

FARMINGTON PLANNING BOARD
153 Farmington Falls Road
January 9, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
Minutes

Planning Board members present: Lloyd Smith, Judith Murphy, Clayton King, Craig Jordan, Gloria McGraw and Jeff Wright.

Alternate members present: None.

Members unable to attend: Mike Otley, Michael Macneil, and Troy Luther.

Others present: Town Manager, Christian Waller; Code Enforcement Officer, Steve Kaiser; Code Assistant, Kate Foster; Zoning Board Chairman, Paul Mills; Zoning Board member, Kyle Terrio; applicant Garrett Reynolds; Adrian Harris representing Normand Martin's application; Kobi Perry of Western Maine Community Action (WMCA).

Board of Selectmen member Joshua Bell arrived at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Smith opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Designate alternate members, if needed

No designation needed.

3. Review minutes of October 17, 2022

Mr. King made a motion to approve the minutes of October 17, 2022 as written.
Ms. Murphy seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 0 – Opposed
Motion carried.

4. 22-SS-10

Garrett Reynolds
165 Farmington Falls Road / U10-49
300 CY of earth moving activity

Mr. Smith introduced the application and asked who was present to represent the application.

Garrett Reynolds introduced himself as the applicant and stated he is going to push roughly 300 CY of top soil off the back bank of the depicted area.

Ms. Murphy asked if he was planning on expanding his current business next door onto the lot.

Mr. Reynolds replied yes, he will probably add a few more greenhouses.

Mrs. McGraw asked if there was any worry about pushing the material over the bank and into the water.

Mr. Reynolds replied no, there is quite a distance between the bank and river including a 30-acre field between them.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to accept the application as complete and to approve the application as presented.

Mrs. McGraw seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 0 – Opposed

Motion carried.

**5. 22-SR-14 & 22-SS-11
Normand Martin
School Street / U29-28-B
4-unit apartment building**

Mr. Smith introduced the application and verified who was present to represent the application for the meeting.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to accept the application as complete for review.

Mrs. McGraw seconded the motion.

Mr. King stated he had some questions on the applications completeness. He stated there weren't any walkways, entrances, drainage, or scale marked on the plan.

Adrian Harris introduced himself as the designated agent for the project and stated there are going to be two driveways, one on each side. He added that if someone looks at any of the work the applicant has done previously in West Farmington he will comply with any and all regulations.

Mr. Kaiser stated he reviewed the setbacks with the applicant and he is aware that the driveways need to be 10' off the property line on each side, with four parking spaces on each side. He said it is a one-story building, and there is a description on the soil application regarding drainage being level-spread.

Mr. King stated he had a couple other questions that he will bring up under the review of the application, but feels there are items missing on the application that should be there for it to be considered complete.

Ms. Murphy questioned if it was part of the review process or the application process.

Mr. King replied that his question was on the application and what the Board normally sees on a Site Review application.

Mr. King asked what the percentage/coverage amount was for impervious soil on a lot.

Mr. Kaiser replied that the building footprint is the only thing counted in lot coverage.

Mr. King asked if the parking lot was counted and Mr. Kaiser replied no.

Mr. Kaiser stated regarding grades, the application has a description indicating the grade is not significant and therefore no ditching or culverts are needed. He added that the scope depends on the impact of the project.

Ms. Murphy asked Mr. Kaiser if he felt the application was complete enough.

Mr. Kaiser replied that this is for the Board to ultimately determine after he felt it was complete enough to get to the Board for consideration. He said the Board needs to decide whether it is complete before considering approval of the application.

Mr. Kaiser stated that as Mr. Harris mentioned the quality of work done by the applicant on a previous project on the same street, that's an example of what will be done on this site, even though that was a renovation and this is brand new, it will be done well.

Mrs. McGraw asked about lighting on a four-unit apartment building that the Board would normally see on a plan.

Mr. Kaiser replied that the Board needs to look at what was done on the Hodgkin's House (his previous project) in this regard. He asked the applicant about lighting and was told there will be minimal lighting, maybe one on each side aiming down on the access and parking.

Mrs. McGraw stated that Mr. King has brought up some good points, she does not know the applicant, the Board does not approve projects based on knowing if they do good work or not, and she feels the application does not have enough information at this time.

Ms. Murphy verified with Mr. Kaiser that if the application is not voted as complete, the review process stops there.

Mr. Kaiser said that this application was submitted just before the deadline, and if the Board votes the application is not complete for review it will be on the next Planning Board agenda - if the applicant submits the additional information.

Mr. Smith asked if there was a ditch between the road and front of the lot.

Mr. King replied no, he checked it this morning.

Mr. Jordan stated that on the second page of the Soil/Storm application there is a site plan - but without any landscaping, buffer, or vegetation details. He added that this is a small project and not as detailed as the Board usually sees. Mr. Jordan said he doesn't want to set a precedent by approving an application without all the information.

