

The Town of Cambridge Planning Board held their regular monthly meeting, Thursday, May 6, 2010, 7:30 Pm at the Town Hall.

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

Others present: Secretary Sally Eddy, Bruce Rolleston

Chairman Pearson called the meeting to order and presided.

Minutes

Charlotte Banzhaf motioned, seconded by Gerald Moppert, to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2010 meeting as mailed by the secretary with no additions or corrections.

Vote: 7 – Ayes 0 – Noes

No Communications

No Unfinished Business

New Business

Chairman Pearson said he spoke with Supervisor Watkins concerning the Planning Board inviting an attorney to come and speak with them about various planning issues and to inform the board about what they legally can and cannot do. Supervisor Watkins said the request would need Town Board approval. Chairman Pearson expressed that he though it would more beneficial to have an attorney come to us where we can ask questions that are specific to Cambridge as opposed to attending bigger meetings where a broad spectrum of issues are addressed which, in most cases, don't pertain to us. Chairman Pearson asked the members how they felt about it.

It was discussed and most members felt it was a good idea to have an attorney speak to the board, but realized that it would cost the town money. They also felt that the services of an attorney should not happen immediately, but only after the board has prepared a list of questions and items that need legal advice.

After further discussion, the following was adopted:

Resolution by Charlotte Banzhaf

Seconded by Gerald Moppert

Be It Resolved, that the Town of Cambridge Planning Board does hereby wish to make it known to the Cambridge Town Board that they (Planning Board) are interested in engaging the services of an attorney, at some point in time, to advise them in planning matters; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Town of Cambridge Planning Board is seeking official authorization from the Cambridge Town Board for the aforementioned request.

Was duly put to vote and resulted in 7 – Ayes and 0 Noes.

Chairman Pearson proceeded to review the list of concerns the members came up with at the April meeting they felt should be addressed through regulations. He expressed that not all of the items are under the jurisdiction of the planning board. Junk yards, landfills and rendering plants should be addressed by the Town Board. He was unsure if ridge top development falls under zoning. However,

the Planning Board does have the authority to establish set backs from property lines and require 50 ft right-of-ways. Those items can be incorporated in the subdivision rules and regulations.

Dan Thomas asked if the board could just do site plan review? Chairman Pearson responded he thought they could, however, that's a good question to ask the attorney.

Secretary Sally Eddy stated she has a copy of the site plan review ordinance from the Town of White Creek which was adopted in 1997. She passed it out to members for review.

Mr. Pearson asked Earl Horton, who chaired the April meeting, if the topic was brought up about the town having the option of not taking over any new roads in a development? Mr. Horton said it got shot down. A member of the public said that if the road is built to town specs then it should be taken over. It's revenue to the town from the new residences.

Chairman Pearson thought that, if the town adopted the policy, it would be a good way to deter development from happening. He was told by an attorney at a seminar that it was legal for the town not to assume maintenance of any new roads.

Also discussed was allowing only a certain number of houses on a specified amount of acreage and establishing minimum road frontage. Do we want it? Can either be done outside of zoning?

Other Business Before the Board

At this time, Chairman Pearson asked Bruce Rolleston, the only person present from the public, if he wanted to speak to the board?

Mr. Rolleston stated he felt the comments made last month about Nan Stolzenburg were unfair. He has done some research about her and found that she did a very good job helping Pittstown and Oswego in preparing planning documents. He spoke with the Town of White Creek where she is acting as a facilitator to help them with their comprehensive plan. They are happy with her. Mr. Rolleston expressed that she is a nearby resource that's available and could be a big help. In White Creek, her salary is taken care of through a grant from Ag & Markets that towns can apply for when they undertake developing a comprehensive plan.

Stuart Ziehm remarked we could have her for one or two meetings. She's a tool and a resource.

Dan Thomas differed with Mr. Rolleston by saying that the plan from the Town of Pittstown was thrown out and asked Mr. Rolleston to check that out for accuracy.. Mr. Rolleston did say that the plan from the Town of Oswego received an award.

Gerald Moppert said he still is not sure what the planning board's task is. What we've talked about are all good ideas, but we've been floundering for months. The impression he got from the Town Board was for the planning board to work on site plan review because that's where our experience lies and the Town Board would take care of the other issues. He said we can approach it from two ways: 1) draw up some general ideas to present to Town Board or 2) take a step back and have some experts come in to help us formulate something more specific.

Chairman Pearson commented we're limited in what we can do since we don't have zoning. If we all agree on the set backs and the 50 ft right-of-ways, then we should hand it to the Town Board to put into our regulations.

Mr. Pearson related that his Father-in-Law is a large property owner in four towns in central New York. Some of the towns have zoning, some do not. When Mr. Pearson asked him about zoning, he commented that he hasn't seen that a town has been saved by having zoning and he hasn't seen that a town's been destroyed because they didn't have it. Mr. Pearson remarked there are just as many problems with zoning as there are without it.

There was a brief discussion about the critical state of agriculture and its uncertain, shaky future in relation to town plans that emphasize the preservation of the industry. What's going to happen to the town when agriculture is no longer a viable industry? For most farmers, the land is there retirement.

For the June meeting, Chairman Pearson charged the members to write down some rules they would like to see implemented and bring them to the meeting. They will be discussed and voted upon before they will be presented to the Town Board.

There being no further business before the board, the meeting was moved and carried to adjournment at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Eddy, Secretary