

TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES

July 5, 2016

7:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

Ned Goff, Chairman
Todd Smith, Vice Chairman
Steve Conley, Secretary
Stephen Gould
Chris Huck, KVCOG
Dena Rich, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Harvey Austin, Jr.
Chris Kruse

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Randy Gray, Code Enforcement Officer
Steve Garcia
Lorraine Garcia

1) QUORUM:

Regular Planning Board Meeting called to order at 7:15 P.M. Quorum was present.

The Board shall organize at its first regular meeting after the annual Town Meeting, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary each shall be elected by a majority vote, who shall serve until the next annual meeting.

Ned Goff opened the discussion on the nominations.

Stephen Gould nominated Ned Goff for Planning Board Chairman, second by Steve Conley. Motion passed 3-0.

Steve Conley nominated Todd Smith as Planning Board Vice-Chairman, second by Stephen Gould. Motion passed 3-0.

Stephen Gould nominated Steve Conley as Secretary, second by Todd Smith. Motion passed 3-0.

2) MINUTES OF THE March 15, 2016 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:

Motion by Steve Conley to approve the March 15, 2016 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Stephen Gould, Motion passed 3-0.

3) SITE PLAN

None

4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:

Steve Garcia said that they are interested in purchasing a property located on Lois Lane. This property was part of an approved subdivision in 2001 because it houses a 4 unit apartment building. Ned Goff asked Mr. Garcia what it was that he is looking to do. Mr. Garcia said he wants to purchase the back portion of this property which abuts his property. This means it would have to be an amendment to an approved subdivision. The portion he would like to buy is 100' by 100' in size. Randy Gray explained that when the subdivision was approved the owners had to join 2 of their lots together to make the required land area for the subdivision which was 10,000 sq. ft. for the first unit and 5,000 sq. ft for each additional unit which is stated in our ordinance. The current area of this parcel is 28,333 sq. ft. Steve Conley asked what the issue would be if Mr. Garcia was to purchase the piece of land that he wants. Randy said the issue would be that if he was to purchase that piece of land measuring 100' x 100' then the remaining land for the subdivision which the apartment units are located on would not meet the ordinance requirements. Chris Huck said that the apartment units would need to have a minimum of 25,000 sq. ft of land in order to be in compliance with the Subdivision Ordinance. Mrs. Garcia said that the subdivision is not using the piece of land at all that they want to purchase.

Stephen Gould said that he has had a conversation with Mr. Garcia about what he wants to do with this property therefore he will reclude himself from any voting on this matter. He explained that what Mr. Garcia is looking for is if he would be able to get this amendment to the subdivision before he pursues it any further. He understands that Mr. Garcia would have to submit a formal application before they could vote on it but he really doesn't want to go through the process if there isn't any chance that it would be approved. This would require a variance to be issued on this subdivision because the minimum lot size would not be met. Ned Goff asked if they would even have the authority to issue that variance. Chris Huck said that any variances would need to be approved by the Appeals Board. He explained that the owner of the subdivision property would need to apply for the amendment to the subdivision first and have it denied by the Planning Board before he could go before the Appeals Board. Randy said that if they decided to purchase a smaller piece of land that would still allow for the apartment units to still retain the required 25,000 sq. ft. then that shouldn't be an issue to approve. Mr. Garcia said that is something they could look at but couldn't there be a way to get the sized piece of property through the Appeals Board. Stephen Gould said that even if they did go to the Appeals Board they would still have to prove that this would be a hardship for them if it wasn't approved. Randy said that might be difficult to do since the land owner can't create his own hardship. Mr. Garcia thanked the Planning Board for their time and he will do some checking to see what he can come up with and if a smaller piece of land would work for him.

5) COMMUNICATIONS:

None

6) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

7) NEW BUSINESS:

None

8) ITEMS BY:

a) SELECTMEN:

b) DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Randy said that his office has been very busy lately. We are up to around 60 building permits so far this year and more are coming in which is good. That means the town is continuing to grow. Stephen Gould asked if the town would ever hire someone to help Randy out in the office. Randy said with the fire department taking over the apartment house inspections that has helped out a lot and he is able to keep up with everything else right now.

c) MEMBERS:

Stephen Gould asked about the Parades and Processions Ordinance that did not get approved at the town meeting. He didn't know if they had to do anymore work on that or what the status was. Randy said that they had a department head meeting today and from what he got from Christine is that she does not want that to go away and be forgotten. He thinks that she will be contacting the Planning Board in the near future to discuss what to do with that next.

Todd Smith asked Randy if there had been any more discussion about a possible 5 unit apartment building coming to town. Randy said not at this time.

d) CHAIRMAN:

Ned said he noticed the building up by Wal-Mart seems that it has turned into a business selling granite stones and when it was originally built it was supposed to just be a sample building that they were going to produce and sell. Randy said that when it was built he had the owner go through the permit process but he did not have to have it engineered because it did not meet those standards to require that. Randy said the building was built in compliance with the building code. Ned said he doesn't feel it is right that he had to go through a much more expensive process to build his commercial structure and this person did not have to because he said it was not going to be a business when it was built. Randy said that at the time it was built he had to go on what he was told the building was going to be used for and now he doesn't really know if there is anything he could honestly do about it. Ned said it just seems like they went around the law to avoid having to spend the extra money when they built it and it doesn't seem right. Steve Conley said that they should be promoting growth in the town and if someone has found a way to be able to generate business in town then they should look at that as a good thing for the town. Ned said he agrees with that but he also thinks that everyone should have to follow the same rules when it comes to building commercial buildings.

e) STAFF:

Chris Huck said he hasn't had any new developments coming in recently. He did mention that Joel Greenwood will be taking over as the town's planner for the most part coming up. The way they have worked it out is if new developments come in then they would be working together to help him get familiar with the town's rules and ordinances. Ned said they do appreciate Chris's service to the town.

9) ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Todd Smith to adjourn at 7:45 p.m., Seconded by Stephen Gould. Motion passed 3-0.

Minutes approved on September 6, 2016.

Chairman
