



BOXBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
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Owen Neville, Chair Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk Nancy Fillmore John Markiewicz Hongbing Tang

Meeting Minutes
June 29, 2015
7:30 PM
Morse Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road

Members Present:

Owen Neville, Chair
Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk
Nancy Fillmore, Member
John Markiewicz, Member
Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner

Members Absent:

Hongbing Tang, Member

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM.

Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2015

Ms. Fillmore MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of June 15, 2015. Mr. Pontoriero SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Correspondence

Mr. Duchesneau distributed and read an email from Becky Neville of 317 Middle Road dated June 29, 2015 which indicated her opposition to the proposed policy on banners over Route 111.

Discussion Regarding Proposed Banner Policy and Compliance with Zoning Bylaw

Ms. Fillmore inquired if the Public Works Director was ever asked about the proposed banner policy and it was unknown if he had been contacted. Mr. Duchesneau read a letter to the Planning Board from Building Inspector David Lindberg dated June 11, 2015 which spoke to some of the banner policy and permitting items, including the policy's conformance with the Zoning Bylaw and MassDOT's policy on banners over their roadways. Mr. Pontoriero asked if the Board of Selectmen had already made their decision on this matter. Mr. Neville indicated they had not, but the topic is an item on their agenda for their July 20, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Markiewicz asked how the particular proposed location for the banner was selected. Mr. Neville indicated he believed the location was selected because it was close to the Department of Public Works, however, he also pointed out a new pole would need to be set to string a banner across Route 111 at the proposed location. Mr. Neville continued on to state the property owner of 593 Massachusetts Avenue (adjacent to the Department of Public Works) did not need another

impediment to redevelop his property and drivers did not need something else to possibly run into along Route 111. Mr. Neville noted the Energy Committee had asked about stringing a banner across Route 111, but he was confused as to why they were not directed to the signage board in front of the Fire Station. Mr. Neville also pointed out there were other locations along Route 111 with a utility pole on one side and a guide pole on the other where a banner could be strung without the need for setting a new pole.

The Planning Board then raised questions about who would assume the liability for the banner across the roadway and had concerns the Town could be held accountable if an accident happened. Mr. Pontoriero noted the banner policy idea likely came from seeing banners in other communities and he noted how a number of non-profit groups could use them for advertising. However, he wondered how the banners would be regulated to ensure they are not distasteful or offensive. Mr. Neville stated the Building Inspector would be responsible for regulating the banners according to the proposed policy.

Mr. Neville asked how the proposed banners would be in compliance with Sections 6307(5) and 6308(6) of the Zoning Bylaw. Mr. Duchesneau noted these provisions of the Zoning Bylaw applied to permanent signage on individual parcels of land, not the public right-of-way. The proposed banners would be temporary signage over a public right-of-way where the Zoning Bylaw would actually not be applicable. Mr. Duchesneau added that even if the Zoning Bylaw were to regulate the proposed banners, they would be regulated under Section 6305(5) which speaks to temporary, non-commercial event signs. Mr. Neville stated the Zoning Bylaw speaks to what the Town has intended in terms of all signage.

Mr. Pontoriero asked where the banner policy proposal originated. Mr. Duchesneau explained the Energy Committee had inquired with the Town Administrator about putting a banner across Route 111. The Town Administrator informed the Committee there was currently no policy on banners over the roadway but felt it might be a worthwhile item to explore further. She then worked with the Building Inspector to craft a banner policy that would regulate all types banners across Route 111 and brought it to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Markiewicz felt the banner policy was not needed. Mr. Pontoriero did not want the Town to spend any money on this, including the Public Works employee's time, supervision, etc. Ms. Fillmore noted the Town's employees would be used to erect the banners. Mr. Pontoriero felt people could simply use the signage board by the Fire Station or other types of signage along Route 111.

Mr. Pontoriero then MADE a MOTION to have the Planning Board formalize their stance on the banner policy matter as follows: The Planning Board does not see this policy as a necessity which needs to be fulfilled being there are other opportunities for communication along Route 111 and there are other locations where other types of signage can be used in ways that are more environmentally friendly.

Mr. Neville stated the Planning Board could work on the wording of this motion and take a formal vote on it at their next meeting on July 13, 2015.

