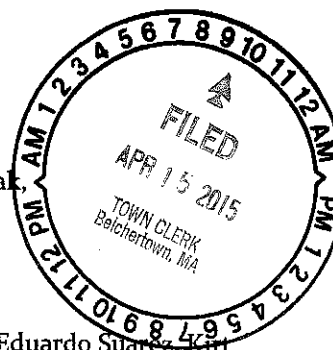


Belchertown Planning Board Minutes

March 10, 2015



Members: Daniel Beaudette, Christopher Laurenzo, James Natle, George Synan, Robert Wojtczak, Michael Hofler (Alternate Voting Member Special Permits).

Staff: Douglas Albertson - Town Planner, Susan Gay

Visitors: Hollis Brashear, John Krifka, Fred Morris, Sierra Pelletier, Peter Laznicka, Judy Gillan, Eduardo Suarez, Kart Mayland, Stephen Ballard of Whitman & Bingham Assoc.

Chris Laurenzo Chairman opened the meeting at 7:33 pm.

C. Laurenzo re-opened a public hearing for a **special permit for an accessory apartment** by applicant Jared Moriarty for 16 Shea Avenue, Map 109, Lot 26.

Mr. Moriarty brought photographs of the existing house, and a plan and elevation of his proposed apartment. The board said this presentation was clear and they could figure what he wanted to do.

Motion J. Natle to close the public hearing for Jared Moriarty for an accessory apartment at 16 Shea Avenue, Second D. Beaudette, Vote 5-0-0;

Motion J. Natle to grant a special permit to Jared Moriarty for an accessory apartment at 16 Shea Avenue, noting that the approximate ten square feet over the 600 square foot maximum is negligible, Second G. Synan, Vote 5-0-0. The board noted the approval is as seen on the drawing submitted by Mr. Moriarty tonight to be entered into the file, Second G. Synan, Vote 5-0-0.

Judy Gillan of the New England Small Farm Institute (NESFI) to discuss possible requirements to build a poultry slaughterhouse on the Lampson Brook Farm on Jackson Street. A sub-lessee, Peter Laznicka, wants to process chickens at this site.

Board member Dan Beaudette disclosed that he works for the USDA and has participated in some projects with NESFI. He has not been hired for pay and felt this was not an ethical issue. However, he noted that if anyone here felt it might be an issue for him to be part of this conversation, he asked them to speak up and he would excuse himself from the discussion, to which there was no response.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts owns the land and NESFI is the lessee. The building inspector and town planner suggested that the use is not allowed unless the proposed use can be shown as part of NESFI's educational non-profit mission, or if it can be ascertained that local zoning does not apply to state land. Judy noted the reason NESFI is presently located at this site is because the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) asked them years ago to occupy buildings to prevent vandalism.

Doug showed the board where the building is located. Mr. Krifka from Gillen Collaborative Architects said he could submit a plan showing the whole site for the processing as well as the existing building and what they have for parking. The board asked Mr. Laznicka questions about numbers of poultry processed, layout of the building and rooms involved in the process.

Judy Gillan asked the board a question regarding zoning as this property is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and leased to NESFI, which is a non-profit entity. This is the first step is to see if they should proceed. Judy said this was a permitted use under their lease.

The board felt this is an issue for the state to determine and felt they have no jurisdiction over this site. It was noted that if the board was the determining factor, they would go along with a poultry business as they would want to help NESFI bring all aspects of farming to Lampson Brook Farm. Judy Gillan said she'd ask Paul Adzima, Building Commissioner to ask David Holmes, State Building Commissioner his opinion on this issue.

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Kirt Mayland and Steve Ballard were here to discuss the ANR plan regarding Springfield Road's solar project and an amendment to the approved site plan. Mr. Mayland's corporation would purchase the parcel from the Loftus family.

The approved site plan has a right-of-way through the abutting Northeast Treaters parcel. Mr. Mayland explained that it would good to have another access in case the agreement with Northeast Treaters ever changed. There is an existing farm road on the solar parcel that would provide access to the panels from the street. Mr. Mayland said he'd replace a culvert and improve what is necessary to have the access to the parcel. The conservation commission has already permitted this. The board discussed if this minor modification to the approved solar project would need to be a formal change to a site plan.

