

Minutes of the Town of Lee Planning Board
August 28, 2023
6:00pm Lee Town Hall Courtroom

Present: Buck Donovan (Chair), Peg Biron, Peter Bluhm, David Forrest, Conrad Decker and Daniel Blaisdell (alternate).

Other Present: Kathy Hall, Sean Reigner, Patrick McColgan, Holly Petell and Matt Kollmer.

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 Comment

None.

Form A Application – 935 Main Road

Patrick McColgan, Taconic Land Consultants, introduced himself representing Dale Mitchell. They are proposing to cut out lot #1 which is just over 10 acres for his son Cody.

Chairperson Donovan stated that there is plenty of frontage.

Member Decker confirmed that the land was in the CR zone.

Member Bluhm moved that the Board endorse the plan presented by Patrick McColgan dated July 24, 2023 for the property located at 953 Tyringham Road; Member Decker seconded.

Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Form A Application – 360 Pleasant Street

Patrick McColgan, Taconic Land Consultants, presented plans for 360 Pleasant Street representing Nicole Mottarella.

Mr. McColgan stated that there was a garage encroachment from a neighbor so lot #4 was created. He stated that it does not make it conforming but puts garage on their property.

Member Decker stated that lot #4 is not a building lot and is stated on the plan that way.

Member Bluhm moved that the Board endorse the Form A submitted by Patrick McColgan dated August 8, 2023 for the property located at 360 Pleasant Street; Member Decker seconded.

Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Public Hearing – Zoning Bylaw Amendment/Accessory Dwelling Units

Chairperson Donovan opened the Public Hearing at 6:18 pm.

Chairperson Donovan gave a brief description of the bylaw amendment.

Member Bluhm stated that the Board wanted homeowners to have an opportunity to obtain some rental income and to find a way to make more housing available at moderate prices.

Member Bluhm stated the amendment has sizable limitations on gross floor area. There is also a moderate parking requirement of 3 off-street parking spaces.

Member Bluhm also stated that in the amendment no ADU should be offered for short term rentals and the construction of an ADU on a larger lot would prevent that lot from being subdivided later into two separate houses.

Member Decker stated that construction of an ADU is not allowed by right but by Special Permit through the Planning Board.

Member Bluhm moved that the Board vote to report the ADU bylaw with draft date of July 27, 2023 favorably and report it to the town that the Planning Board recommends adoption; Member Decker seconded. Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Chairperson Donovan closed the Public Hearing at 6:27 pm.

Discussion – Alternate Delegate to Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Planning Board recommends a delegate and the Select Board appoints the alternate.

Chairperson Donovan moved that the Board recommend Peter Bluhm to the Select Board for the alternate to BRPC; Member Decker seconded. Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Update – Master Plan

Member Bluhm stated the Committee will be meeting twice a month.

Member Bluhm stated a new member, Patrick Rooney, was appointed.

Member Bluhm moved that the Board appoint Lilliana Bermudez Ortiz to the Master Plan Committee; Member Decker seconded. Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Member Bluhm discussed what the Committee has been working on regarding housing and education to improve the town's happiness and ability to thrive. The Committee is concerned with the enrollment in schools consistently declining. More housing equals more students. Committee Member Hall spoke about the passion she has for the school system. The importance of smaller classes, upgrading curriculum and bringing back more trade programs discussed.

Discussion – 345 Spring Street/Theater

Tabled to next meeting.

Update – Starbucks Signs

The Board discussed the original sign permits for the building.

Commissioner Kollmer confirmed all signs were on the same application. He stated that there were two signs not approved and they were both roof signs. He also stated that the argument would be that the sign labeled “K” is not a sign because it is not visible from the public way.

Member Bluhm moved that the Board encourage the Zoning Enforcement Officer to take no action; Member Decker seconded. Planning Board voted (4-0). (Decker – aye, Bluhm – aye, Blaisdell – aye, Donovan – aye)

Member Bluhm moved to adjourn the meeting; Member Decker seconded. Planning Board voted (4-0) Chairperson Donovan declared the meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.