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ACTON PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of Meeting
December 13, 2005
Acton Memorial Library

Planning Board members Mr. Greg Niemyski (Chairman), Mr. Christopher Schaffner (Vice Chair), Mr. Edmund Starzec, Mr. Michael Densen, Ms. Ruth Martin , and associate Mr. Bruce Reichlen attended. Also present was Town Planner, Mr. Roland Bartl and Planning Board Secretary, Ms. Kim DelNigro.

Absent were Mr. William King (Clerk) and Mr. Gary Sullivan.

Mr. Niemyski called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

I. Citizens Concerns
There were no citizen concerns.

II. Consent Agenda
A. The minutes of 11/22/05 were approved unanimously as drafted.

III. Reports
CPC: Ed Starzec reported they are in their first stages of review and meetings with the CPA applicants.
EDC: Ed Starzec stated the meeting was cancelled and they had attended the Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan meeting.
Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan: Chris Schaffner reported that the committee had concluded its 1st work phase and is working with the Board of Health in expansion of sewers to help Acton's Wastewater Disposal problems in priority need areas in the Town.
MAGIC: No meeting.
MAGIC Emergency Preparedness Forum: Mrs. Rosenzweig reported that they discussed the roles, responsibilities and plans for preparation for natural and man-made emergencies and how to respond at a local and regional level.

IV. Sign Special Permit – 136 – 138 Main Street – Dmitry Goykhman
Mr. Niemyski opened the public hearing at 7:45pm. Mr. Dmitry Goykhman, applicant, resident of South Acton Village area and business owner; and Mark Mussel, tenant business owner of Assabet Sewing & Vacuum, of 136 Rear Main Street were present. Board members reviewed the application and staff's comments on the proposed free standing business sign (lists multiple tenants) located at 136 Main Street. The sign is proposed in South Acton Village where freestanding signs are not allowed except where no building is within 30 feet of the street sideline. The applicant's building sits about 11 feet off the sideline; but the proposed sign (5ft. high, 3ft. wide, and 12 sq. ft display area) would otherwise fit within the by-right maximum dimensions. Mr. Dmitry Goykhman had placed a temporary sign at the location for the Board members to view and check for any obstructions to the sight distance as this was a concern raised in several staff comments. Mr. Niemyski had taken pictures to distribute to the Board members.
Mr. Goykhman stated that he wants the freestanding sign for better identification of his tenants. Because some of his tenants are located in the back, the sign is useful as a navigational device. Mr. Goykhman added some general comments and recommendations for improvements in South Acton Village. He also would like to see more foot traffic.
Board members raised questions and concerns regarding:

- Why not have a projecting sign on each building.
- What materials will be used to support the footing for the sign.

- A landscaping plan is needed.
- The sign design is too contemporary; should have more of an ornamental capping and border.

Mr. Bartl has asked Mr. Goykhman to produce a sketch with a peak-like shape of the sign to match to building's design with dimensions and a landscape plan to document compliance with landscape area requirements. The Board directed Mr. Goykhman to provide this information to staff, and asked staff to draft a decision for voting at the next meeting. Mr. Niemyski motioned to close the public hearing, 2nd, all voted in favor.

V. NorthWest Development – Madison Place 40B; presentation/discussion

Ms. Jennifer Shea and Mr. Dennis Ring, of NorthWest Development, LLC; and Mr. Jay R. Peabody, of Graham & Harsip, P.C were present. Ms. Shea described their Madison Place 40B proposal located at 737 – 741 Main Street: 3.34 acre parcel; 8 units in duplexes with a cape-cod style architecture; over 2,000 square fee of living area in each not including finished lower level options; attached 2-vehicle garages. Ms. Shea stated that they have met and given presentations to the neighbors, town staff, Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC), and the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen endorsed their project and NorthWest has applied to the Department of Housing Community Development (DCHC) LIP program for site eligibility and approval. Once the approval letter has been received, NorthWest Development, LLC will apply to the ZBA for a Comprehensive Permit.

Mr. Ring explained the site's history, the existing house that is listed in the Acton Cultural Resource Inventory, entrance setup, drainage designs, sight distance, landscape plan, septic system location, and stated that there is an endangered species of wood turtles on the rear of the parcel. Board members questioned the applicant on the garages, exterior colors and lowering the price on the affordable units.

Abutter in attendance, Mr. Pat Murphy of 733 Main Street, raised questions and concerns regarding:

- He is very unhappy and concerned with the resulting character change of Main Street.
- Concerns on screening for his property.
- Concerns with what will happen to the existing house.
- Concerned about completion of a sidewalk.

The Board Chairman thanked Ms. Shea, Mr. Ring and Mr. Peabody for their time and effort to explain the project.

VI. Affordable Housing Bylaw – First Draft

Board members briefly reviewed the staff memo regarding draft zoning changes for affordable housing and then agreed to discuss it further at next meeting in conjunction with the draft 40B policy once it is received. The sense of the Board was that the Annual Town Meeting in April 2006 would be a too ambitious schedule for such a significant change. More time for community outreach and education is needed.

Mr. Niemyski moved to close the meeting, Mr. Schaffner 2nd; all voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM.