

Town of Farmington
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Board Members Present:

David Kestner, Chairman
Martin Laferte, Vice Chairman
Rick Pelkey
Bill Fisher, Secretary
TJ Place, Selectmen's Rep.

Board Members Absent:

Charlie King, excused
Stephen Henry
Brandy Sanger, Alternate

Others Present:

Dan DeSantis, Town Planner
John and Laura Taber
Deborah Donnelly

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

Call to Order:

Chairman Kestner called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of Minutes:

May 15, 2018 – Page 2, Public Hearings, 8th line- strike "risk";
Page 3, 5th & 6th lines- add "in" after "where" and add "an" before "entire";
Page 5, 19th line, add "the" before "contractor";
Page 7, 8th line from the bottom, add "there" after "that".
Page 7, 11th line, add "a" after "be"; 12th line, add "the" before "grades"; 14th line, add "on" before "some";

Motion: (Laferte, second Fisher) to accept the minutes as corrected passed 4-0 (Pelkey abstained).

Correspondence-

DES Letter - Chairman Kestner said he just received a letter from NH Dept. of Environmental Services (NH DES) and asked Mr. DeSantis to give a summary of its contents.

Mr. DeSantis said he did not see the letter and did not comment on it.

After quickly scanning the contents of the letter, Chairman Kestner said DES Commissioner Robert Scott's letter was in regards to the designation of the Cocheco River as a protected river under the NH Rivers Management Protection Program. He said they are interested in finding 3 individuals to serve on the Cocheco River Local Advisory Committee (LAC) representing Farmington.

Mr. Kestner read aloud some of the duties of the committee members and Mr. Laferte

volunteered to become a member of the committee.

Mr. Kestner said they are looking for 3 volunteers and asked Mr. DeSantis to make copies of the 2 page letter and include them in the members' packets for the next board meeting.

Mr. Pelkey asked if the potential committee members can come only from the Planning Board or if the members of the other Town boards could become a member of the LAC.

Mr. Kestner said he had not read the entire letter, which includes an application for committee membership and advised the board to fully read it before signing up for the committee if they so desire.

Correction to Voluntary Lot Merger- Chairman Kestner read the memo from Assessing Clerk Kelly Heon regarding the 2006 voluntary lot merger application from the Farmington Country Club which stated that some of the deed references were incorrect or missing. She advised that the corrected merger application should be recorded and listed the correct deed references (map, lot and page number) in her memo. He said the memo also included a copy of the original application approval signed by Charlie King who was the board Chairman in 2006. Chairman Kestner asked if a site plan was submitted with the application.

Mr. DeSantis said that there was no plan available.

Members reviewed the memo and the original application and the following motion was made:

Motion: (Fisher, second Laferte) to accept the revised merger application and lot numbers as written passed unanimously.

Chairman Kestner then signed the documents.

Bernier Follow-up- Mr. Laferte asked Mr. DeSantis if Tim Bernier has submitted all of the information requested by the board at the previous meeting.

Mr. DeSantis said Mr. Bernier has submitted all of the requested materials which were placed in the Town files.

He then asked the Chairman if they could get on with meeting instead of waiting until 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Kestner said they did not have to wait until 6:30 p.m. as the next item on the agenda is not a Public Hearing and the discussion is non-binding.

Conceptual Presentation by Jon & Laura Taber (The Studios on Main):

Mr. & Mrs. Taber came forward to present their conceptual plan to reopen the 445 Main Street block which formerly housed the Subway sandwich shop.

Mr. Taber said they met with Mr. DeSantis to discuss their plans a few weeks ago and he suggested they come before the Planning Board for a conceptual discussion of the plan. He said that at one time they considered making some changes to the building but their architect advised them not to make any structural changes and they have decided to keep the building pretty much "as is".

He said they are targeting artisans to rent the spaces on the second floor to give those people who can't get into Portsmouth or Rochester a more inexpensive place to "do their thing".

On the first floor of the building they plan to utilize the middle unit for a coffee shop which will

be called Main Street Coffee. The 2,000 sq. ft. unit already has a commercial kitchen that is ready to go he said.

Mr. Taber said the other 2 first floor units would be rented out as studios/shops and they are not necessarily looking for other restaurants. He said they have received some interest from 2 photography shops and a children's resale clothing shop.

He said the only definite plan at this time is for the coffee shop and that they plan to use as much local food and drink vendors as possible.

Mr. Taber said they plan to repaint the building to give it a fresh new vibe to let people know that there is something going on there.

Mr. Kestner said the proposal appears to be a good use of an existing structure and would help create pedestrian foot traffic in the area. He asked Mr. DeSantis if all of the proposed uses were allowed in downtown area.

Mr. DeSantis said there may be some question about the artisans uses as that is not specifically listed as a permitted use in that zone. He said he planned to have a discussion with the ZBA on Thursday about the permitted uses there.

Chairman Kestner suggested that the artists could be considered as a professional/office use.

Mr. DeSantis agreed that they could be considered as such and that he was hoping to avoid making the Tabers take the additional step of having to go before the ZBA.

Chairman Kestner said he thought the proposal could be handled through the Technical Review Committee (TRC) with hardly anything having to come back to the Planning Board.

Mr. Fisher said he did not see much difference between the artisans and the sign makers formerly located next to the barbershop.

Mr. DeSantis said it is up to the Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) to sign off on the proposal and up to him to convince the CEO to allow the use. He said he did not think the proposed uses would be a big deal and that they would "work it through".

Mr. Place asked how soon the coffee shop would open.

Mr. Pelkey said the timeline was contained in the proposal to the board and says they plan to have it open by the end of August.

Mr. Kestner noted that small scale retail less than 2500 sq. ft. is permitted with review in the Village Center. He said that as far as he could see the proposed uses are permitted with review which could be handled by the TRC which includes the CEO, Fire Chief, Police Chief and the Town Planner.

Mr. DeSantis suggested the Tabers ask the Fire Chief to visit the building and advise them on fire safety issues before going before the TRC.

Mr. Kestner said he did not see any means of a second egress from the second floor.

Mr. Taber said there is no second egress but that because they are not making any changes to the building they should be able to use as it is currently being used.

Mr. Kestner said there is potential for more units on the second floor than there is now so there

may be a need to add a second egress. He said the second access may be as simple as the addition of a knock out window to provide access to the first floor.

Mr. Kestner said he sees this project as a great re-use of an existing building and wished the Tabers the best of luck with their plan.

Any Other Business before the Board:

Con Com Forum- Mr. Fisher said that a forum hosted by the Conservation Commission will be held on Wednesday, June 6 at 6 p.m. in the Goodwin Library. The guest speaker from the NH Assoc. of Conservation Commissions will speak on the purpose of Conservation Commissions.

Trail Dedication- He said that on Sunday, June 10 at 1 p.m. the dedication and grand opening of the McCarthy Trail will take place at the Public Safety Building.

Adjournment:

Motion: (Laferte, second Pelkey) to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 6:45 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Kestner', is written over a horizontal line.

David Kestner, Chairman