

**Zoning Board of Adjustment
Town of Walpole
Wednesday, February 21, 2018
7:30 pm**

Present: Board Members: Chair Myra Mansouri, Vice-Chair Jan Galloway Leclerc, Judy Trow, Tom Murray. Alternates: Pauline Barnes, Ernie Vose.

Recording: Marilou Blaine. These minutes are unapproved and will be reviewed at the March 2018 meeting for corrections, additions and/or omissions.

Roll Call: Ms. Mansouri called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. There were only four board members present so she asked Ms. Barnes to fill in.

Minutes: Minutes of December 2017. January meeting canceled because of snow. Corrections: Ms. Barnes said on page one, last paragraph, there was an “s” with an extra blank after the word need. Ms. Trow mentioned a typo on page two. Ms. Trow made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Ms. Barnes seconded the motion and the motion carried.

New Business:

Kim Mastrianni – president of the Walpole Co-op, formally known as Great River Consumer Cooperative Society, Inc. – said the organization wants to convert a chicken coop, previously used by Hubbard, on Bensonwood property in the rural/ag zone for a store for the Co-op. Request for a Special Exception, Map 12 Lot 4-2, building 18.

Ms. Mastrianni said the Co-op now has 750 members and wishes to convert the existing building that was used by Hubbard, No. 18, into a Co-op store. The layout is great and the building is what they were looking for, she said. The only issue is that it is not on the commercial property where the Co-op was going to build a new building. It is in the rural/ag zone. So the group is looking for a Special Exception to convert it to commercial. The parking lot for the store would be in the adjoining lot, across from the store on Lot 4-3.

Mr. Vose asked, “What is the difference between the two lots? It shows different names for owners.” One is owned by Karlson Realty, the other Huntington Realty. Both lots, 4-2 and 4-3, are owned by Bensonwood Woodworking. The names represent different holding companies, Ms. Mastrianni said.

Originally the Co-op had an agreement with Monadnock Development Corp. and Bensonwood to build a new building in the front part of Lot 4-2, which is zoned commercial. But when this building in the rural/ag zone became a possibility and Hubbard vacated it, the organization looked at it and decided:

1. It was an already existing building.
2. The organization would not have to build something new.
3. It has a good footprint.

How far is the building from the property line? Ms. Mansouri asked. Ms. Trow pointed out that Criterion 5 says it is in excess of 20 feet from the lot boundary.

Has this been to the planning board? Mr. Vose asked. Ms. Mastrianni said, “Not yet.” She is getting the plans done to bring to the Planning Board next month for a recommendation and start the process for a site plan review.

Ms. Barnes remarked that under criterion 5 – g it says the existing building is 4,680 square feet and the store plans for space are between 4,000 and 6,000 square feet. “Why the difference?” she asked. Ms. Mastrianni said that the Co-op’s market study said that anything between 4,000 and 6,000 square feet was viable for being able to be supported by the community as well as a broad spectrum of product lines.

Ms. Barnes then asked if that she planned to expand the building? Ms. Mastrianni answered that the only thing they were looking at right now was to have an overhang that would have seasonal merchandise, such as fresh plants, that would be marketed outside, and a patio seating area at one end. She added that the entry way might be pushed out to make it easier to access the building.

Mr. Vose said if you push out that access, it might put the building within 20 feet of the boundary. Ms. Mastrianni said, “It might put us within 20 feet of the parking so we might have to return to the ZBA and have that discussion. We would have to figure out if we have the 20 or, if not, we are back here asking for something. But we are not asking for that now because we do not have the design.”

How about a parking lot on another property? Mr. Vose asked. Ms. Mastrianni replied a parking lot would be created on Lot 4-3 in back of where the Hungry Diner is.

How much parking are you going to allot? Ms. Mansouri asked. Ms. Mastrianni answered she didn’t have that figure because she didn’t have the calculations based on the capacity of the building. She needed to find out what would be recommended for a building of that size. “We would be looking at those figures depending on town requirements,” she said.

Ms. Mastrianni said her plans were to go to the Planning Board for a recommendation and she was asking the ZBA for the Public Hearing for a Special Exception for next month. After meeting with the Planning Board she would come back to the Zoning Board.

Ms. Leclerc asked if the application includes asking for parking on that lot. Ms. Mastrianni said it refers to the parking and it’s a rough drawing on the map. She doesn’t have the space numbers yet.

Mr. Murray asked if the parking lot isn’t under the purview of the Planning Board. Ms. Leclerc said yes but she needed permission for the parking lot in a commercial zone from the Zoning Board.

The Co-op application should say a Special Exception for a building on one lot, Lot 4-2, and parking lot on another lot, Lot 4-3.

Ms. Trow made a motion to accept the application as presented and to have a Public Hearing in March for a Special Exception. The motion was seconded by Ms. Leclerc and the motion carried.

Mr. Vose said he wanted to make Ms. Mastrianni aware of runoff water regulations – that she might need something like a retention pond and that she should look into it.

Barlo signs for Mascoma Savings Bank – Craig Moore represented Barlo Signs of Hudson, NH. Mr. Moore explained that Mascoma Bank had changed its logo and that his company was changing signs for the bank throughout the New England area. Mr. Moore was here before and the Barlo company received approval in July 2017 for Mascoma Savings Bank to have a 12 square-foot back-lit illuminated sign to be placed on the peak of the drive-thru behind the entrance to the bank. But with the new logo, all the signs would be changed slightly.

Two signs affixed to the building would be removed – one facing Jake’s Variety gas station and the other on the opposite side of the building near the back. All the other remaining signs would be using the same spaces as before.

