

IPSWICH PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Thursday August 13, 2009, 7:30 p.m.

Pursuant to a meeting notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Ipswich Planning Board was held on Thursday, August 13, 2009 in Room A, 2nd floor of Town Hall. Board members Jim Manzi, Tim Purinton, Cathy Chadwick and Brian Hone attended as did Associate member, Suzanne Benfield. Planning Director Glenn Gibbs and Assistant Planner Kathy Connor also attended.

Jim Manzi called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

CITIZENS' QUERIES: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Manzi noted that Bob Weatherall's name should be added to the list of Board members who had attended the meeting on July 16.

MOTION: Chadwick moved to approve the draft minutes of the July 16, 2009 meeting with the noted edit. Purinton seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Requested: Release of surety for Jewett Hill Subdivision.

Gibbs explained that on August 5th, 1993, the Planning Board agreed to a \$500 performance bond to cover minor reseeding issues along Jewett Hill Drive, one side of the detention basin and bare spots within some of the lots. Connor noted that during a recent site visit, the roadsides and the detention basin were found to be vegetated. Because so many years have elapsed and all the lots were built upon, all areas within the individual lots are presumed to be vegetated as well since they are all landscaped. Purinton asked Connor if all associated conservation restrictions or easements were recorded. Connor said that the conservation restrictions appeared to be in order.

MOTION: Hone moved to approve the release of the \$500 surety. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed 4 to 0.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Vegetative Management Plan: Sagamore Road, Candlewood Road, Fellows Road and Lakeman's Lane.

At the request of Tim Henry, Director of Utilities for the Town of Ipswich, the Planning Board agreed to continue the public hearing seeking Scenic Road approval to remove dead or compromised trees within the right of way along the aforementioned roads that may impede utility lines.

MOTION: Purinton moved to continue the public hearing to the next Planning Board meeting. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

Vegetative Management Plan: Waldingfield Road.

At the request of Tim Henry, Director of Utilities for the Town of Ipswich, the Planning Board agreed to continue the public hearing seeking Scenic Road approval to remove dead or compromised trees within the right-of-way along the afore-mentioned road that may impede utility lines.

MOTION: Chadwick moved to continue the public hearing to the next Planning Board meeting. Hone seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Requested: Special Permit to allow conversion of an existing garage into a dwelling unit at 15 Currier Park.

Donna Farina, owner of the property and her daughter, Mary Anderson, appeared before the Board. Farina told the Board that Anderson would be living in the proposed apartment with her husband. Manzi asked if they were planning to stay in the footprint of the existing garage. Farina said they planned to raise the roofline of the building. Manzi asked where the parking would be. Farina presented pictures of the current and proposed parking. Gibbs asked Farina to sketch where the parking would be on the plan. Gibbs asked how many vehicles would need to be accommodated. Anderson answered that they owned two cars. Gibbs asked if they had an elevation drawing. Anderson showed plans for the apartment but they did not include an elevation drawing. Gibbs asked that they obtain an elevation rendering of the proposed dwelling unit. Hone and Manzi explained that in order to approve the application, the Board must have a better sense of what the building would look like. Benfield asked if the dwelling unit had to be a rental unit in order to be affordable because the application said it was a condo. Manzi answered that it does not but the house would have to be turned into a condo too. Farina said that the unit would be an apartment rather than a condo. Purinton explained that this application may be a little different than others since the garage is a fairly new structure rather than a historic structure and since the bylaw was created with historic preservation in mind, it is a novel approach for the Board. Gibbs said that the provision that allows this conversion does say it must fit within the footprint and that the Board could refuse the application on that basis since the roofline is being raised but there is flexibility. Chadwick asked if the fact that the garage only had a slab for the foundation would cause any problems with converting to the apartment. Purinton said that no, it wasn't necessarily a problem. The Board agreed that a site visit would be an appropriate action before the next meeting. The site visit was set for August 24 at 6:30 p.m.

MOTION: Hone moved to continue the public hearing to the next Planning Board meeting. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion: Attendance at August 27 Planning Board meeting

The Board discussed ensuring that four Board members would be present for public and continued public hearings at the next meeting on August 27th.

