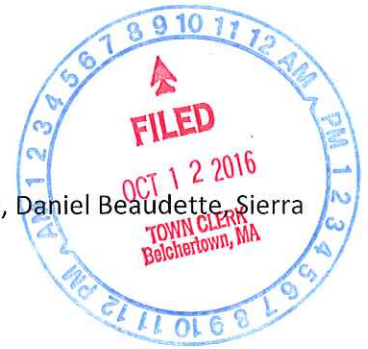


Belchertown Planning Board Minutes  
September 27, 2016



Planning Board Members: Michael Hofler, Donna Lusignan, Chris Laurenzo, James Natle, Daniel Beaudette, Sierra Pelletier (alternate for special permits)

Staff: Douglas Albertson, Town Planner, Lynn Sikes

Present: Bill Terry, EDIC Chairman

M. Hofler, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and welcomed everyone.

M. Hofler read for the record the agenda. There is an addition to the agenda: Bill Terry, Chairman of the EDIC, will explain preliminary changes to the site plan for the Grantham Group.

Bill Terry spoke to the Board. He had a draft plan showing site plan changes for Christopher Heights, the new Assisted Living facility located on the state school property. D. Albertson met with EDIC, the Grantham group, their design people, and some town departments earlier today. D. Albertson explained the proposal. He showed the approved plan and explained that the proposed change is to eliminate 11 parking spaces, to go from 53 down to 42, and to alter the storm water detention basins by making them shallow swales instead. He added that the fire chief had some comments that Grantham agreed to address. The new plan shows about 50% plus less paving. This will reduce the cost of site work.

The Board wants Grantham to present industry standards for parking to show what is required. Grantham should determine this in the beginning rather than finding they might need to add spaces later. They should justify why 53 spaces as shown on the approved plan are now unnecessary.

The final plan will need to be submitted for review. The revised plan and storm water calculations are to be reviewed by Tighe and Bond, the board's review engineer. When the final plan is in, pertinent departments would also review.

The board itemized their initial comments on the draft plan:

- 1) They asked for the logic why the 53 spaces were changed to 42 parking spaces?
- 2) The Board wants a detailed list of all proposed revisions.
- 3) Identify where, if needed, future additional parking might be installed.
- 4) Identify how the loading ramp will work.
- 5) Give the retention water calculations.
- 6) Get from the Fire Chief a written letter agreeing to the revisions.

With the new changes and more financing, Grantham hopes to break ground early April and take a year for construction and open for business April of 2018. The Board thanked Mr. Terry for coming in.

-----  
C. Laurenzo thanked Mr. Terry, who is also a volunteer for the Belchertown Fair, for all his efforts and work at the recent Belchertown Fair. It was a wonderful time and thanked the fair committee and all those who volunteer. It is very impressive to see the amount of work that is accomplished. It was a wonderful weekend and we were lucky to have had great weather.

Mr. Terry left the meeting.

-----  
ANR for Arthur Bessette, 90 Channel Drive, Map 101, Lots 43 and 44 to become one lot to become lot #43. Arthur Bessette is the owner and applicant. This was a condition of his recently granted accessory apartment special permit.

**Motion:** C. Laurenzo to endorse the ANR for Map 101, Lots #43 and #44 to create one new lot to be entitled Lot #43 **Second:** J. Natle **Vote** 5-0-0

-----  
**Motion:** J. Natle to accept the minutes of September 13, 2016 as written. **Second:** D. Lusignan, **Vote** 5-0-0.

-----  
Bills were endorsed.

-----  
Discussion items:

-----  
Fee schedule – The proposed new fees are final. Part of this will include amending the subdivision regulations, §270-67. The Board will hold a public hearing for amending this part of the subdivision regulations.

-----  
Chapter 61B Recommendation, South Washington Street, Map 279 Lot 12, applicants Catherine L. Gaouette and Patricia Randon. This request was forwarded from the Board of Selectmen to review a Right of First Refusal – that was tabled from our last meeting pending comments from the Conservation Commission; specifically as to whether they had expressed acquiring this land. A memo from Conservation Administrator LeeAnne Connolly has since been issued stating that at their meeting held on September 26, 2016, the Commission recommended the selectmen do not exercise their Right of First Refusal. With this Conservation Commission recommendation, the Board has no further concerns.

**Motion:** D. Beaudette to recommend to the Select board that they do not exercise their ~~Right of First Refusal~~ <sup>Right of First Refusal</sup> for South Washington Street, Map 279 Lot 12, Catherine L. Gaouette and Patricia Randon. **Second** D.Lusignan **Vote** 5-0-0

-----  
Recommendation to Board of Appeals for a variance on property located at Willow Lane, Map 245 Parcel 93, Lot 6. The request is to reduce the front setback from the required 160 feet to 80 feet. This is an estate lot, but the configuration is different than a standard estate lot as there is not another lot in front of it. The abutting house, #33, has been built. Aesthetically this would make the proposed house more in line with the neighboring houses. This is new construction; not an existing house looking for a variance for something additional. The variance would be to keep the septic system and house away from the wetlands in the rear of the lot. The application did not include any correspondence from the Conservation Commission. The topography in this area does have some difficulty, and the wetlands on this lot make it difficult to fit all items in. The board considered the potential benefits of the variance and the reasoning behind it, as well as the fact that this lot was created with the same zoning in place as now. Because of the zoning having been known when the lot was created, the site conditions should have been known. The board determined that without any written comment from the Conservation Commission, there is not an obvious hardship, and therefore, the house should go with correct setbacks. If the Conservation Commission can document its position, then that could be used as a basis for hardship.

**Motion:** D. Beaudette that we recommend to the ZBA that they take favorable action on the variance submitted by James Hayward, Map 245 Parcel 93, Lot 6 for the front setback to go from 160' to 80'. **Second:** C. Laurenzo **Vote:** 0-5-0 The board's dissent is that these setback requirements were known at the time the subdivision plan was approved. This has not changed. Also, the application does not include documentation from Conservation Commission requiring that the applicant not build within the wetland buffer.

-----  
Town Planner's report:

- Two subdivisions are nearing completion. Jason's Way (J. Hayward) has very little left. This should be wrapping up soon. Meadow Pond Road (D. Lafleur) said that the bounds are in and as-builts are done. There is a little grading of the detention basin and the guard rail. Harris Way should be in a similar position.
- Citizen's planner training. Courses are offered in the fall throughout the State. PVPC offers one on October 13. It is a course on the Introduction to Subdivision Control law and ANR, taught by Paul Bobrowski, who wrote the Mass. Land use law handbook. Also, on October 27th the course will be on the new public

records law, given by Bob Ritchie. They are both offered in the PVPC office in Springfield. There is money in the budget if anyone would like to attend.

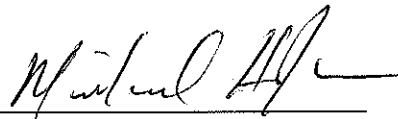
- Copy of the letter to cease and desist sent to the New England Small Farm Institute and Valley Poultry, LLC. from the Zoning Enforcement Officer, P. Adzima. Last year, the two parties came to the Planning Board to see what the board might want on a site plan; at that time, the board felt that zoning does not apply to state-owned property. There is now a verbal opinion from town counsel that zoning does apply and that zoning should be enforced. A few board members expressed that town counsel's opinion should be in writing.
- Our next meeting for October 11 is the day after the Columbus Day holiday, so we will be meeting in the small meeting room. An Accessory Apartment public hearing is on that agenda.
- There is regional discussion regarding a passenger rail line, with a stop in Palmer. The idea is to have trains between Boston and Montreal and between Boston and New Haven via Springfield with a stop in Palmer. This would take several years to implement, once approved. Once operating such service would be near the south end of town.

Members report:

- D. Lusignan -The Board should look into "Tumble Weed" houses, aka tiny houses. We should be proactive not reactive and have zoning in place so there can be some orderly control of them. She has some information on bylaws around the country to use as examples.
- J. Natle indicated the community preservation committee met last week. They had a very good year. Lawrence Memorial town hall windows are now paid off. The moving of the old school house was another project completed. Applications for new submissions will be online soon.
- M. Hofler – again just wanted to say how wonderful the Belchertown Fair was. It defines what it is like to live in Belchertown. The Farmers market, the concert on the common ~ all these things help to make our Town what it is.

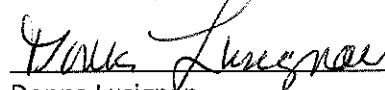
-----  
**MOTION:** J. Natle to adjourn the meeting. **Second:** D. Lusignan **Vote:** 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:17



Michael Hofler, Chairman

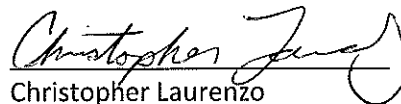
James Natle, Vice Chair



Donna Lusignan



Daniel Beaudette



Christopher Laurenzo