

**MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF DAMARISCOTTA
March 6, 2017
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Eaton, Shari Sage, Bruce Garren, Stephen Cole, and Wilder Hunt

STAFF PRESENT: Anthony Dater, Town Planner

PUBLIC PRESENT: Marilee Harris, Stepping Stone Housing, Inc.; Lucille Anderson, Stepping Stone Housing, Inc.; Barbara Howlett, Stepping Stone Housing, Inc.; Bill Howlett, Stepping Stone Housing, Inc.; Isabella Nelson, Joe Lane Lobster; Joe Lane, Joe Lane Lobster; Gabe Shadis, Tax PayerII; Amy Lalime, Stepping Stone Housing Project; Mark Hamilton, Stepping Stone Housing, Inc.; Cindy Sherman, Stepping Stone Housing Project; Paul Sherman, Stepping Stone Housing Project; Tom Quarantano; Rob Hunt, NC Hunt Lumber; Austin Turner, Damariscotta DG, LLC; John Scribner, Damariscotta DG, LLC; Gina Hamilton, Wiscasset Newspaper; Maia Zewert, Lincoln County News.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Eaton called the meeting to order.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING FOR MARCH:

A. MINUTES

February 6, 2017 meeting:

On motion Garren / Sage to approve the February minutes as written.

VOTE: 4-0 IN FAVOR
(Cole did not vote-absent Feb)

B. OLD BUSINESS

1. STEPPING STONES HOUSING INC. – PLEASANT & HODGDON STREETS – LOTS 7/41 & 41-1 – RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT – FINAL SITE PLAN APPLICATION FOR SIX-UNIT MULIT-UNIT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – LANDSCAPE PLAN, FINANCIAL CAPACITY DOCUMENTATION.

Marilee Harris, representing Stepping Stone Housing, Inc., submitted a final application for the Board's review; and a 3D model of the site plan – showing what the completed project would look like, for general public viewing. She explained that they currently hold an approved building permit for 1 750 sqft house at this time – they plan to build as they can afford to complete each house – hopefully 1 house every 1-2 years replacing what is currently there, up to the 6 planned houses. They plan to return to the Planning Board before staring each building to prove financial capacity.

Harris noted the 4 items missing from the last meeting were included in the packet handed out tonight:

Landscape plan
Storm water management
Financial capacity
Sign location & permit

Cole asked if the trees & plantings shown on the 3D model were representing what was listed in the landscape plan.

Harris told the Board that the 3D model shows what is existing on the property. They were not planning any new landscaping for the lot as a whole, but each tenant may plant at their home if they wish. She told him that they are also planning a community garden on the property.

Cole asked about the fence shown.

Harris told him the fence also already exists on the property.

Harris explained that the homes will be built on site, using as much volunteer labor as possible – habitat for humanity, CHIP, etc. They will hire a general contractor to oversee the project & coordinate the labor.

On motion Cole / Hunt to accept the site plan application as complete.

VOTE: 5-0 IN FAVOR

Sage asked the Board if they had reviewed the email sent about land use laws.

Eaton didn't think it was applicable to this project.

Garren agreed with Eaton

Gabe Shadis asked if approved, would the applicant need to come back to the board before each new house is built.

Garren stated that that could be part of the conditions of approval.

Audience discussion / comments about concerns with this project on that property; not having an onsite babysitter for the tenants, maximum number of people on the size of property, type of project does not fit in this neighborhood, the grandfathering issue, the pending appeal, etc.

Eaton told the audience that the Board has heard the concerns many times previously. The Board need to move forward & must follow the ordinances of the Town.

Garren stated that the Board had spent a lot of time on the grandfathering decision, with guidance from the Town Attorney, and feel it will be upheld at the Appeals Board.

Eaton stated that it is 1 building in approximately 2 years, it's a slowly planned development.

The Board discussed a specific fence request from a representative for the Rand property which abuts this project.

Hunt stated that there is a field that separates the Rand house from this property – he would personally prefer vegetative screening over a fence – it's residential abutting residential, and he's not sure they can require a buffer between the same type of properties.