MOTION: Hone moved to open the public hearing for 15 Currier Park. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

MOTION: Manzi moved to appoint Suzanne Benfield, Associate member to Acting member for the August 27th meeting. Hone seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

MOTION: Purinton moved to continue the public hearing to the next Planning Board meeting. Hone seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Requested: Special Permit to allow installation of additional equipment to existing monopole located at 2 Turnpike Road.

Gin Vilante, Wellman Associates and, Franz Spear appeared before the board. Vilante, acting as MetroPCS's representative, said that MetroPCS was seeking approval to install six panel antennas to the existing monopole, similar to the way that other existing antennas are mounted. Manzi asked if they were microwave antennae. Vilante answered that they would be facilitating wireless cell phone coverage. Manzi asked if the look of the poles would be as shown in the plan. Vilante said yes. Gibbs asked about the height of the proposed ice bridge. Vilante explained that the ice bridge would be about 15' tall and 40' away from the fence. Gibbs said that the antennas were stated in the application as being flush mounted, when in fact, they are mounted on extended arms as shown in the rendering. Vilante explained that the renderings were not correct but the drawings were, and that the arms extending out from the pole to hold the antenna were about one foot long rather than the two feet depicted in the rendering.

MOTION: Manzi moved to close the public hearing. Purinton seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

Gibbs and the Board discussed the language of the draft Decision.

MOTION: Hone moved to approve the Special Permit as revised per the discussion. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion: Presentation of revised development concept for Turner Hill by the Residences at the Hill, LLC.

Gibbs explained to the Board that this was an informal preliminary discussion preceding any formal application. Jim Valleco, Architect, appeared before the Board. He explained that getting the closest number to the previously approved 180-plus dwelling units had been the plan but now they were interested in creating a more community-minded living plan with townhouses, fewer apartment style buildings and fewer residential units overall. Plan A as shown by Valleco featured townhouses of approximately 2000 square feet, clustered in a village-like setting. The buildings would have porches and entrance courtyards and each unit would be 1 and ½ stories. The entrance courtyard would be located between the garage and the townhouse building. A model of a unit was shown to the Board. There would be two small parks. Garages in much of the development would not be visible from the street. Valleco stated that the neighborhood residents' group has been shown the plan and approve of it. Valleco said that if the townhouses appear to market well, Turner Hill would be inclined to continue building them rather than any apartment style buildings. Purinton asked about a no-built zone on the plan and was assured that it was not going to be built on. He also asked about the status of the church that was originally going to be preserved but is now being considered for development of townhouses or mid-sized apartment-style buildings. Gibbs said that the church was not considered historic by the Historic Commission. Hone expressed concern about the potential sprawling. Gillis said that essentially

less land was being used in the proposed plan than in the approved plan. Discussion ensued. Manzi said that he liked the plan. He did not think that there would be that much open space lost. Purinton commented on how the new plan was patterning the new development after houses on the hill rather than the historic brick mansion. He also noted that many of the townhouses would have garages in front – a style that Randall Arendt calls “snout houses”. Vallico explained that 50% of the development would not have views from sidewalks or streets looking at the front of the garages. Porches and trellises would be emphasized. The potential relocation of Mary’s House’s was discussed. Gibbs noted that while the approved Special Permit allowed 182 units, Turner Hill had not intended to build that many in any of the proposals brought before the Board previously. Event parking was discussed and the Board emphasized that no parking on the alley should occur.

Update: Appeal of 25 High Street Special Permit denial

Gibbs explained that Chris Lane was appealing the Board’s decision to deny his special permit. Manzi said that Town Counsel would be handling the legal process.

Discussion: Zoning and Land Use Articles for Fall Town Meeting

Gibbs updated the Board on the Finance Committee’s discussion of the proposed Sustainable Building Measures and Miscellaneous amendments at their meeting on August 11th. Purinton updated the Board on the Selectmen’s discussion of the proposed amendments at their meeting on August 3rd.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Hone moved to adjourn. Chadwick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Connor

The Planning Board approved these minutes on August 27, 2009.