At this time Francie Nolde, Chair of the Energy Committee, arrived at the meeting and wanted to know how the Planning Board felt about the proposed banner policy. The Planning Board members informed Ms. Nolde of their stance on the issue and Mr. Duchesneau read Ms. Nolde the Board's motion. Ms. Nolde asked if there was a different location along Route 111 the Planning Board felt would be better and Mr. Neville stated further to the west or the east from the proposed location would be preferable. However, he also pointed out the Planning Board felt the signage board in front of the Fire Station should be used. Ms. Nolde then explained the LittleBox Solar Initiative and how their goal was to have 50 homes sign up for the solar program. The Energy Committee has had very good attendance at their initial LittleBox Solar meetings and many residents have signed up for solar evaluation appointments. However, the Energy Committee was informed by the installer that typically only 20% of these appointments result in people signing up to join the program. The Energy Committee is using the Town's website, email, and other methods to get the word out, but they wanted to do everything possible in terms of outreach.

Mr. Markiewicz stated the most prominent place to reach out to the public is at the Transfer Station and this would not require the installation of a new pole. He pointed out that people stop and chat at the Transfer Station and it would be good to focus the Energy Committee's outreach efforts there. Mr. Markiewicz also added the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) has been putting up their Boxborough 2030 banner behind the Selectmen during their meetings to capture the television viewing audience. Ms. Fillmore noted the banner could also be erected on the hill at the Transfer Station. Mr. Neville suggested that Ms. Nolde look into altering the banner policy. Ms. Nolde then confirmed the Planning Board was opposed to all banners over the roadways in town and the Planning Board members indicated this was correct. Mr. Markiewicz also added the banner could be hung from one of the trailers where electronics are dropped off at the Transfer Station, or perhaps even between some of the trees there.

Report on the Space Needs Advisory Group (SNAG)

Ms. Fillmore stated at the last meeting of the SNAG the group discussed how the \$69,500 that had been appropriated for the next phase of the project should be used. She also indicated the group discussed whether or not the SNAG should be disbanded and a more formal committee should be formed. Ultimately the members felt the SNAG should remain an informal group for the time being. Mr. Duchesneau noted if the SNAG were to become a formal committee it would remove some of the project control from the Police and Fire Chiefs. Ms. Fillmore indicated committee members would also need to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen as opposed to simply being designated by their respective Board or Committee.

Ms. Fillmore noted the Police and Fire Chiefs have explored simply renovating the existing buildings to accommodate their future needs, but any additions or adjustments to the structures would require them to become entirely code compliant. Mr. Markiewicz stated from the Town's perspective, the Town needs to figure out what needs to be done for this project, and why, based upon the needs of the community.

Planning Board Fee Schedule – Abutter Mailing Fees for Applications

Mr. Duchesneau proposed adding the cost of the abutter mailing fees to all Planning Board application fees where applicable as this is how the Zoning Board of Appeals currently operates.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated this is something the Planning Board should be doing as this is not a cost the Town should be absorbing. Mr. Neville asked if a public hearing was required to make this change to the Fee Schedule. Mr. Duchesneau indicated he did not believe so, but would look into the matter before the Planning Board's next meeting.

Future Meeting Dates until December of 2015

Ms. Fillmore MADE a MOTION to set the Planning Board's meeting dates for the remainder of 2015 as discussed at the meeting as follows:

Monday, October 5th
Monday, October 19th
Monday, November 2nd
Monday, November 16th
Monday, December 7th
Monday, December 21st

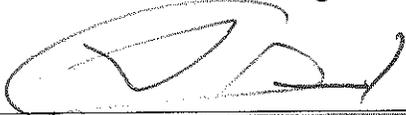
Mr. Pontoriero SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Boxborough 2030 (Master Plan) Update

Mr. Markiewicz indicated the Boxborough 2030 Booth had received a significant number of visitors and responses at Fifer's Day. Mr. Duchesneau noted around 150 people had visited the booth and the Boxborough 2030 website was recently updated to reflect the responses which had been received. Mr. Markiewicz stated he continues to tell the MPUC they are not going to solve every item of the Master Plan during the update process. The MPUC will likely need to setup separate committees which will work on each implementation initiative of the Master Plan once it is completed.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Markiewicz, SECONDED by Ms. Fillmore, with all members voting in favor.

On Behalf of the Boxborough Planning Board



Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk