

Walpole Planning Board Minutes
Tuesday, October 12, 2021
Town Hall
7 pm

Roll Call: Present: Board Members: Chair Jeff Miller, Vice-Chair Dennis Marcom, Clerk Jason Perron, Jeff Harrington, Joanna Andros, Bill Carmody, Select Board Representative Steve Dalessio. Alternate: Trevor MacLachlan.

Recording: Secretary Marilou Blaine. **This meeting is being recorded. These minutes are unapproved and will be reviewed at the November 2021 meeting for corrections, additions and/or omissions.**

Call to order: A full board was at the meeting at 6:47 pm, so Mr. Miller called the meeting to order.

Minutes: The September 2021 minutes were approved as written. A motion was made by Mr. Marcom, seconded by Mr. Perron and approved by the rest of the board.

Old Business:

Public Hearing No. 1. Continued from September meeting. Two amendments to the Walpole Zoning Ordinances. Amendment No. 1 bans feather flags. Amendment No. 2 is a definition of temporary signs with some examples of temporary signs. If approved, these two amendments will be put on the March 2022 warrant for approval by the townspeople. Presented by the Chair of the Zoning Board.

ZBA Chair Jan Leclerc explained that she was at the September meeting last month and the Planning Board has some problems with the amendment about feather flags, especially the words “wind-activated.” So the board decided that the public hearing should be continued to this meeting so Ms. Leclerc could go back to her board and make some changes to the amendments. In between the September and the October Planning Board meetings, the ZBA board held a workshop on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 to discuss the wording of the amendments. The following is what the board decided.

Ms. Leclerc said that the Board decided to remove the words “wind-activated” from Amendment No. 1. In regard to the temporary signs. There is a definition of a temporary sign and examples of temporary signs. But because the board cannot constitutionally say what is on a sign, the board added “may include, but are not restricted to” announcement signs; real estate signs; community or event signs; etc. so they are not specifying what is on a sign. There is also a limit on how long a temporary sign may be displayed. The board decided not to add the word “flag” to the amendment. Most of the time the zoning board has found that being less specific is safer than being too specific, Ms. Leclerc said. She added that the Select Board asked the Zoning Board to write an ordinance for feather flags.

Mr. Miller asked if there were any questions. There being no questions there should be a motion that would be to either recommend the new version of the two zoning amendments or not to recommend, he said. Mr. Marcom made a motion to recommend the revised amendments. Mr. Perron seconded the motion and the motion passed with 6 votes, 1 abstention.

So this is how the final two amendments to the sign ordinance will read.

No. 1 Article IV

D. Signs.

3. Limitations

1.

Inflatable signs; feather flags; oscillating, rotating, flashing, neon or other tubular gas signs; or signs with blinking, changing or moving illumination are not permitted. These prohibitions do not apply to signs used for safety purposes by a government entity.

- No. 2 This amendment will be added to the ordinance and will be Article No. IV General Provisions, D. Signs, No. 9, and the ordinance about Special Exceptions for signs will move to No. 10.

Temporary Signs

A temporary sign is any sign not permanently attached to the ground, a wall or a building that is intended to be displayed for a short to limited amount of time.

Examples of temporary signs may include but are not restricted to announcement signs; real estate signs; community or civic event signs; political campaign signs pursuant to RSA 664; garage or yard signs or signs for other special events that occur for a limited period of time.

All temporary signs shall be removed within ten (10) days following the event or activity being promoted.

Public Hearing No. 2: Avanru Development Group LTD/ Red Barn Lane LLC, West Swanzey. Tax Map 12, Lot 13-3, 4.03 acres, commercial district. Agent: James Phippard, Brickstone Land Use Consultants LLC. Proposed Vacant Lot/Self-storage units, 37,450 square feet, 5 buildings. Storage units to be built in two stages with buildings 3, 4 and 4 being built first. Phase 2 will be building 1, a cold storage unit, and building 2.

Mr. Phippard used the large screen for his presentation. He began saying the application is complete, all abutters notified and all fees paid. He said that Red Barn Lane LLC is proposing to purchase the property. There are two units of property, one is 4.03 acres and the other, No. 2, is 3.33 acres. The storage units will be on the 4.03 acres site. He described the storage units' location, which is off of Route 12, with the stores Tractor Supply to the north and Dollar General in front and west of the storage units. There are two units of Abenaki Springs residential development to the north at the eastern edge of the property. The buildings are long and narrow. Building No. 1, 20 feet by 200 feet, is along the bank and is longer and less wide than the others. There will be an office in this building. A diagram with all the buildings show building No. 2 a little wider but shorter than building No. 1 and 3, 4 and 5 being the widest. There will be a total of 76 units.

Mr. Phippard said he had met with Fire Chief Mark Houghton that day and there was concern about a Walpole fire truck going around the buildings within the fencing. Mr. Phippard said the fire truck was identical to the fire truck in Chesterfield and he knew the dimensions of that fire truck and assured Mr. Houghton the Walpole fire truck would have no problem accessing the property. Mr. Houghton will be getting back to him. Held up a new diagram showing that the fire truck could adequately go through and among all the units.

The inside climate controlled units will be open from 6 am to 10 pm and 24 hours a day with key pad access. A chain link fence will go along the perimeter of the north and west sides. Arbor vitae will be planted along the fence line as well as 10 deciduous trees, equivalent to Cleveland Pear trees, planted near the parking spaces to provide shade and screening. The rest of the perimeter of the property is surrounded by wetlands. Silt fencing will be installed during construction to prevent any sedimentation from entering the wetlands.

Access to Storage Unit 1 is on Red Barn Lane, a road off of Route 12. Red Barn Lane is 20 feet wide. Access to the buildings will be controlled by a sliding gate activated by a keypad. The driveway is located approximately 650 feet from Route 12. It provides access to Tractor Supply, Dollar General, and the residents who live in the two units of Abenaki Springs. This is the only access to the storage units, which means there will be very little additional traffic on Red Barn Lane. He estimated it would be about 7 vehicles a day - "not a significant impact" - and up to 15 vehicles on the weekend. This makes sense when you think about it, he said. How many people visit their storage unit daily?

The physical features of the land are that it is basically flat with Agawam, Type 24 A soil, a fine sandy loam that is excellent for stormwater filtration. Runoff created by the new buildings and pavement will be collected on site using catch basins, roof gutters and curbing. Most of the runoff will then be infiltrated using infiltration strips next to the buildings or infiltration strips along the perforated storm drains under the paved areas. Excess storm water not infiltrated will be discharged into a small pond to be constructed at the southwest corner of the site. The system has been designed to retain and infiltrate a 50-year-design storm. It's an ideal site. An Alteration of Terrain already exists for this property.

Lighting will be LED wall packs mounted 8 feet above the finished grade and provide 1.09 footcandles over the paved area. There will not be any poles. Mr. Phippard showed the section on lighting and the width of the light, known as the footprint, was about the width of the overhead door. Lights will go on at dusk and off at dawn. Pictures of the fixtures are on the lighting plan L-1. Utilities are all underground and both water and sewer service are tied into a town system. There is a fire hydrant nearby. Most of the buildings will not have water, only building 1 where there is an office.

There will be 25 parking spaces spread throughout the property and among the five buildings. People renting the outside units will park in front of their unit. People using inside units will use parking space at both ends of a building. There will be one handicapped parking space at the site and a van parking space. This was based on the square footage of the buildings.

All snow will be stored on site in areas designated on the site plan and within in the fenced area. This property is not located in the 100-year floodplain.

A free-standing 24.6-square-foot sign that is 8 feet high will be located 10 feet from the west end property line near building 5. It is 60 feet from the edge of Red Barn Lane and 10 feet from the property line. There will also be small signs on the buildings to identify them and some small signage inside. The buildings are all metal with a metal roof and overhead doors. The siding is Desert Sand in color and the doors and building trim are Fern Green in color.

