

# Town of Washington

## Planning Board Summary

November 9, 2021

Attendance: Deb Dean, Sarah Collins, Seth Anderson, Steve Ocean (Chair), Corey Fortin (CEO), Kate Grinnell (VC/S), Erick Anderson (Alt.)

Absent: Ezra Casas (Alt.)

Public Attendees: Earl Leigh, Dalton Crummett, Peter Drum (town attorney), Richard Bartlett, Guy Bourrie, Sandra Hall Bourrie

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Erick Anderson motions to approve the September summary as written, Sarah Collins 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor, none opposed, September summary approved.

Bartlett Event Barn:

The Planning Board must determine whether or not the project (Route 105) can be permitted as a Commercial Enterprise within the parameters of the Farm and Forest zoning district.

Peter Drum states that the proposed use is not explicitly forbidden in the specific descriptions of the ordinance. Conditions determined by the Planning Board can be applied to protect the integrity of the Farm and Forest zoning. It was also recommended that perhaps a change of language be brought before the Selectmen to assist in clarity of ordinance. If the structure was built as a convention center that would oppose the current zoning, however the proposed structure is a barn that does comply with the current ordinance. An option for Mr. Bartlett is to build the barn as just a barn and then get permitted for repurposing at a later date.

Steve Ocean asked about the scope of the conditions that could be applied. Peter Drum stated that a detailed and more developed site plan from the applicant containing the information about lighting, parking, seasonal applications, hours of operation, and up to how many events are allowed in any given season. Placement of the actual build should also be considered as it is proposed close to the edge of the property.

Mr. Bartlett explained that his intentions for the barn would be to host weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries at the location. He also has stated that a reduced rate for the Town of Washington as a service to the community to hold events. Mr. Bartlett also suggested that perhaps some events could use a shuttle service to minimize the traffic impact on area.

Deb Dean asked how it could be permitted as requested if it is not clearly stated in the ordinance. Peter Drum states that the issue lies in a blank space in the zoning that is open to interpretation and relies heavily on the judgement of the Planning Board and the response from the abutters in this circumstance. He also said that all opposing statements from the community be included in the conditions and that approval is not appropriate until a more detailed plan is submitted by applicant.

Kate Grinnell motions to consider moving forward as a Commercial Enterprise pending an updated site plan, Steve Ocean 2<sup>nd</sup>. 4 in favor and 1 opposed, motion is carried but opposing vote stated that details are still too vague to feel confident voting in favor.

Steve Ocean reminds all present that at the final conclusion of the matter all parties involved have the right to file an appeal. The zoning provided has allowances for other types of businesses in the Farm and Forest District including things such as laundromats, trailer parks, bed and breakfast lodging, and shooting ranges.

Earl Leigh, abutter, states he is “Dead set against it” and if approved will file for an appeal. Sandy Bourrie, project abutter, is concerned that making an allowance for Mr. Bartlett might set a precedent that could be damaging to the town later. Peter Drum assured the neighbors that until a matter is adjudicated in a court of law no precedent is set.

Any and all conditions on the property if it moves forward would also be valid in the event of change of ownership.

Peter Drum advised to grant no waivers on the project due to the likelihood of an appeal being brought but advised applicant to be sure to mark setbacks, parking plans, and use a professional survey team. All elements of the proposal must be clearly identified.

Erick Anderson motions to postpone discussion until new site plan is ready for review. Deb Dean 2<sup>nd</sup> all in favor, matter is postponed pending the presentation of revised site plan.

Mr. Bartlett asked if he could seek a permit for a storage shed in the meantime to store tools. Peter Drum said the only way to do that within the confines of the ordinance would be to withdraw his current application and put in for the smaller building permit. The zoning clearly states that while an application is pending no construction may occur until the permit is issued.

Steve Ocean has requested an ordinance review to make some commonsense changes. Specifically, the ordinances for buildings over 1200 sq ft, the matter of rebuilding a damaged building in a smaller footprint need to be re visited and brought to Selectmen if any changes are needed.

Remote Meeting Policy:

In the event of an emergency or illness the policy would allow for Board members to attend virtually and be able to cast valid votes.

Erick Anderson motions to approve, Sarah Collins 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, Remote policy is approved for use.

Maine Audio Visual has not had any contact with CEO in past month. Corey Fortin will reach out and try to keep project moving forward.

Ron Jackson replacement garage will be added to December meeting agenda as a pre application.

Earl Leigh stated that he feels the Bartlett Barn is unnecessary because there are other Halls in town to rent and Rt 17 would be more appropriate. Mr. Bartlett had left at this point so all discussion on matter was tabled until applicant can be present.

Steve Ocean motions to adjourn, Sarah Collins 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor, meeting is adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kelly Hassanein