Mr. Smith called for a vote on the motion that the application was complete for review.

VOTE: 0 – Affirmative 6 – Opposed
Motion denied.

Mrs. McGraw stated that the Board is not against the project, we as a Board are only saying that the application is not complete enough and doesn't have enough information for the Board to review.

Ms. Murphy stated that she agrees in regard to setting a precedent and the Board has to be fair on the review process.

6. Public Hearing to review and vote on amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to include the addition of a definition, Table of Uses line item, and Performance Standard for "Homeless Shelter"

Mr. Smith opened the Public Hearing at 6:22 p.m.

Mr. Kaiser gave an overview of the amendment, stating that it has been being worked on since 2019 by the Zoning Board and stated under State law it needs to be reviewed and voted on by the Planning Board.

There weren't any questions or comments from the public.

Mr. Smith closed the Public Hearing at 6:25 p.m.

Mr. Jordan asked Zoning Board Chairman Paul Mills to address his following concern. He stated he would be disappointed to see a homeless shelter within the Village Business District including Historic District, where the Town has already limited the number of marijuana businesses in order to keep it the way it is as long as we can.

Zoning Board Chairman Paul Mills responded by stating that it will be difficult to locate a Homeless Shelter in the downtown due to requirements in the Performance Standards such as adequate off-street parking. He stated that the Zoning Board struggled with which zones to allow them in but decided the performance standards are stringent enough for the Planning Board to determine the appropriate place.

Mr. Mills said Homeless Shelters would also have to be licensed by the Board of Selectmen as well as approved by the Planning Board. He said Father Paul at the St. Joseph's Church was considering having one there but that idea seems to have subsided. Mr. Mills said Zoning Board member Kyle Terrio worked at a homeless shelter in Montana for a year and has been very helpful and informative, has had a good view on what works and doesn't work, and knows the temperament of the community.

Mrs. McGraw stated she likes that the Board now has something in writing that clarifies this, that the Board can look at and rely on and say that it meets the Performance Standards or it doesn't. She added that in 2018 she had an issues with wondering what the difference was between a Homeless Shelter and a Group Home where the town already has several group home locations.

Mr. Mills stated that they wanted to get all the stakeholders involved so when it went to the Board of Selectmen several months ago there were members of the public and Western Maine Community Action (WMCA) present.

Ms. Murphy asked Kobi Perry if she had anything to add to the discussion.

Kobi Perry of WMCA, which serves families in Franklin County, said she thought this would be very helpful as they currently have 55 homeless households out in the cold, 11 of which have children, that are either living in a tent, in the woods, or in their car. She said even though you may not see it, it exists, and she is present tonight for the discussion and the vote.

Ms. Murphy stated she agrees that a lot of planning has gone into this and it looks good, and she can't think of anything else that could be added to the Performance Standards. She stated she has no problem making it a motion to be approved.

Mr. King agreed with Mrs. McGraw and Ms. Murphy. He added that he feels the big issue in the past when it came before the Planning Board was that there was not going to be a supervisor or someone in a similar position there 24/7.

Mr. Wright stated he was very impressed with the work that has been done and clarification, and he agreed with Mrs. McGraw, Ms. Murphy and Mr. King as well.

Mr. Smith asked Ms. Murphy if she wanted to make a motion.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to approve the ordinance amendments.
Mr. King seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 0 – Opposed
Motion carried.

7. Other Business

Code Office updates:

- Roughly a year from now Marshall's is going to move into the Hannaford building.
- Skowhegan Savings bank is still trying to get another access off Hannaford Drive.

Mrs. McGraw asked if there was any updates on the Colonial and Mt. Blue hotels coming before the Board from WMCA for low-income housing.

Mr. Kaiser replied that they will need to come in for use approval, which they are aware of.

Ms. Perry stated she could give an update to the Board on the project where she is the lead. She stated they plan on renovating the hotels into 31 housing units, the majority of which will be "zero bedrooms" [aka "studio" or "efficiency"] and the rest one bedroom. Ms. Perry added that where the middle of the hotel building is two-story there will be 2-3 bedroom apartments.

Ms. Perry continued saying they hope to have three units for emergency housing. She said the grant requires it to be non-congregate housing and they have not received any funds yet. Ms. Perry said they haven't come before the Board because they don't own the property yet it and it will probably be a few more months before they do. She added that there won't be any additional strain on the community because these families are already residents of the Farmington.

Mr. King thanked her for coming in and clarifying rumors.

Ms. Perry stated there is also a rumor going around that WMCA is going to accept illegal immigrants bussed from Portland and house them – which is not true as illegal immigrants are not eligible for subsidized housing.

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Ms. Murphy seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – Affirmative 0 – Opposed
Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kate Foster.

Planning Board

Date