

The Town of Cambridge Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting, Thursday March 4, 2010, 7:30 PM at the Town Hall.

Members present: Charlotte Banzhaf, Earl Horton, Gerald Moppert, Mark Rogers, Dan Thomas, Eric Pearson, Stuart Ziehm

Others present: Secretary Sally Eddy, Ted Berndt, Harriet & Henry Peabody, Kim Davidson, Gerald Skiff

Chairman Pearson called the meeting to order and presided.

Minutes

The minutes of the February 4, 2010 meeting will be approved at the April 1 meeting because they were not received in advance and board members need time to look them over before approving them.

Communications

Chairman Pearson stated he received a letter about an upcoming training meeting on March 25 for Planning Boards and Zoning Board of Appeals. It will be held at the Fort Edward Fire Department, 6:00 – 9:00 PM and is sponsored by the law firm of Fitzgerald, Morris, Baker & Firth. The class will satisfy up to 3 hours of the mandatory yearly 4 hours of training for planning boards and zoning board members. There is a \$10 fee for each participant.

No New Business

Unfinished Business

Chairman Pearson stated that Kim Davidson, a resident of Conley Road, missed the deadline for filing her subdivision map with the County Clerk and is asking for a new approval date. The subdivision was originally approved in March 2009. The board agreed to re-stamp the map with the date of March 4, 2010. Ms. Davidson has 60 days to register the map with the county.

No New Business

Other Business Before the Board

At the joint February Planning Board and Town Board meeting the Planning Board was charged by the Town Board to come up with ideas that they think would be useful in governing the future development of the town.

Chairman Pearson said he wanted to start with revising the subdivision regulations to include two items that the board has discussed for some time: 1) establish a 50 ft. set back between the boundary line and an existing building, and 2) Allow for an action to be deemed a boundary line adjustment if it is only between two property owners and the amount of land involved is less than one acre. The Planning Board has dealt with these two issues over the years and, now, wants to incorporate them into the subdivision rules & regulations. The board approved Mr. Pearson's recommendation and authorized him to move forward with it.

Gerald Moppert stated he felt the planning board should have some sort of control over the speaking time of privately retained lawyers who are present at public meetings. He was making reference to the joint February meeting when Leah Everhardt, an attorney personally hired to attend, spent a considerable amount of time speaking to issues offering facts as well as her own opinion.

Harriet Peabody asked what was she supposed to do when everybody was asking her questions?
Henry Peabody stated Ms. Everhardt was representing him.

At the joint February meeting, the Town Board did ask the Planning Board to develop a site plan review policy.

Mr. Pearson commented that any actions we, as a board, take should not hurt or diminish anybody's property. He said we are not going to make 100% of the people happy. He remarked that at the joint meeting there was a lot of conflicting information. He said we need an attorney. He questioned whether site plan review can be adopted without a Master Plan in place?

Gerald Moppert stated we need an attorney to advise us about what we can and cannot legally do.

It was suggested that possibly the board could use the services of the county attorney.

Councilman Berndt stated the county attorney can't do anything for the town without the approval of the Board of Supervisors.

Dan Thomas stated that from the training meetings he attended he was told that site plan review pertains to commercial properties and not residential.

Gerald Moppert asked if it can regulate where to build a house?

Earl Horton commented you mean that if Danny's daughter has 25 acres you (the planning board) are going to tell her where she can build? He said nobody is going to tell me where I can use my property.

Dan Thomas interjected we don't want to make problems; we should try to make friends.

Chairman Pearson commented let's not harbor ill feelings among ourselves, let's talk to each other about issues.

Stuart Ziehm remarked that smart planning increases property values.

Dan Thomas commented that the more planning you do the more you get people with money coming in.

Gerald Moppert stated he grew up in Lake George as a kid and it was a beautiful place.

It's an example of uncontrolled growth. Now, they have zoning.

Reference was also made to the growth that is happening to the Schuylerville – Saratoga area.

Earl Horton stated he doesn't think growth will happen here. He doesn't want anybody telling him what he can do with his land. He cited a problem the Washington County Fair Board had with the Town of Easton Planning Board which resulted in the Fair Board not being able to sell a piece of property.

Charlotte Banzhaf and Gerald Moppert both agreed that developers tend to come to areas where there are no rules and regulations.

Gerald Skiff said look at Lake George, Clifton Park and Wolfe Road. They all have zoning and look at what you got. Once zoning takes off you can't stop it; there is nothing you can do to stop growth once it starts.

Gerald Moppert asked how are we as a planning board going to proceed?

Dan Thomas responded, "Very general."

Mr. Moppert suggested that we, as a board, look and see what our options are and see what other towns are doing. We have received copies of subdivision rules and regulations, site plan review and comprehensive plans from the Towns of Jackson and Salem. Let's get copies from other neighboring town and look them over.

Discussion continued and covered such topics as junk yards, compost facilities, cell towers and windmills. Many and varied opinions were offered.

For now, the board agreed to amend the subdivision rules and regulations to include the aforementioned items regarding a 50 ft building set back from boundary lines and a provision for boundary line adjustments.

There being no further business before the board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally B. Eddy
Secretary