board, and the Committee’s request to create the position was approved.

Mr. MacLean asked for clarification on the due date of the Plan: Mr. Wilson replied that at this time it appears that the Plan is due in 2016. While the State is willing to conduct some level of review of Plan, there is no review of any Plan required by the State unless State or Federal funding is involved in the development of the Plan.

4. ORDINANCE ISSUES FOR THE SPRING 2013 WARRANT:

Mr. Wilson had prepared a list of Possible Ordinance Amendments dated 8-1-2012 for discussion purposes: The Board discussed the following issues and prioritized a selection for work this winter:

- Hawking and Peddling Permits: The Select Board had denied a request for a permit saying they wanted the Ordinance revised before any more permits were issued. Don White reported that the Select Board wants to look at this issue further to see how they want it handled; it is not certain that the Ordinance will come to the Planning Board to revise.
- Storage Trailer and vault boxes regulations: This needs to accompany the changes to non-conformity if that amendment passes, but it needs to be addressed regardless.
- Ms. MacKinnon wants the Board to address the inconsistencies in the definition of Piers within the various Ordinances of the Town; there should be only one definition and it should make clear exactly what is a pier and what is not a pier. Mr. Wilson cautioned that any definition of a pier would have to agree with the DEP's definition.
- Mr. Householder would like the Board to address the Property Maintenance issue again, this time limiting only to vacant or abandoned properties. He would like standards for care set that would keep a property at a certain level of care regarding overall appearance; the yard would have to be kept mowed, for example. The goal is to keep the condition of the property from being offensive to passers-by. Mr. MacLean remains firmly against the Board becoming involved in any way with this issue; he believes it is a "slippery slope" because it is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid infringing on property rights. The CEO stated that it is difficult to write enforcement into these kinds of Ordinances; in most cases the standard for enforcement is that the condition of the property has to reach the point where it becomes either a nuisance or a danger. Mr. Householder suggested that there might be safety issues involved – a fire hazard might exist if the lawn was left to weeds and was very dry, for example. Other members agreed with Mr. MacLean that trying to regulate appearance is something they don't want to take on.
- Rezoning the Keefe property on Route One and Camden Street: The Board discussed why this property was in the zone it was: Had it been designated B-2 on purpose because people wanted to see an open area at the edge of Town? Was it mistakenly *not included* in the B-3 like the adjacent properties immediately across Route 1? Members of the Board wanted to know exactly what Ms. Keefe wanted to be able to do with her property with a new designation that she cannot do now. The Board discussed what kinds of uses would be allowed with the change: fast food restaurants – no drive through, gas stations, motor vehicles sales, theatres, offices, etc. Right now many uses have to be in buildings that existed when the Ordinance was passed, and that one building on the lot is very small. The Board supports doing something to make this space more useful.

Ms. Freedom-White has heard that there might be a restriction on the deed that prevents a change from the existing level of development. Mr. MacLean believes the Board should know this for sure before they spend time on the issue.

→ Mr. Wilson will pull the deed for the property to check for any restrictions.

- Rezoning the Bifulco property – and three others.
The Board discussed these changes and whether or not this was “spot zoning”. Mr. Wilson noted that in each case, the property was surrounded by – or adjacent to – properties in the zone they want to be placed within. With regard to the Bifulcos and their neighbors, he is not sure how much of a difference a zone change would make to their operations – there may be more to this request.
- Housekeeping: Mr. MacLean feels it is good to clean up all the housekeeping issues, and supports taking care of those five.
 - 1, 2, and 3 appear to simply be oversights and missing words.
 - Commercial Parking: This change is being made to avoid confusion about when commercial parking is not allowed if a building has to be destroyed in order to accommodate the use. If it is classified as an accessory use it cannot be banned; if it is a utility use, then no buildings can be demolished to create a commercial parking lot. Currently an existing business can buy a lot, flatten a (historic) building, and create a parking lot – this would prohibit that.
- Mr. Householder believes they should tackle the subdivision amendments regarding joint review while the review done with Rockport is fresh in their minds.

5. SCHEDULE/LOCATION OF NEXT PLANNING BOARD MEETING

PopTech! will be in Town on October 18, the date of the next Planning Board meeting. The Board could chose to either find another location for the meeting, or they could reschedule the meeting for October 25 instead. Members agreed to meet on the 25th as there will be two subdivisions before them, and they want a recorded record.

6. DISCUSSION:

1. *Minor field adjustments:* There were none
2. *Future Agenda items:* There will be two subdivision revisions coming to the Board:
 - LeGrand Drive: Abutters on either side of an unsold lot want to split the lot and merge the divisions into their existing lots resulting in a change in the number of lots in the subdivision.
 - Arey Avenue: A change to an easement is requested.
3. *Future Meeting dates:* See #5 above.
4. *Pending Applications:* See # 6.2 above.
5. *Other:*

Signs:

Many other Directional Signs have been put in place – only one that requires a special post is left to install. Comments from business owners are positive, and parking is being found on Main Street on a fairly regular basis – a definite change.

Members agree that there has been a visible increase in foot traffic to the River Business District; much of that is attributed to the new Parking Signs directing drivers to the lots in that area.

MUBEC: Mr. Wilson reported that there have been no complaints about the impact of MUBEC re: additional permits, etc. Builders and architects are coming in beforehand to ask what they need to do – the cooperation has been wonderful and made the transition easier. He and Rockland CEO held a workshop with half a dozen architects and 10 – 20 builders; they have been approached about doing another workshop in the future to get everyone up to speed. They will also be trying to help Rockport which just adopted the building part of the code but not the energy code. There will be three towns in a line that will be working together with one code.

Upcoming Vote: Mr. Wilson has been working on voter education information for the upcoming vote, and has talked to *Village Soup*. They have agreed to publish information on the Amendments prior to the November vote. Members were pleased to hear this because it had been obvious at the Select Board’s Public Hearing that there was a great deal of confusion and misinformation about the non-conforming expansion amendment especially, but about the scope of the changes to the Sign Ordinance as well. There is a misperception about the numbers of signs that will be allowed with the changes to signs – people think a large number of new signs will be allowed, and that is not the case. Businesses will get the same number of signs – they will have options on what kinds of signs those might be, and that is a change.

Ms. MacKinnon believes that people fear that the non-conforming expansions will mean there will be rampant expansion everywhere, and that is not the case. There are very few businesses that will be able to expand under the changes. Mr. Wilson noted that he had misclassified the Irving Station as non-conforming: their business is an allowed use (car repair) and they would not be able to expand if the amendment goes through. It was noted that Cooper Tire also makes repairs; Mr. Wilson believes, if that is the case, then they would be conforming and not allowed to expand either. Party Fundamentals is retail, however, and they are non-conforming and could expand. So, from three businesses in that area they thought could expand with this change, there is only one; Mr. Wilson believes there are very few businesses in the B-3 that would be affected by this change.

There being no further business before the Planning Board they adjourned at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Hollingsworth, Recording Secretary