

Montague Planning Board

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January 28, 2014 6:30 PM
Town Hall Upstairs Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Sicard – Chair, Bruce Young, Fred Bowman, Bob Obear and George Cooke
Staff Present: Walter Ramsey, AICP- Town Planner, and David Jensen (6:46 p.m)

Meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM by Ron Sicard-Chair.

Approval of Minutes: September 24, 2013 Minutes, October 22, 2013 Minutes and November 26, 2013 Minutes.

Motion made by Bob Obear to approve September 24, 2013 minutes. Seconded by George Cooke.
Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Bob Obear to approve October 22, 2013 minutes. Seconded by Bruce Young.
Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Bob Obear to approve November 26, 2013 minutes. Seconded by George Cooke.
Motion passed unanimously.

REVISION OF ANR #2013-06 -156 East Mineral Road filed by Jon H. Waidlich
To revise a property boundary on the previously approved plan to create one new building lot in a AF-4 zoning district with 250 feet of frontage from Map 25 Lot 9, East Mineral Road.

Planner: After the board approved the previous plan the owner discovered that a property line was drawn over an adjacent septic system. There will not be a change frontage, only a change to the side lot line. Walter recommended endorsing the amended plan. No fee was in required of the applicant for the amendment.

Motion made by Bruce Young to approve the revised ANR plan based on a finding that there is no change in frontage for the lot just an adjustment made to ANR #2013-06 156 East Mineral Road filed by Jon H. Waidlich to establish a building lot with 250 feet of frontage from Map 25 Lot 9 East Mineral Road. Seconded by, Bob Obear. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Town Planner update:

- a. CDBG 2015 Grant Application: Grant application overview, potential vote to support application.

Planner: The application is due in a couple of weeks. The Planning Board usually is typically asked for a letter of support. The non-physical projects that are being proposed are 1. Housing rehabilitation and 2. Social Services. For physical projects that are being proposed 1. Streetscape enhancement to Avenue A including a bump out plaza on the corner of Avenue A and 3rd Street and Street lighting (replacing 33

light posts, led lights –they will look like the ones in Millers Falls). The Town Planner shared the design plans with the board. The grant criteria includes the need for two physical projects so after the public hearings and the livability plan it was decided based on support and need to have the lighting and a bump out plaza as the designated phase 1 of the plan. The street trees would be kept and some of the planters would be repaired in this area. There is a plan for a phase 2 which would include updating the other planters and extending the street lighting down to Peskeomskut Park. The selectmen had some concerns with the project due to removal of 3 parking spaces regardless of what the outcomes supported and other Selectmen felt money could be better spent other places in town. The Planning Board brought up the issues of the truck route/turning radius due to the bump out, an idea of an island rather than a bump out plaza along with discussing the scale of the bump out and getting another parking space back on Avenue A. The Town Planner is going to have Berkshire Design Group rework the proposal to include the extension of the lighting down of Avenue A.

Motion made by Ron Sicard to support the CDBG 2015 Grant Application with some revisions as discussed. Seconded by, Bob Obear. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

- b. Zoning Workshop: Sign Regulations (Section 6.1): Review existing sign regulations for consistency with current planning goals.

Planner: Most recently some issues have come up that the existing sign regulations don't address. For example the use of flashing or scrolling signage that Cumberland Farms proposed at their gas station. The following is what was discussed regarding the sign regulations:

**EXISTING SIGN REGULATIONS
(to be replaced in entirety)**

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

Sign- shall mean any device designed to inform or attract attention of persons not on the premises on which it is located, but not including traffic directional signs or signs erected by public agencies

Sign area- shall mean the surface area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing all the display area of the sign, but not including structural members not bearing advertising matter, unless internally or decoratively lighted. One side of flat, back to back signs shall be counted.

SECTION 6. GENERAL REGULATION

6.1 Sign Requirements

6/16/73

6.1.1 Off-Premises Signs.

Billboards or signs whose content does not relate exclusively to the premises on which they are located, or to products, accommodations or services or activities on those premises shall be allowed only in LB, GB, and ID Districts; provided, however, that any such off-premises sign shall not exceed 100 square feet in sign area and six feet in height, shall not be located upon the roof of any building, and in the event that such sign exceeds 32 square feet of sign area, shall not be located within 50 feet of any public way. If required, permits must be obtained from the Outdoor Advertising Authority. **(Currently we don't have a Limited Business district)**

6.1.2 On-Premises Signs.

Signs whose content relates exclusively to the premises on which they are located, or to products, accommodations, services or activities on those premises shall be allowed, subject to the following:

(a) Permitted on any premises are unlighted directional signs of 2 square feet or smaller, or subsidiary signs such as travel, club and credit card signs if incorporated within an approved on-premise sign framework.

(Accessory signs)

(b) On any premises there shall not be more than one free standing sign, plus not more than one building sign per business or other enterprise. **(Quantity of signs allowed)**

(c) In a Residential District or Agricultural District, no sign shall exceed four square feet. In all other districts, signs shall not exceed 32 square feet. However, signs of larger areas may be allowed in any district on Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. **(Size of signs) (There is a discrepancy in this between the home occupation vs. residential district and what the bylaws allow in each.) (Zoning Board of Appeals has the authority to grant by special permit the size but not the location or the number, these would have to be addressed by a variance request.)**

6.1.3 Sign Prohibitions.

No sign shall flash or move, or cause glare on any public way or adjoining property; or be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. unless relating to an establishment open during those hours. No building sign shall project above the roof. **(With the advance in technology a lot of signage has gone to LED which makes signage easily programmable and changeable.)**

PROPOSED REGULATIONS- TOWN PLANNER WORKING DRAFT 1/8/2014

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS (no changes)

Sign- shall mean any device designed to inform or attract attention of persons not on the premises on which it is located, but not including traffic directional signs or signs erected by public agencies

Sign area- shall mean the surface area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing all the display area of the sign, but not including structural members not bearing advertising matter, unless internally or decoratively lighted. One side of flat, back to back signs shall be counted.

SECTION 6. GENERAL REGULATION

6.1 Sign Requirements (replace in entirety)

6.1.1 Permitted Signs.

Signs whose content relates exclusively to the premises on which they are located, or to products, accommodations, services or activities on those premises are allowed by a permit from the Building Inspector, subject to the following:

(a) On any premises there shall not be more than one free standing sign, plus not more than one building sign per business or other enterprise. A business with entrances on multiple road frontages may have one building sign for each frontage. A business in the Central Business or Neighborhood Business District without a free standing sign may have a second vertically projecting building sign.

(b) Permitted on any premises are unlighted directional signs of two (2) square feet or smaller, and one non-flashing “open” sign or flag per business if incorporated within an approved on-premise sign framework.

(c) Sandwich board signs are permitted directly in front of a place of business in any district. All sandwich board signs in the public right of way must receive a license from the Board of Selectmen. All sandwich board signs on private property shall not exceed three (3) feet in height and two (2) feet in width.

(Sandwich board signs are by right as it is considered a free-standing sign. The Selectmen permit these licenses as it is on a public right of way.)

(d) Temporary signs attached to the outside of a building façade or from a free standing sign which are regularly or occasionally replaced or substituted shall be considered permanent signs. **(Have to consider if it is a sign, artwork or political based.)**

6.1.2 Dimensional Restrictions.

No sign shall exceed:

(a) Four (4) square feet in area in Residential and Agricultural Forestry Districts with the exception of religious, nonprofit educational, municipal use or farming operations which may have one sign not exceeding twenty-five (25) square feet in area. (most home occupancy businesses are in these districts)

(b) Twenty-five (25) square feet in Neighborhood Business, Central Business, Recreation-Education, and Public-Semi Public Districts. **(Bring the current 32 square feet regulation and reduce it to 25 square feet)**

(c) Thirty-two (32) square feet in area in General Business, Industrial, and Rural Business Districts.

6.1.3 Prohibited Signs.

The following signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:

a) Signs that contain any part that moves, flashes, scrolls, or repeatedly switches its message with the exception of time and temperature indicators.

b) Signs that cause glare on any public way or adjoining property.

c) Signs that are illuminated between the hours of 11:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M. unless relating to an establishment open during those hours.

d) Signs that project above the roofline of the associated property.

e) Free-standing signs exceeding 15 feet in height.

f) Signs that generate music or an audible message

g) Signs that are erected at any location where the sign may obstruct vision of any traffic sign, signal, intersection or driveway entrance.

h) Billboards and other off premise signs. **(Examples of these would be: farm stand signs, MC fire district, rotary club and real-estate directional signs, 2nd Street Bakery, decorative signs and plantings with sponsored by signs)**

i) Signs located in a public right of way without prior approval from the Board of Selectmen or Massachusetts Highway Department

6.1.3 Exceptions.

The Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a special permit for an exception to the number, height, or area requirements of a sign.

Building Inspector: David would like to see square footage used where it can as it has a universal understanding. The sign use by right has not been an issue up to this point along with the quantity of signage at each business/building.

Planner: Walter would like to see the signage regulations clearer especially in the Central Business district where you can have a wall sign in addition to a vertically projecting/sandwich board sign by right. Walter will work on the sign regulations paying attention to: particular size, flashing/moving signs, and awnings/projection portions. Walter will also draft a site plan review specifically to address the old Greenfield Savings Bank building and a possible change of use and vehicle trips being a trigger needed for a site plan review. The site plan review process currently involves an environmental impact statement which will stay in for now and the process will be reviewed at the next Planning Board meeting. There are also available design guidelines that should be shared with new businesses that come into town.

c. Items not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting.

Preparations for the medical marijuana article will be heard at a special town meeting on January 30, 2014. The Town Counsel reviewed the regulations and asked to have some changes made. 1) The definition of medical marijuana dispensaries slightly to specifically reference the Massachusetts state laws. 2) Under section b where the special use is reference and where it is going to be placed in the list of special uses. 3) On the Town Meeting floor there are a couple of items that will have to be changed under section 7.10.3 sections A,B,C were in capitals and need to be lowercase letters and also need to end in periods rather than semicolons. All those present at the meeting agreed to the slight changes.

Motion made by Fred Bowman to adjourn January 28, 2014 Planning Board meeting. Seconded by George Cooke. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____