

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, May 20, 2009
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: Jonathan O’Keeffe, Acting Chair; David Webber, Denise Barberet, Ludmilla Pavlova-Gillham, Richard Howland, Stephen Schreiber (7:05 PM), Eduardo Suarez (7:22 PM)

ABSENT: Bruce Carson, Jonathan Shefftz

STAFF: Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director; Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner; Sue Krzanowski, Administrative Assistant

Mr. O’Keeffe opened the meeting at 7:02 PM, and welcomed newly appointed member David Webber to his first meeting.

I. MINUTES – Meeting of April 29, 2009

Mr. Howland MOVED: to adopt the Minutes as corrected and amended by Ms. Barberet.

Ms. Barberet said that there were a few very minor typos that, rather than take up time during the meeting, she would give to Ms. Krzanowski after the meeting if other members were okay with that. Other members agreed. She also said that, on page 2, she had misspoken when she said that there had been a lot of “quorum” problems and had meant to say “attendance”. The Board agreed to the change.

Mr. O’Keeffe seconded the Motion and the vote was 3-0-2 (Webber and Pavlova-Gillham abstained).

II. PUBLIC HEARING – PLANNING BOARD RULES & REGULATIONS

PBR-1-09 Planning Board Rules & Regulations, Articles I & III
(Continued from April 1 & 29, 2009)

Article I. Organization – Amendments to authorize the Clerk to act as Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, and clarify the nomination process for Design Review Board representatives.

Article III. Public Hearing – Amendments to clarify public hearing procedures.

Mr. O’Keeffe summarized the proposal to date and noted the latest revisions in the language which was before the Board.

Mr. Howland said that he was prepared to make a motion and suggested some changes to Section 3, Hearing Procedure, including amendments to the draft language, which he and others revised during the Board's discussion. Mr. O'Keeffe recommended that Board members re-familiarize themselves with the Appointed Committee Handbook, where meeting procedures are described. The Board also discussed time limits, responsibilities of the Chair, and how much flexibility should be allowed for presentations, speakers and questions.

Mr. Howland said that he would like to work on the language a little more and suggested the Board not act yet.

Mr. O'Keeffe commented that the Board had continued the hearing a few times already and suggested it shouldn't continue to be dragged on every two weeks.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED: to adopt Article 1 as revised at tonight's meeting. There was no second.

The Board discussed, and generally agreed, that they would prefer to vote on the article in its entirety, rather than piecemeal.

Mr. Howland MOVED: to continue the hearing to the next meeting. There was no second.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED: to continue the hearing to June 3 at 7:30 PM. Mr. Howland seconded, and the Motion passed 7-0.

III. PRESENTATION – Open Space & Recreation Plan – David Ziomek, Director of Conservation & Development and Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner

Mr. Ziomek introduced Nathaniel Malloy, Associate Planner and Linda Chalfant, Director of Leisure Services and Supplemental Education. Mr. Ziomek told the Board that they are under time constraints to get the plan submitted to the state in early June. The state requires cities and towns to submit an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan every five years in order to be eligible for grant funding. The proposed draft Open Space and Recreation Plan fits well with elements of the Master Plan. Mr. Ziomek credited Mr. Malloy for his efforts in completing the plan and said that he also worked closely with Planning Director Jonathan Tucker.

Mr. Malloy described the public process of developing the plan and said that the resulting draft plan had been brought to a number of committees. They are looking for a letter of endorsement from the Planning Board to be attached to the plan when it is submitted. Mr. Malloy said that the plan will be updated every five years and he gave a brief presentation of the plan outlining the goals and objectives.

Mr. Suarez asked what was planned for some contiguous open space on South East Street shown on the draft plan's maps. Mr. Ziomek indicated that the information on the maps was

Mr. Howland said that the former Faces building behind Ren's Mobil station is the best space to develop a multi-use recreation facility for young people to congregate and there is a big opportunity which shouldn't be missed. It's an ideal location, he said.

Mr. Ziomek said that the plan is about keeping future opportunities open, not plans for specific parcels.

Mr. O'Keefe asked if the circles shown on the map indicating areas of recreation interest form actual boundaries.

Mr. Ziomek said that they tried to be generous. Ms. Chalfant said that in many cases they include existing facilities which might be appropriate for renovation or expansion.

Ms. Barberet asked if paper copies of the maps could be provided to Board members because the maps were hard to read on the web. She also noted that the on-line map #8 is different than the one shown tonight.

Mr. Ziomek said that the map shown at the meeting was the correct one. The ones on-line were evaluation maps, he said.

Mr. Malloy said that he would provide Board members with copies of the maps.

Mr. Webber said that he learned a great deal about Amherst reading through the plan and he agreed with almost everything in it. He asked what a "pocket park" was. Mr. Ziomek described it.

Ms. Pavlova-Gillham said that she was very happy to see the plan and asked how it will happen in terms of funding and implementation.

Mr. Ziomek there will be multiple approaches.

Mr. O'Keefe thanked the group for the tremendous amount of time and energy put into the effort.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED: that the Board endorse the plan. Ms. Pavlova-Gillham seconded.

Mr. Howland said that he could not vote because he had not seen the plan. He was unable to print the electronic copy which had been provided.

Mr. O'Keefe asked about the timeline for the Board to submit a letter of endorsement. Mr. Ziomek said that the Board could endorse the plan at their next meeting. Hard copies of the plan and maps will be sent to the Board before then. Mr. Webber said he would not be at the June 3rd meeting. Mr. Schreiber expressed concern that the Board might not have a quorum

but everyone except Mr. Webber indicated they would be available and the Board decided to wait.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Planning Commissioners Journal – Mr. O’Keeffe said he found the articles to be interesting and recommended reading the Journal.

Mr. Schreiber said that he had read in the Gazette that a member of the Planning Board will serve on the new Save Our Stop committee looking into the fate of Amherst’s Amtrak service, and he asked for more information about that. Mr. Tucker said there has not been a formal request from the Select Board yet.

V. OLD BUSINESS – None

VI. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS

Mr. O’Keeffe endorsed the following:

ANR2009-00007, 145 & 159 Glendale Road – Mark Moriarty

VII. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS

The Board decided not to review the following:

ZBA2009-00037, 22 Lessey Street – Clark House Associates

VIII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS – None

IX. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Zoning Subcommittee – Mr. O’Keeffe said the Subcommittee had not met. He provided an update on the zoning amendments which Town Meeting had passed.

B. Master Plan – Ms. Barberet said there had been no quorum at the most recent meeting, so no formal meeting had been held. However, those present had received a presentation on the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Ms. Pavlova-Gillham asked for the latest copy of the Master Plan. Mr. Tucker said that he would send the latest chapters to all Planning Board members.

X. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS – No Reports

XI. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – No Report

XII. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – Mr. Tucker noted that a joint public hearing with the Tree Warden was scheduled for June 3 at 7:05 PM, for tree removal on Sand Hill Road.

Ms. Barberet said that she would like a formal report or some information from the Tree Warden. Mr. Tucker explained that the Tree Warden is not a Town staff person, but a permitting official. He would be participating in the public hearing in much the same manner as the Planning Board, would be receiving the same information as the Board at that time, and would need to reach his own decision. He said that staff would contact Mr. Snow to see about setting up a site visit and would let the Board know.

Mr. O’Keeffe said that the Zoning Subcommittee will be sponsoring a community meeting about the Main/Dickinson/High Street rezoning proposal. The meeting is scheduled for June 10, 5:00 PM at the VFW Hall on Main Street. There will be a walkabout of the area, weather permitting.

The Zoning Subcommittee will again sponsor a Zoning Forum to provide the public with an initial look at the plans for Fall Town Meeting. The Forum is scheduled for July 1, at 5:00 PM in the Town Room, Town Hall.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Howland MOVED: to adjourn this meeting at 9:10 PM. Mr. Schreiber seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Sue Krzanowski, Administrative Assistant

Approved:

Jonathan O’Keeffe, Acting Chair

DATE: _____