

Minutes of the Town of Lee Planning Board
November 22, 2021
6:00pm Via Zoom

A regular meeting of the Lee Planning board was held virtually in accordance with Governor Baker's Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law (MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20) on Monday, November 22, 2021 at 6:00pm on Zoom.

Present: Buck Donovan (Chair), Peter Bluhm, Peg Biron, Matt Carlino, David Forrest and Gordon Bailey (alternate).

Others Present: Kathy Hall, Kathy Daoust, Tony Caropresso, Peter West and Sean Regnier.

Call to Order

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. For the record he informed those in attendance that the meeting was being recorded.

Public Hearing (cont.) – Zoning Bylaws

Chairperson Donovan reopened public hearing on the zoning bylaw amendments. The Board received a deadline date of December 8, 2021 for any changes to be submitted.

Member Bluhm stated the Board is ready to start thinking about the next round of updates including the sign bylaw and internal lighting of gas station signs.

Member Carlino stated he would like to discuss air bnb and accessory dwelling bylaws.

Resident Hall stated concerns with having roosters free roaming in neighborhoods and safety.

Member Biron stated she did research other towns and most do not allow roosters unless on properties of 20 acres or larger.

Member Biron questioned allowing parking lots in downtown area without a special permit.

Member Bluhm stated in the CBC zone parking lots will be allowed by right, in DCBC zone they would require site plan review and multi-level parking lots will require special permit in every zone that they are allowed.

Member Biron moved to continue the Public Hearing to December 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm; Member Bluhm seconded. Planning Board voted (5-0). (Biron – aye; Carlino – aye; Forrest – aye; Bluhm – aye; Donovan – aye).

Discussion split zone – 940 Pleasant Street

Chairperson Donovan discussed property at 940 Pleasant Street being split zoned RB and R-30.

Presenter West introduced himself representing potential buyer of property to put in a car dealership with paved space in the back and limited parking. The zoning map does not specifically show exactly where the line is for the zone split.

Member Bluhm confirmed the buyer is seeking to clarify where the line actually is.

Member Biron stated concerns with the property being so close to Highfield Drive.

Chairperson Donovan stated that the lot is an accessory use to the dwelling in RB zone which is fine as long as it stays in RB zone, once it goes over into R-30 zone it would have to abide by that zone and is not allowed at this time.

Presenter West stated the zoning line is not on the assessor's map.

Member Bluhm stated the Board should be able to provide, to the public, where the line exactly is and will have to use a surveyor to define the boundary.

Member Bluhm discussed the acreage in the back being practically landlocked and the Board should seriously discuss moving the boundary by amending the bylaw and move it back closer to the back line of the residential lots on Highfield Drive. It would open up a large area to RB and increase the opportunity for commercial development.

Presenter West stated he will be meeting with surveyor to develop a site plan.

Sign Permit – 55 Housatonic Street

Chairperson Donovan shared the picture of the sign that was sent in to permit eyes.

Member Carlino moved to endorse the sign permit for 55 Housatonic Street; Member Biron seconded. Planning Board voted (5-0). (Biron – aye; Forrest – aye; Bluhm – aye; Carlino – aye; Donovan – aye).

Sign Permit – 145 Housatonic Street

Chairperson Donovan discussed the particular roof sign presented.

Member Bluhm stated there are 2 building signs presented and only 1 sign is allowed in the bylaw.

Member Carlino confirmed that the freestanding sign is 15 feet off the road.

Member Bluhm stated the Board can approve everything except the roof sign.

Member Bluhm moved to endorse all signs except signs “B” and “C” for the Starbucks located at 145 Housatonic Street, Member Carlino seconded. Planning Board voted (5-0). (Biron – aye; Forrest – aye; Bluhm – aye; Carlino – aye; Donovan – aye).

Any Other Topics

Member Bluhm stated he would circulate a Vermont document to the Board for discussion at the next meeting. It involves an illumination study and recommendations from a Vermont Task Force.

Brief discussion occurred regarding the zoning enforcement officer and determining the zoning line for 940 Pleasant Street.

Member Bluhm moved to adjourn meeting; Member Carlino seconded. Planning Board voted (5-0) Chairperson Donovan declared the meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm.