

Montague Planning Board

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July 15, 2014 7:00 PM
Town Hall Upstairs Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Sicard – Chair, Fred Bowman, George Cooke, Bob Obear and Bruce Young
Staff Present: Walter Ramsey, AICP- Town Planner

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Ron Sicard-Chair.

Approval of Minutes: June 24, 2014 – Tabled

Zoning Workshop: Making Site Plan Review Work for Montague

The Montague Planning Board invites all residents, business, officials and other interested parties to a workshop to review and comment on proposed changes to Section 8 of the Montague Zoning Bylaws.

Guests: Ernie Brown, Allen Rippingill, John Burek, John Reynolds and Richard Ruth

Ron Sicard opened the zoning workshop. Planner presented the draft language line by line. The Planning Board has been discussing over the past few months the triggers that need to be looked at including buildings with a small foot print but have a high volume of traffic. Included under this would be: fast food restaurants, gas stations, as well as industrial and institutional uses. The site plan review processes and procedures are currently unclear. The proposal would make it clear to what the criteria process and procedure is required for a site plan submittal. This would be a guide that can be referenced by both the Zoning Board of Appeals and The Planning Board. The Planning Board is sometimes the site plan review authority and generally that is when it takes place in the Industrial zoning areas.

The discussion has been focused around the triggers that then require site plan review. Right now it includes:

- Any structure with floor area over 5,000 square feet
- Any development over 3 acres
- Solar Energy Facilities
- Registered Marijuana Dispensaries
- Self-Storage Facilities
- Telecommunication Facilities

The proposed thresholds are:

- Any structure with floor area over 3,000 square feet
- Any development over 3 acres
- Solar Energy Facilities
- Registered Marijuana Dispensaries
- Self –Storage Facilities
- Telecommunication Facilities
- Any use generating 500 or more vehicle trips per day (based on impact of traffic on the community rather than size of the building)

- Any parking area creating 10 or more new spaces

Other changes to Site Plan Review Section 8:

- Establishes a streamlined 45 day streamlined permitting process when a special permit or variance is not required in addition to site plan review. There would be no public hearing.
- Clarifies submittal requirements, approval guidelines, decision, and appeals procedures. A checklist in Section 8.3 which can be waived by the board. Examples of what should be needed for a plan: Applicants and Property Owner labeled Streets and Ways, Topography, Locus Map, Boundaries of the lot.
- Removes “Environmental Impact Statement” portion of bylaw that was generally redundant to site plan review.

Discussion points:

- Make sure fire access / egress are addressed
- Does a site plan really need to be ‘certified’ and ‘stamped’
- Timeline for submission procedures? Best accommodated as policy, rather than bylaw
- Checklists are preferred, but these should be policy. These policies should apply to ZBA and PB equally
- Make sure peer review is allowed
- Potential effects of removing environmental impact statement

Public Hearing on the re-submission of a variance request to the ZBA- 7 Park Street at the request of Douglas A. Carlson and Crystal L. Chamberlain.

Sicard: The purpose of this meeting being held under MGL section 40A Section 16 is for the Planning Board to consider granting consent for the applicant to resubmit a variance application under section 5.4.4 of the Montague Zoning Bylaws. The variance request was previously denied by the Zoning Board of Appeals on 6/18/2014. The revised application is to allow the construction of a 28’ x 24’6” attached garage 8’ 9” feet from the side property line

Planner: We are here today because the applicant was denied a setback variance to construct a garage by the ZBA on June 18, 2014. The applicant has since re-applied for a variance for the same project, but they are seeking slightly less relief. MGL Ch40 Section 16 clearly states that “no application that has been unfavorably and finally acted upon by the ZBA shall be acted favorably upon within two years after the date of final unfavorable action unless:

- 4 ZBA members decide that there were specific and material changes and the conditions upon which previous unfavorable action was based
- All but one member of the Planning Board consent thereto and notice is given to parties of interest of the time and place when the consent is considered.

Planner: The original request was for variance to Section 5.4.4. (15 ‘minimum side yard setback from property line) for a 28’X 27’ attached garage. 5’3” feet from property line. The planner noted that the other side of house is 1.9 feet from opposite property line. The revised request is for a 28’X 24’ .6’ attached garage 8’9” feet from property line. Applicants are seeking 40% less setback relief, but still requiring a variance. The structure in question has reduce square footage by at least 68square feet and gone from a two bay to a one bay garage- a relatively substantial redesign.

The Board reviewed the original and revised elevation plans in the ZBA file. Parties of interest were notified by the Planning Department. No objections were received in writing before or verbally at the meeting. No substantial concern was raised by the Board with allowing the application to proceed.

Planner recommend a motion from the Board to grant consent for this application to proceed to the Zoning Board of Appeals for their consideration of the revised garage construction plans for 7 Park Street dated 6/26/2014.

Motion moved by Robert Obear. Seconded by Fred Bowman. Motion passed unanimously.

Annual Reorganization of Board- tabled

Planner Updates:

Citizen Petition to re-zone portions of Eleventh Street from RS to RB. A petition was submitted by Lynn Pelland. The Board agreed to hold a site visit to familiarize the board with the site. Planner will arrange.

Motion by Bob Obear at 8:40 PM to adjourn the July 15 Planning Board meeting. Seconded by George Cooke. **Motion passed.**

Approved by: _____ Date: _____