Eaton felt it could be a 4' fence.

Dater read aloud ...”a 25’ buffer strip MAY be required between incompatible uses...”

Hunt felt that a buffer strip is different than screening – there is currently an existing 120’ buffer between the Rand house & the project boundaries.

Hunt made a motion to approve the application as presented. There was no second.

On motion Cole / Garren to approve the application as presented, providing the applicant & the Rand’s come to an agreement on screening – either a 4’ high fence or vegetation providing screening, and applicant will return within 2 years to prove financial capacity before starting the next house.

Garren stated that the Board needs to be the ultimate decision if an agreement cannot be achieved before construction begins. Agreement should be submitted to the Town Planner in writing.

VOTE: 3-1 (Sage) IN FAVOR

2. DAMARISCOTTA DG, LLC – POOLE PROPERTY – 508 MAIN STREET (CORNER OF BISCAY RD / RT. 1B) – LOT 8/16-1, HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL C2 DISTRICT – PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPLICATION FOR TWO RETAIL STORES.

Dater told the Board that MDOT stated that the Planning Board may have input on the location of entrances / exits, and MDOT will not make a decision until the Town does.

Eaton stated that MDOT knows a lot more about traffic patterns & safety – they should make that call.

Eaton reviewed the letter from the Board of Selectmen (see attached) regarding their concerns on this project – primarily the Main Street access and the sidewalk situation.

Eaton thought it could be safer to move the Main Street access as far North on the property as possible to get it away from the intersection with Biscay Road, and to make it enter only.

Austin Turner, engineer for the project, stated that if the Main Street access moved North the look of the entire site plan would substantially change.

Turner went over the highlights of the project for the Board. Currently they are proposing 2 full access points in a location to be determined by the Maine Department of Transportation through their permitting process. He went on to say that the locations exceed the MDOT specifications on distance. He wasn’t sure how having Biscay Road be the only full access would affect deliveries – and it would be a lot of traffic on Biscay Road. He told the Board that they were still working through the phases of the MDOT process.

The project's storm water management system will exceed the DEP requirements – there is a drainage report in the application package.

Dater requested a copy of DEP feedback & permit once applicant received.

Sage asked about the safety of the propane tank location.

Turner explained that they will meet or exceed the boundaries required by the propane company.

Dater questioned Turner again about making this 2 separate lots – he reminded him that a 15' setback would apply to parking lots on all sides – driveways don't typically follow lot lines.

Turner stated that he didn't believe the driveways were subject to the setback. He further explained that each property has its own dedicated driveway, with easements to each other's property for the shared parking count.

Garren asked about building sidewalks.

Turner stated that MDOT doesn't like dead ended sidewalks or sidewalks to nowhere. It implies a false sense of pedestrian safety. He told the Board that the applicant would likely be willing to provide a donation to a town sidewalk fund for a future sidewalk project in that location.

Turner went on to say it would require some things be worked out – there's not a lot of space for a public sidewalk in that area – the pavement of the existing road meets the property line at the front of this property – and generally a town wouldn't want to build a public sidewalk on private property.

Cole questioned whether a trip analysis conducted in the winter would produce accurate information for this area.

Turner explained that there is a seasonal boost percentage applied to the counts.

Garren asked about the possibility of a left turn lane.

Turner told him that MDOT would likely review that option.

Garren asked Dater to review where they were in the application process.

Dater stated that the Board of Selectmen had submitted an opinion on some aspects of the proposed project. The Planning Board can take that opinion into consideration or not. MDOT will hear this Board's input.

Turner expressed concern that if the Town also communicated with MDOT that the conversations may run parallel and make things more confusing. Turner respectfully requested that the Town let the applicant handle the communication with MDOT

and they will keep the Town in the loop on the process going forward.

Garren stated that he felt there was still a lot up in the air on this project and he's not sure it's ready for a vote.

Eaton agreed – he would like more info from the Selectmen on the escrow for sidewalks etc.

Turner told the Board that the waivers requested would not change based on the driveway location, sidewalks, etc. Each waiver is contained within the property lines.