When Mr. Phippard finished his presentation Ms. Andros asked when do the lights go off. Lights will be on all night. They turn on at dusk and off at dawn. There will be security cameras throughout. Hours for the heated buildings will 6 am to 10 pm. Units along the outside with overhead doors are accessible 24 hours a day. Ms. Andros asked if he considered motion-sensor lighting. Mr. Phippard said that in many locations there have been complaints about that type of lighting because lighting can be triggered by small animals, a deer and sometimes even a large truck driving past the building. When the lights come on and then stay on for 10 minutes and bother neighbors. Mr. Miller said that the footcandles are low, they are not on poles and then there is some screening along the fence. Mr. Dalessio pointed out the people that would be bothered would be above on Upper Walpole Road. They would be looking down on the site. With LED lights and the lights pointing down it should be pretty good, he said.

Mr. Dalessio asked if there were 30 percent green space. Mr. Phippard calculated there would be 47 percent green space. Mr. Perron asked about what was outstanding for confirmation of the project. e said before.

Mr. Phippard said that Mark said he would review the building plan. Alteration of terrain update. There is a 1,000 propane tank at the office that he has to check and insulation.

Mr. Miller asked if there were any more questions. There being no further questions, the Public Hearing was closed.

Mr. Marcom made a motion to approve the site plan for the storage units with the following conditions:

Make sure the entrance to the storage units can handle our fire trucks.

He would like state mechanical inspection of all propane connections.

The location of the propane tanks must be approved by Walpole Fire Department.

All building and site plans must be submitted to Walpole Fire Department and approved by them.

An Alteration of terrain plan must be provided.

All this shall be done prior to issuing a building permit.

Mr. Perron seconded the motion and the motion carried.

New Business:

Tom Goins, one of two owners of Burdick's restaurant and the building it is will discuss Outdoor Dining Facility.

Mr. Goins received a letter from the Select Board sometime this summer recommending that Burdick and Burns LLC approach the Planning Board with a site plan review application. Mr. Goins asked to be on the agenda to discuss the outdoor seating area.

Mr. Goins brought along a drawing of the building and businesses in the entire building showing the 16-foot-by-26-foot outdoor seating area that he said was built by Mark McGill. He said while it was built with the intention of being disassembled in sections, doing so would be a hardship and he had nowhere to store it. Mr. Goins said when Covid hit, he had to shut down the restaurant. When outdoor dining was allowed, he started restaurant service outside. Mr. Goins would like to leave the outdoor seating area there during the winter and wanted Planning Board permission to do so. He would cover it with a tarp, and put up a chain barrier around the platform to insure safety. Mr. Houghton would plow around it and keep the area clean during the winter.

Mr. Miller asked Mr. Goins why he was here. Mr. Dalessio said at the time the governor mandated temporarily closing all restaurants and eventually that morphed into eating spaces outside. Mr. Miller asked about the cost of the platform. Mr. Goins said he paid Mr. McGill \$5,500 to construct the platform and about \$1,000 for planters and plants to put around three sides of the seating area. So the cost of the platform doesn't exceed the \$10,000 threshold for getting a site plan, Mr. Miller said.

Discussion ensued about winter, snow, snow clearance and the piles of snow created at the north side of the area. Mr. Goins said he owns the parking lot up to the cafe and has approached the town about purchasing the remaining parking area to Westminster Street and the exit to Main Street. That was where piles of snow usually accumulate. Several board members spoke about the problems he might encounter during the winter with the outdoor seating area still there. Mr. Goins said Mr. Houghton said

he seemed to think he could accommodate Mr. Goins and be able to keep the area cleared. The Board members also pointed out that the town had to do its part in keeping the snow from piling up and do a better job of plowing the roads.

Mr. Goins left without needing to fill out a site plan application and prepared to take a chance to see if he can get through the winter without encountering plowing problems on his property.

Mr. Perron made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilou Blaine
WPB Secretary

cc: WPB, ZBA. Town officials, The Walpolean.

Posted: Inside the Town Hall, on the bulletin board outside the post office, www.walpolenh.us

Workshop: Tuesday, Oct. 26, 7 pm, Town Hall, masks required.

Next regular meeting: November 9, 2021.