

Town of Damariscotta  
Planning Board Meeting  
January 5, 2015  
Minutes

**ROLL CALL**

Members present: Chairman Jonathan Eaton, Vice-Chairman Wilder Hunt, Stephen Cole, Shari Sage, and Bruce Garren. Also present were Anthony Dater, Planner and Cindy Sykes, Secretary.

Audience: Dave Lawlor, Rebecca Emmons, Gabe Shadis, Pat Shadis, John Roberts, Jessica Sirois, Debra Lucchesi, William Howlett, Ronn Orenstein, Robin Mayer, Perry Waltz, Jenny Begin, Amy Lalime, and Michelle Switzer.

**A. MINUTES**

The Board reviewed December 1, 2014 minutes. **On Motion Garren/Cole to approve as written. Vote 4-0-1.** Minutes were signed.

**B. OLD BUSINESS**

-None

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Mobius – 3 Chapman St - Bruce Garren recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

-David Lawlor – Mobius purchased this building that they had been leasing for offices. Requesting to renovate the existing 24'x24' garage into additional offices. No change in footprint, will redo walls, floors, and add a sink, range and half bath. No one will reside there. They are tax exempt.

Parking – no change; currently 5 spaces; most consumers do not drive; any overflow can park at other Mobius owned properties. Also lease space for programs at the Wheeler building on Church St.

-Dater- Waivers requested for a signed survey plan and a signed topographical map. Fire Chief has requested a Knox Box. Offices are a permitted use in the General Residential zone.

-Perry Waltz, abutting owner, expressed concern that vehicles being parked along Chapman St are creating a hazard. In the 1980's, George Hutchings, Police Chief had signs installed which prohibited parking near the corner of Chapman and Church St. Signs need to be replaced. Mayer expressed support for the signs. Dater will discuss with Town Manager Matt Lutkus.

-Lawlor – No changes in lighting, parking, paving. Sign will be no larger. No excavation.

**On Motion Hunt/Cole to accept application as complete. Vote 3-0-2.**

**On Motion Cole/Sage to approve the change of use and accept waivers for a signed survey plan and signed topographical map. Require Knox Box.**

**Vote 3-0-2.**

2. Stepping Stones – Blue Haven Lane – Bill Howlett stated he is not ready for a formal application. Presented plans.

-501C3 Organization, hoping to improve quality of housing; will not request total waiver of Real Estate taxes, will negotiate with town. Not government funded.

-4 existing units are occupied. There are homeless in Lincoln County. Have 4 in queue for assistance with housing. Obtained a permit for a 12' x 24' tiny house on wheels. 1 bedroom, living room, kitchen, and bath. Will be connected into water/sewer. Will not be permanent structure.

-Occupancy will be decided on case by case basis; transitional housing with rental fee based on ability to pay. Goal is to help people transition to a better life.

-Big house has been demolished, and has obtained a permit to replace with a duplex. Plan is to remove existing trailers and build new structures. Plans to build 2 more duplexes with 2 bedroom units of 560-600 square feet.

-Howlett is current manager. No one will be on site. He works with Tedford Shelter, and they will lend people to assist. Also works with Home Counselors in Rockland, assists families with children. Creating network of assistance. Ideal location, walking distance to downtown, school, shopping.

Howlett will be the contractor, with assistance from Habitat for Humanity. Plan is for transitional housing, but could be long term if tenant unable to function elsewhere.

Dater – The project was referred to Planning Board by Stan Waltz, CEO due to rearrangement of location and sizes of structures. 7 dwelling units located on small lot. Board needs to review buffering, parking, and stormwater management. Dater recommended that Waltz not approve any additional building permits without a full site plan review. Project first needs approval as a planned unit development. Then a building permit needs to be obtained from the Code Enforcement Officer for the additional buildings.

Sage - will there be written regulations, guidelines for tenants?

Howlett said there are no written guidelines, each tenant will be told rules and consequences. Current tenants watch out for each other. Neighbors were right in their comments on the food pantry plan.

Hunt – does Ordinance have rules for location of buildings?

Howlett – setbacks go through houses, 15-20 feet.

Dater – ghost lot of 6,000 square feet difficult to meet setbacks. PB will review access by Fire Dept. This is a grandfathered lot, CEO can approve up to 7 units in 18 months. Must meet sideline setbacks.

Begin – does CEO decide grandfathering?

Eaton – yes

Lalime – a mobile home is above ground, can it be grandfathered?

Eaton – Ordinance does not address

Cole – Mobile homes are allowed in a residential district

Pat Shadis – Mobile homes are personal property, not real estate

Cole – how long before tiny house will be removed?

Howlett – Can't speak for the Board, but maybe in a year. Could be registered, but would cost \$1,000 in excise tax.

Sirois – what happens to existing buildings, and where will new buildings be located?

Howlett – house in middle with fence is remaining. Showed plans to audience.

Mayer – Do current tenants have first option?

Howlett – No, but will not throw people out on the street.

Dater – Has 18 months from date of permit to complete dwelling units.

Sirois – will there be consideration of the roadway? Two cars can barely pass each other in that area of Hodgdon St now.

Eaton – Planning Board will follow recommendation of the Fire Dept.

Roberts – It will not be a big change. There are already issues with several buildings on Hodgdon St, this may improve access. Need enough turn around space for fire trucks.

Eaton –Police Dept should also be made aware of plans.

Lalime – has issues with lack of supervision. Plan has some amazing ideas, but transitional housing needs supervision. John Andrews lived on the site.

Begin – will there be plans available? What water and sewer improvements to property?

Howlett – has floor plans and elevations, but not with him.

Dater – stormwater management plan will be needed for a complete application, so that Board can make fair decision. Board can require additional info.

This project will use public water and sewer.

Gabe Shadis requested verification of timeline.

Dater – Meeting must be advertised; applicant must notify abutters to the project by certified letter.

G. Shadis – is the project out of compliance if the duplex is built, and the tiny house remains?

Eaton - yes

Begin – Grandfathered project, how could CEO approve 3 dwelling units?

Eaton – Land Use Ordinance language is general, not specific to project; tiny house is for demonstration purposes.

Mayer – house is being moved around the lot.

Sirois – Did grandfathering start when John Andrews house was torn down?

Dater – yes

Cole – For Site Plan review, will need role of tiny house in overall plan. Can grandfathering be refuted?

Dater – Administrative appeal to the Board of Appeals is open if does not agree with CEO decision.

#### **D. OTHER**

John Roberts, Fire Chief – Fire Dept wants to upgrade sign to a programmable sign to advertise meetings, etc. Currently change letters manually. Looking at non-flashing, electronic changeable signs. Other changing signs in town are not in compliance with current ordinances, i.e. Hilltop gas price sign and The First.

If department approves the funds:

- ground will be raised

- 2 sided, 4' x 8' or no more than 36 square feet maximum size electronic sign

- brick pillars

- not constantly changing; lowest level illumination, will adjust according to amount of light; will not change more than once daily

Dater reviewed changeable sign rules in Site Plan Ordinance. Ordinance can be changed at Special Town Meeting. Or Planning Board can waive requirements.

Roberts – Fire Dept does not want a special exemption. Prefers an Ordinance change to allow. Ordinance could require that all electronic signs be turned off 11PM – 6AM. Also, changeable sign wording needs to be changed to quick changing signs.

Sage – abutters?

Roberts – Floor Magic and one residence; could send abutters notice of February meeting

Hunt – has no reservations in giving the Fire Dept a waiver

Cole – would not support waiver; Ordinance has been changed once, is not usable; with changing technology, Ordinance needs to be consistent and appropriate.

Dater – can amend in Site Plan Ordinance, or create a separate sign ordinance.

Sage – send to Board of Selectmen to motivate a sign committee.

Mayer – will pass on to Board of Selectmen

Dater – requested that Roberts provide a site plan and notify abutters; request amendment to cover municipal buildings

Roberts – will not ask for waiver; would rather wait for amendment process; will propose wording and notify abutters.


## **E. PLANNER REPORTS**

-None

**F. ADJOURN**

**On Motion Sage/Hunt to adjourn at 9PM. Vote 4-0-1 Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted by

  
Cynthia L. Sykes, Deputy Clerk

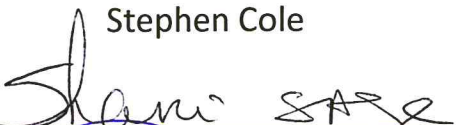
We, the undersigned do hereby approve as written, or with changes as noted, the Minutes of the January 5, 12015 Planning Board Meeting.

  
Jonathan Eaton, Chairman

  
Wilder Hunt, Vice-Chairman



Stephen Cole

  
Shari Sage

  
Bruce Garren

Dated 3/2/15