Garren stated that he felt the Board was pretty clear at the last meeting where they stood on the waivers.

Garren stated that he would like clarification on Dater's setback concerns – perhaps get the CEO's input or interpretation.

Dater read the definition of setback – minimum required distance from lot lines to nearest point of building.

On Motion Garren / Cole to request that the Planner draft a letter to MDOT on this project outlining the Board's concerns & questions on Sidewalk issues and Main Street access.
VOTE: 5-0 IN FAVOR

Austin Turner requested a copy of the letter once issued to MDOT.

Turner asked the Board if they felt his application was complete.

Eaton told Turner that he still had some questions he'd like to review.

Garren stated that typically the Board has a checklist to review before making a determination of completeness and they didn't have that tonight.

Dater reviewed the typical process to move forward. He suggested that the Board review the checklist at their next meeting.

Dater will request that the Board of Selectmen put the applicant on their next agenda for a face to face meeting to go over the concerns outlined in the letter.

C. NEW BUSINESS

NONE

D. OTHER

1. SKETCH PLAN QUESTIONS – JOE LANE – 115 ELM STREET – LOT 6/71 – PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN REVIEW OF CHANGE OF USE FROM RETAIL TO RESTAURANT.

The Applicant told the Board that they are changing the old Skidompha Used Book Shop into an eatery – mostly lobster rolls. They have a meeting / inspection with the Fire Marshall coming up. They have spoken with the Great Salt Bay Sanitary District and will have a letter.

Cole stated that they needed to complete a Site Review application for a change in use.

The Board discussed the parking requirements & the location downtown.

Applicant told the Board that they plan to come back in April with a Site Review Application.

2. SKETCH PLAN QUESTIONS: N.C. HUNT LUMBER COMPANY – 769 MAIN STREET (RT 1B) – LOTS 3/58 & 59 – C2 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL & RURAL DISTRICTS – PROPOSED REVISED OUTDOOR STORAGE OF SALES GOODS ON THE APPROVED 2010 SITE PLAN.

Robbie Hunt came before the Board with questions about amending the approved 2010 Site Plan Review for N.C. Hunt Lumber Company on Main Street.

Wilder Hunt recused himself from this discussion and left the meeting.

Robbie told the Board he would like to restructure the size & location of the outside storage. He'd like to add a stone wall, instead of shrubbery.

Eaton told him that the ordinance says he is supposed to screen all outside storage from ordinary view where he abuts residential property with a fence or shrubbery. He reminded Hunt that the original plan said he would have 50' of plantings at the front.

Eaton asked the Board about having the CEO write a letter that N.C. Hunt doesn't need to screen, due to the location. Maybe if he got a letter from the only residential abutter.

The Board felt they needed more input from the Code Enforcement Officer before making any decisions.

3. PLANNER'S REPORT

NONE

E. ADJOURNMENT

On motion Garren / Cole to adjourn meeting at 10:30 pm.

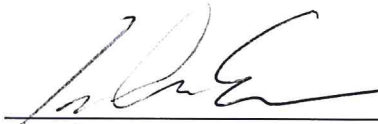
VOTE: 4-0 IN FAVOR

Respectfully submitted by:



Rebecca J. Bartolotta, Deputy Clerk

We, the undersigned, do hereby approve the minutes of the **March 6, 2017** Planning Board meeting:

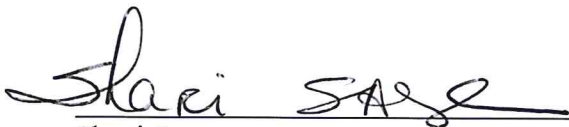


Jonathan Eaton, Chairman

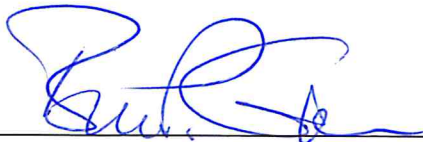


Wilder Hunt, Vice – Chairman

Stephen Cole



Shari Sage



Bruce Garren

Dated: 06/05/2017

