

Town of Washington

Planning Board Summary

September 13, 2022

Attendants: Steve Ocean (Chair), Micah Nelson (Alt.), Samuel Collins, Kristie Grant (Alt.),
Kate Grinnell (VC/S)

Absent: Seth Anderson, Corey Fortin (CEO), Erick Anderson

Public Attendees: Sean Donaghy, Peter Drum Attorney

Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m.

Sam Collins motions to postpone voting on July summaries until pertinent members are in attendance, Kate Grinnell 2nd. All in favor, none opposed, the summaries will be reviewed for approval at next meeting.

Pre-Application: Medomak Camp Dining Hall

Sean Donaghy, contractor on behalf of Medomak Camp, is proposing a complete renovation and expansion of the current dining hall. The existing structure would be demolished and rebuilt with an additional 1000 sq feet. As it is now 2 bathrooms of the 3 are located on the exterior of the hall, this proposal would result in 2 new facilities located on the interior of the space. The property is located in the Farm and Forest zoning. After review of the ordinance Peter Drum noted that the project might require additional paperwork due to the size proposed. Micah Nelson points out that on the site map presented most of the additional space is a covered porch and does that affect the way it would be viewed within the ordinance. There were no exemptions for that item in the standards. Sean Donaghy and the owners of Medomak Camp have consulted with the Fire Marshall and have an engineer stamped plan prepared as the property is commercial use involving minors. The time frame available in between seasons and workable weather conditions create urgency on the matter.

Kate Grinnell brings up the proposed project would have no additional impact on the community and applicant has completed the steps needed. She would be open to consider a waiver on procedure due to low chance of abutter objections. Peter Drum said the Planning Board could do that but to be aware that a challenge within the appropriate time frame would put the proceedings under scrutiny. The Board members reviewed the map of the area and the abutters that might be affected. It was determined the negative effects would be minimal.

Kate Grinnell motions to approve the project as a repair or alteration to the original structure. Micah Nelson 2nd, All in favor, none opposed. The proposed renovation is approved. The applicant can contact Code Enforcement for a permit.

New Business:

There has been interest in setting up a daycare on Crystal Lake Rd. The Board reviews the Farm and Forestry zoning in regard to the proposed at home business. Micah Nelson stated more information would be needed for the Board to determine the level of involvement needed. Peter Drum said that if more than 3 children are anticipated to be attending that a site plan is needed.

Peter Drum Attorney Consultation:

Planning Board has requested Peter Drum to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Code Enforcement.

Peter Drum explained that the Planning Board and Code Enforcement always work together. The Planning Board has more responsibility in assisting the applicants with the necessary paperwork. He offered to assist in creating forms to aid in clarification of what is expected for the applicant and simplify understanding for all parties. Code Enforcement is an overseeing agent and should not be expected to assist with applications. The role of a Town Planner would fill that role if the Planning Board were unable to assist applicants with the needed paperwork. The Planning Board then approves or denies the applications and can rule on the relevance of specific items on a case-by-case basis. The Planning Board is not an enforcement entity. Code Enforcement is protected by Maine Tort Claims Act on any mistakes that they may make. The contract with the Town also determines the level of Code Enforcements involvement by the way of technical assistance or specific questions that need clarification.

Steve Ocean notes that in the Town by-laws that the Code Enforcement Officer is required to let the Planning Board know if the application is complete. Peter Drum elaborates that it is the CEO's responsibility to ensure that the applicants comply with the application findings by determining if there is evidence of adherence and if it's sufficient. CEO will need to show decisions on item by item in the event of a legal challenge. Many communities do employ a Planner to review and assist with existing circumstances and the Planning Board would work exclusively with new development in that scenario.

The matter of the proposed event barn was brought up as it may return as another issue that would need management. Peter Drum alerted the Board that if any change of use was proposed that the structure under consideration would have to follow the ordinances for a commercial project. This would include an engineer stamped plan, fire safety protocol, structural safety, and disability accommodations.

Micah Nelson asked about the situations when an applicant is unwilling or unable to fill out the application. Peter Drum stated that the Planning Board should not be doing the paperwork with the applicants but rather assist with questions.

Peter Drum has offered to assist with any amendments, forms, or conflicts that might exist in the current ordinances. He has advised the Board to consider the elements of the community that are positive and beneficial and structure the ordinances to shape the community to reflect and amplify those qualities.

Due to scheduling conflicts the November meeting will be held on Thursday the 13th at 7:00.

Kristie Grant motions to adjourn, Kate Grinnell 2nd, all in favor
Meeting adjourned 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Hassanein