There is one sign above the entrance and one on the canopy of the drive-thru as well as two aluminum ground signs. The entrance and drive-thru canopy signs will have the multi-colored logo with the letters below, which are black and illuminate gray during the night. There is a ground sign with the bank’s name and updated logo and a similar parking sign with a new logo. Both are the same size as before, not illuminated, and the only change is the logo. The logo and size of the sign on the drive-thru canopy has changed. The previous canopy sign was 12 square feet and is now 15.44 square feet.

Ms. Mansouri said that the sign is larger than the one you received approval for last summer. And that sign was larger than what the ordinance mandates. That’s why you had a Public Hearing. To get an even larger sign, Mr. Moore would have to come back for another Public Hearing. Her suggestion was that the sign remain at 12 square feet. Mr. Moore said he could agree to that.

Ms. Mansouri said she recalled when Mr. Moore was here last time, he said the lighted signs could be dimmed. Mr. Moore said that was still an option. The lights would be on a dimmer and if it were still too bright, someone could approach the bank and ask the bank to dim it even more. Mr. Moore said it would dim automatically at a set time. Ms. Mansouri suggested 8 pm.

Ms. Mansouri said she lived down the street from the bank and there were apartments all around the bank and these people could see the sign.

“How many lumens?” Ms. Barnes asked. She couldn’t figure out from the information given how many lumens it would be.

Mr. Moore had a calculator and estimated it at 96 total lumens. Moore added that the light is diffused. He referenced the Irving sign, around the corner, which is white and, he said, creates a big white glow. The only thing that light is passing through in that sign is a layer of white lexan. On the Mascoma sign, there is actually white lexan with a black film on top of it so it’s going to be grayed out. The letters are lit and the logo is lit with various colors but there is also a film on top of the colors.

Ms. Barnes asked if it were going to flash. Mr. Moore said, “No, no flash, no flickering.” The remote dimmer is on a timer. It dims at a particular hour and then wakes back up.

Would it be brighter during the day? Ms. Barnes asked. Mr. Moore explained it would probably not be lit during the day but it could be stated in as a clause of approval. The contrast would be better during the day if the lights were shut off.

The sign over the entrance would be less lumens because it is smaller. In fact, it is smaller than the on

previously proposed. The original sign for the entrance was 8.16 square feet; the new sign will be 7.76 square feet. It is 62.08 lumens. Ms. Barnes remarked that she'd love a lecture on lumens some day.

Ms. Leclerc said the lumens for the Irving sign was 6,000 plus so 96 is a lot less. Mr. Moore explained that if you looked at LED light directly it would be very bright. But it goes through a layer of lexan, which is 3/8 of an inch thick and also a layer of film. The light is less bright depending on the color of the light it is shining through. Light comes through yellow very bright.

Moore requested a copy of the minutes. He agreed to:

1. The canopy sign will remain at 12 square feet.
2. The illuminated signs will not be lit during the day.
- 3,. The illuminated signs would be dimmed at 8 pm. It was decided that if they were too bright the Board could request the light be dimmed even more.
4. After the signs are up, pictures of the signs will be submitted to the Zoning Board and placed in its file.

A motion was made and seconded to approve all the new signs with the new logo. The motion carried.

Signage: FairPoint is becoming Consolidated Communications – new signage - same size, same place.

Mr. Stan Obachowski submitted a proposed sign to replace the existing FairPoint sign on Westminster St. It will be in the same place and says Consolidated Communications. It is 1 foot 3 inches high, 3 inches in width and 2 inches deep. It will be made of aluminum with a face material of vinyl. It will not be illuminated.

The Board approved the new signage and asked that the company take a photograph of the sign and drop it off at the Town Hall. The photo should be addressed to the secretary of the Zoning Board.

Questions about Setbacks -Mr. Robert Meier of Charlestown wants to build an 8-foot-by12-foot addition to a home at 79 Main Street, owned by Steve and Patricia Smith. Mr. Meier wanted to know the side setback and the road setback rule. The building is in the Commercial District.

The ordinance states that in the Commercial District yard requirements are no building shall be erected closer than 65 feet to the center line of all public right of ways or 20 feet to any side or rear property line.

The addition was 62 feet to the white line of the road or edge of the road, so it would be more than 65 from the center. The side setback was well in excess of 20 feet. So Mr. Meier was told he didn't need a setback variance and could go to the Selectboard for a building permit.

Handouts:

Master Plan.

Logs of 2016 and 2017 – Month by month listing of what hearings, decisions made on meeting dates in those years

DADU guide for towns – this was to notify the Board that the Municipal Association sent out a multi-page document for towns to follow under the new DADU guideline. The document will be in the basement conference room.

The Keene Sentinel article on clarifying Zoning Board votes – this article is about a recent decision by

the Keene Zoning Board when it had a 2-1 vote on a couple seeking a Variance for a residential rehabilitation center in the former Prospect Place building. They wanted to increase the number of beds from 17 to 26 in the medium density district.

Planning and zoning conference – April 28 at the Courtyard by Marriott in Concord. Information: Call 271-2155 or contact danielle.craver@osi.nh.gov

Ms. Trow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Barnes seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilou Blaine
Secretary

Cc: ZBA, WPB, North Walpole Commissioners, Selectboard and Town Offices, Walpolean
Posted: Inside Town Hall, bulletin board outside Walpole Grocery, Walpolean, town website
www.walpolenh.us

Next meeting Wednesday, March 21, 2018