

Date Approved: May 12, 2016

Submitted By: Nat Strosberg, Ashland Town Planner

Ashland Planning Board Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2016

Board of Selectmen Meeting Room, Second Floor of Town Hall

Planning Board Members in Attendance: Preston Crow (John Dudley, Max Geesey and Mike Mokey (Chair)

Town Planners Karen Martin and Nat Strosberg also in attendance

Mr. Mokey called the meeting to order at 6:38PM.

Item #1: Planning Board Minutes – 4.14.16

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to approve the Planning Board minutes from April 14, 2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 3-0. (Mr. Crow absent.)

Item #2: Invoices

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to approve the first batch of invoices dated April 21, 2016 and totaling \$9,585.76. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 3-0. (Mr. Crow absent.)

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to approve the second batch of invoices dated April 14, 2016 and totaling \$654.84. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 3-0. (Mr. Crow absent.)

Item #3: 24 Tower Road – Telecommunications Special Permit

Mr. Mokey opened the public hearing at 7:10PM.

Mr. Strosberg explained that according to federal regulations, the Planning Board cannot vote to deny a telecommunications special permit, but can establish reasonable conditions on the certificate of approval.

Mr. Strosberg explained that the proposal entailed adding new antennae-based equipment to the roof of the public water tower at 24 Tower Road. He noted that the town needs to be sure that the new equipment will be installed in a manner that is structurally sound. The members of the Planning Board agreed that the certificate of approval should include conditions which address the following: fire department access and safety measures; needed assurance by the Department of

Public Works that the new equipment will be installed in a structurally sound manner; and maintenance of any perimeter alarms to ensure that the alarms sound only at appropriate times.

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to approve the special permit with conditions regarding the above. The motion was seconded by Mr. Crow. The motion passed 4-0.

Item #4: Continuation of ATM May 2016 Warrant Article Public Hearings

Warrant Article #21:

Item A:

The members of the Planning Board discussed the rendering for Ashland Downtown District B, i.e., the rendering inspired by the Mason Building. Mr. Dudley stated that he thought that the rendering, and specifically the level of density shown, is appropriate. Mr. Strosberg stated that he had received considerable feedback from the public emphasizing that the scale of the buildings in the rendering is overwhelming. To that end, Mr. Strosberg shared a revised rendering with the Planning Board showing buildings of a smaller scale. Both Mr. Dudley's view and the view expressed by Mr. Strosberg were supported by statements from members of the public.

The Planning Board ultimately determined that a revised rendering for Ashland Downtown District B should be brought to town meeting. The rendering would include buildings of the original scale and buildings of the revised scale. The two building typologies would be separated by a drawing of the library.

Mr. Dudley also pointed out that footnote references were not included on the renderings for Ashland Downtown District A and should be added.

Overall, in contrast to some comments from members of the public, the Planning Board agreed that added density in downtown Ashland is beneficial.

Item B:

The Planning Board agreed that while green/sustainable building features can certainly be beneficial, the language on such features is not appropriate for this item; the language is off topic.

Item C:

Mr. Geesey pointed out that the proposed restriction on the highest point of a building will make it harder to create designs that reflect the ADD A renderings. Mr. Strosberg stated that the language needed to be improved.

The Planning Board agreed that this item should not be taken up by town meeting.

Planning Board Votes:

Motion made by Mr. Crow to close the public hearing for Warrant Article 21. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dudley. The motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Mr. Crow to recommend that this article be approved by town meeting with modifications as discussed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dudley. The motion passed 4-0.

Warrant Article #22:

The Planning Board discussed whether or not to alter the language in the third stipulation so that a percentage of the upfront application fee is charged as opposed to the fixed cost of \$4,000. The Planning Board ultimately decided to move forward with the \$4,000.

It was stated by a member of the public that this article amounts to a giveaway to developers. Mr. Geesey stated that this is certainly not a giveaway; if it were, there would be no charges.

Motion made by Mr. Dudley to close the public hearing for Warrant Article 22. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 3-1.

Motion made by Mr. Crow to recommend that this article be approved by town meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 4-0.

Warrant Article #23:

The Planning Board reiterated that the first proposed change in Item A, i.e., adding additional language to Note #1, should not be brought before town meeting.

Mr. Mokey stated that the changes proposed in this article are in line with the Housing Production Plan.

The Planning Board agreed that the ultimate goal of this article is to increase flexibility in terms of how units can be designed so that a diversity of products can be built.

Motion made by Mr. Crow to close the public hearing for Warrant Article 23. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 4-0.

Motion made by Mr. Crow to recommend that this article be approved by town meeting with amendments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 4-0.

Item #5: Discussion on Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Board agreed that prior to determining the next steps for moving forward, information should be obtained regarding which elements of the comprehensive plan are required

by the state and which are recommended. The Planning Board instructed Mr. Strosberg to obtain this information for the next Board meeting.

Item #6: Adjournment

Motion made by Mr. Crow to adjourn at 9:48PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Geesey. The motion passed 4-0.