ANR plan: Motion J. Natle - to endorse the ANR plan for Old Springfield Road, LLC, surveyed for Springfield Road, Map 255, Lot 126, proposed Lot A, Second D. Beaudette, Vote 5-0-0.

Site Plan Motion D. Beaudette to grant an amendment to a site plan in accordance to a survey plot plan to be submitted by Whitman & Bingham Associates, LLC for applicant Old Springfield Road LLC 43 Reservoir Road, Lakeville Connecticut, for a solar project by Old Springfield Road LLC, located on Springfield Road, Map 255, Lot 126, Second G. Synan, Vote 5-0-0.

Note: when the amended plan by Whitman & Bingham Assoc. LLC is received, the Town Planner will notify the Town Clerk for the applicant's file.

Sarah Bankert is in to present the "Healthy Hampshire" program and discuss the work being done in Belchertown. The grant from the Mass. Dept of Public Health is to investigate how the Town of Belchertown can enhance walkability, that is, pedestrian access to provide the health benefits, community activity and support for businesses. She cited facts about adults and disease and how this could be turned around making walking more convenient. This work is a "Common to Courthouse" initiative to analyze the existing shortcomings of the pedestrian facilities in this area and to begin the important planning that would go along with the redevelopment of this corridor with the state school work. The vision is to create a network of sidewalks and paths through this area to include the school campus, NESFI farm, the disused railroad and more.

She is trying to see if there are some places that could be developed as walking loops, so they may be publicized for use by all. Last year her group walked around the common and had a visioning session. Focus was streetscape and sidewalks and also the corridor on Maple and State Streets was discussed.

Sarah will lead a forum of town offices and boards at the planning board meeting on April 14 at 7 pm. She also is working on soliciting public opinion and insight on pedestrian accessibility.

Two volunteers have approached the office recently to work with the board to gain experience. They introduced themselves. Sierra Pelletier, is a resident of Belchertown said she is interested in being an associate planning board member. The board asked her about her interest in planning. She noted she will enter the University of Massachusetts next year in the graduate program in Regional Planning. Hollis Brashear said she is a grad student from UMass and will be heading to the West Coast.

They agreed to work together to solicit opinions from businesses in town. The board had created a list of questions last year for this and Ms. Brashear wants to review this with the board. The board would like to get business owners' thoughts for improving business areas in the town. Doug sent the board the large list of DBA or "doing business as" of all the businesses in town recently. There are 400 + on the list, some which may be expired.

Ms. Brashear said she'd drafted a letter to accompany the list of questions. Ms. Brashear will develop a letter on one side and a questionnaire on the other side of one page. The board said the suggestion to keep it on one page is a good plan, and suggest it go to the town web site as well.

The board wished Mr. Brashear the best in her endeavors on the West Coast and then welcomed Ms. Pelletier as an Associate Member to the board.

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Motion J. Natle to appoint Sierra Pelletier to the position of Associate Member to the Planning Board to June 30, 2016, Second G. Synan, Vote 5-0-0.

The board welcomed Ms. Pelletier and asked her to send a note of interest, and then proceed to the Town Clerk office to be sworn in as a member of the planning board.

Discussed the site plan for the assisted living proposal at the former state school property to be reviewed at the next meeting. Doug noted that the site plan doesn't trip the requirement for a public hearing. The applicant needs to have certain financing applications submitted by April 1 and said that having local approvals and support are necessary.

The board is concerned about the overall development of the state school campus and potential expenses for the town. They discussed traffic, demolition work, MEPA and timelines. They agreed that a conversation about the streets within the former state school, as well as all surrounding streets needs to be had with MassDevelopment during the master planning process.

The board asked if the office has received anything further on the Old Sawmill Road subdivision and the answer was no. Doug said he is waiting for the legal descriptions for phases 1 and 2 of Old Sawmill Road.

Motion to adjourn G. Synan, Second J. Natle @ 10:00 pm, Vote 5-0-0.

