

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, November 3, 2010 – 7:00 PM
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: Jonathan Shefftz, Chair; Jonathan O’Keeffe, Bruce Carson, Richard Roznoy, Rob Crowner, Stephen Schreiber and David Webber

ABSENT: Sandra Anderson

STAFF: Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner

Mr. Shefftz opened the meeting at 7:03 PM and announced that the meeting was being recorded by Planning Department staff and was being recorded and broadcast by ACTV.

IX. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Mr. Shefftz reported that he had attended a memorial service for Doug Kohl, a local developer, who had died recently. Mr. Kohl had been a member of the Comprehensive Planning Committee. As a developer, Mr. Kohl had also worked on the conservation and preservation of land in the area. Mr. Kohl died in early September at the age of 51, leaving a wife and a three-year old child. He was known for the quality of his construction and for caring about the community. He was high-minded and had a sense of civic responsibility, said Mr. Shefftz. Mr. Shefftz noted that Mr. Kohl had built the home in which Mr. Shefftz and his family currently live.

I. MINUTES October 20, 2010

Mr. Schreiber MOVED to approve the Minutes of October 20, 2010. Mr. O’Keeffe seconded and the vote was 7-0.

II. OLD BUSINESS – none

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. 45 Boltwood Walk/37 North Pleasant Street, Knights of Columbus

Review of proposed fence location in accordance with Condition #5 of SPR 2006-00007.

Peter Galante of the Amherst Knights of Columbus presented the proposal. The Knights would like to move the existing fence and planters currently located behind Judie’s Restaurant and use them on the Knights’ property. The developers of Boltwood Place, a new multi-use building proposed to be built behind Judie’s, no longer need the fence. The fence is proposed to be installed in an L-shape, along the north and east sides of the existing patio area to the east of the Knights’ building. It will not be attached to the ground. The planters and fence are made of pressure-treated wood and lattice work. The planters will face the parking lot. Mr. Galante met with the Design Review Board on November 2, 2010, and the DRB suggested painting the

fence posts, installing the fence so that the finished side faces the public areas, and fixing the back of the planters so that they have a more complete, finished look. Mr. Galante stated that the Knights intend to repair the fence after it is moved. They will receive help from the Boltwood Place developers in moving the fence.

Mr. Roznoy asked if this were a revision to the landscape plan. Mr. Shefftz stated that it is a minor revision in his opinion. Mr. Crowner asked how far the fence would extend into Town property and how far it would extend past the fire hydrant.

Mr. Galante explained that the fence would be entirely on Knights' property and would not extend as far as the fire hydrant.

Mr. Webber referred to the approved landscape plan associated with the original Site Plan Review decision, which shows where the hydrant is located in relation to the planting area.

Mr. Schreiber commented that the fence was of inferior quality and that it did not have the same aesthetic as the Knights' building. It will look like an "ad hoc" addition, he said. If this were a more hidden location it would be more acceptable, but it will face a public area and that is a matter of concern.

Mr. Galante stated that the Knights will do something with the fence and planters to make them look nicer.

Mr. Shefftz noted that the Design Review Board had recommended conditions under which the relocation of the fence could be approved.

Mr. Webber asked if the Knights were planning to install the fence to protect their property from the construction about to occur next door.

Mr. Galante stated that the fence was not really a temporary solution to the problem of construction. The Knights want to install the fence because people now walk through their property, trampling the plants in the planting beds. The Knights would like to maintain the property in better condition. The fence will give them some privacy and keep people from trampling the plants. They plan to fix the fence when they move it.

The Knights plan to install one 27 foot section and one 21 foot section of fence, with accompanying planters. The planters will contain evergreens.

Mr. Carson noted that if the flower boxes [the planters] soften the fence and if the bare wood on the posts is painted the structure will look better.

Mr. Galante stated that the Knights plan to follow the recommendations of the Design Review Board and paint the posts a putty color.

Mr. O'Keeffe MOVED to accept the proposal as part of the existing SPR 2006-00007, subject to the conditions put forth in the memorandum from the Design Review Board. Mr. Webber seconded and the vote was 7-0.

B. 321 Main Street, StakeHolders Capital

Review of new sign in accordance with Conditions #2 and #6 of SPR 2010-00012.

Andrew Bellak, a partner at Stake Holders Capital, presented the proposal for a sign. He noted that a zoning change had been passed allowing his office to operate at 321 Main Street. He presented a photograph showing the proposed sign. He stated that the sign would have a white background rather than a gray background, as shown in the photograph. There will be a black frame around the sign. The sign will be the same size as the sign that had previously been in place over his window, when the space had been occupied by “The Claw Foot Tub”. The sign will be installed in the recessed area of brick above the door.

Mr. Shefftz noted that the colors of the sign were lost on the gray or black background and that a white background seemed to work better.

Mr. O’Keeffe expressed concern that the colors of the logo, even on the white background, may be too light. He suggested that more saturated colors be better.

Mr. Carson stated that the black border will look good with the black frame of the door and windows.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED to approve the sign. Mr. O’Keeffe seconded and the vote was 7-0.

C. New Information – none

IV. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – none

V. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS

The Board declined to review the following application:

ZBA FY2011-00012 – Cooley Dickinson Health Care – 170 University Drive - Signs

VII. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Zoning – Mr. O’Keeffe reported that the Zoning Subcommittee did not meet this evening [November 3, 2010]. Town Meeting starts next week, on Monday, at the Amherst Regional Middle School at 7:30 p.m. He reported that the Select Board was recommending changing the order of the articles and postponing consideration of Article 8 to Wednesday, November 10th, to allow it to be considered in the most constructive manner, because it will take a lot of time.

VI. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS

SPR 2011-00006 – You-Pan Tzeng – 79 Taylor Street – Site Plan Review for a duplex

VIII. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

- A. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – none
- B. Community Preservation Act Committee – none
- C. Agricultural Commission – none
- D. Save Our Stop Committee – none
- E. Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee – none
- F. Amherst Redevelopment Authority – none

IX. REPORT OF THE CHAIR (continued)

Mr. Shefftz reported on the results of the three ballot questions that had been voted on the previous day. He noted that Amherst is often portrayed as being out of touch with the rest of the country, but that the voting patterns in Amherst and Northampton were similar to those in Boston, Cambridge and Somerville.

Mr. Schreiber noted that Massachusetts is like a “little USA”, with voting patterns of the “east and west coasts” of the state tending to be “blue” [Democratic] and the middle of the state tending to be “red” [Republican].

Mr. Schreiber also noted that passing of David Dillon, a long-time Amherst resident who died this summer. Mr. Dillon had been an architecture critic for the Dallas Morning News. He taught at UMass in the architecture program. Mr. Schreiber invited the Planning Board members and others to attend a memorial for Mr. Dillon on November 9th, in Gordon Hall at UMass, from 5 to 7 p.m. The event is open to all.

X. REPORT OF STAFF – none

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Christine M. Brestrup, Senior Planner

Approved:

Jonathan Shefftz, Chair

DATE: _____