

Town of Jefferson
Office of the Planning Board

Minutes

September 13, 2016

Members present: Chairman Jeff Young; Donna Laurent, Michael Meehan, Gil Finch, Jason Call, alternate; Charles Muller

Absent: Gordon Rebello, Kevin Meehan, Selectmen's representative

Others present: Charlene Wheeler, Board secretary

In the absence of a regular member, Jason Call was designated a voting member for this meeting.

Minutes

Michael Meehan made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2016 meeting, seconded by Charles Muller. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

Financial Report

Charles Muller made the motion to accept the financial report for August, seconded by Michael Meehan. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

Communications

Copies of Selectmen's minutes were circulated.

Report of Officers and Committees

Donna Laurent, our town's representative to the North Country Council Transportation Advisory Committee, shared the draft of minutes for the committee's last meeting. She highlighted the North Country Transit Update and the NH Statewide Asset Database Exchange system for sharing data on roads and their current conditions.

Unfinished Business

The Board continued their discussion tabled at the last meeting of the new state law RSA 674:71-73 on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) scheduled to go into effect June 1, 2017. They set a deadline of the first meeting in December to have language needed for any revisions to the Land Use Ordinance finalized in order to notice a public hearing in January. Donna Laurent asked if the Board should let the law take effect in June and see just what the demand for ADUs may be. Perhaps just following the basic tenants of the law as written would be fine for now. Others thought to take a more proactive response and put in place specific town guidelines (as permitted by the new law) which should be in place when the new law takes effect. Thus helping to maintaining the present unique character of the town of Jefferson along with its existing property values and the underlying aims of promoting Jefferson's health, safety, and general welfare. These guidelines could be fine tuned as needed in the future. One way the town can accomplish this is to allow ADUs by Special Exception. It would mean the Zoning Board of Adjustment would hear such applications for an ADU before the Board of Selectmen

could issue a building permit. Jason Call said it could be listed in Article 3, Section 2 of the Land Use Ordinance with definition and list of required conditions. Such conditions might be a requirement of owner occupancy of one unit, minimum and maximum square footage of the ADU, number of bedrooms, number of people, detached ADUs, septic and water requirements, design standards, and parking. Each was discussed by the Board with possible scenarios and consequences of each condition. No votes were taken. The Board secretary will get printouts of needed RSAs and see how other towns may be handling this issue. Charles Muller made the motion to table the discussion until the next meeting to give members time to digest all the information, seconded by Jason Call. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

In other business the Board of Selectmen requested the Planning Board clarify the definition of a driveway and its required setback from a lot boundary. Should a driveway be listed as a structure? If so, a 50 feet setback would be required. The Board of Selectmen, who issue driveway permits, are concerned they weren't consistent when issuing driveway permits and wanted the requirements stated more clearly in the Land Use Ordinance. A discussion tabled at the last meeting was resumed. Donna Laurent said she had researched the meanings for a structure, some of which she read, and said she thought a driveway could not be considered a structure. Gil Finch agreed. Chairman Young said the word driveway could be added to the definition of a structure. Jason Call said a driveway on or too near a property line could negatively impact an abutter, and gave examples such as eliminating a buffer, an intrusion of lights and noise, or possible drainage issues. Charles Muller agreed. Others said what is the limit on what can be considered a structure with the "not limited to" phrase in the definition of a structure. Would a wall or a fence commonly built along a property line a structure? When does a landowner's use of his property give way to an objection from an abutter? A driveway permit only seems to give access to the property from a public road. Is the route the driveway follows after this point ever examined? Are we getting into site review regulations? Jason Call said some driveway access locations have been denied or relocated in the past because of problems do to topography, wetlands, or drainage but setbacks have not been uniformly enforced in the past. Jason Call made the motion to table the discussion until the next meeting, seconded by Michael Meehan. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

Michael Meehan made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Donna Laurent. The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Charlene Wheeler
Secretary to the Board