



ACTON PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of Meeting  
January 17, 2012

Town Hall – Faulkner Room

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TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Planning Board members Mr. Ryan Bettez (Chairman), Mr. Jeff Clymer (Vice Chair), Mr. Ray Yacouby (Clerk), Mr. Roland Bourdon, Mr. Derrick Chin, Ms. Kim Montella, and Ms. Margaret Woolley Busse attended. Also present were Planning Director, Roland Bartl and Planning Board Secretary, Ms. Kim Gorman.

Mr. Bettez called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM.

**I. Citizens Concerns**

None raised.

**II. Consent Agenda**

Item A - Minutes of 12/06/11 & 1/3/2012: Voted unanimously to approve amended minutes.

**III. Reports**

No updates.

**IV. Acton 2020 Update and Action Items**

Ms. Busse stated the Executive Summary Report for the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan is completed and would like to receive the Planning Board's feedback prior to presenting it to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. Ms. Busse stated the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft is for public feedback which will be ready within a few weeks.

Ms. Busse explained the introduction, the purpose of the guide and its capturing of the major themes of the plan. She discussed the roadmap for guiding growth and future land use.

Board members stated their individual concerns and questions.

**V. Zoning Amendments**

**Board members discussed and reviewed the potential zoning articles.**

Article ZA – Definition of Agriculture: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change would align Acton's zoning bylaw in line with the State Zoning Act (M.G.L. Ch. 40A, s.3).

Article ZB – Mobile Businesses and Movable Office Pods and Storage Containers: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change would prohibit mobile businesses, and movable office pods and storage containers.

Article ZC – Brookside Shops: Mr. Bartl explained the proposal is for the zoning district designation change for Town Atlas parcel F-4/37 (145 to 149 Great Road) from Residence 8 (R-8) to Limited Business (LB).

Article ZD – Signs & Advertising Devices: Mr. Bartl explained the provisions regulating signs and advertising devices as recommended to the Planning Board by the Economic Development Committee.

Section A: The proposed change is to allow LED signs in the same manner that Neon signs are allowed.

Section B: The proposed change would provide a definition for Special Event Signs, which are further regulated in Section 7.10.

Section C: The proposed change would make clarifications to the meaning of Section 7.3.8 without intending to change its effect and application, which is to prohibit freestanding signs in the minimum required side and rear yard.

Section D: The proposed change would shorten Section 7.4.3.8 to its essential point encouraging the use of energy efficient light fixtures.

Section E: The proposed change would shorten the maximum time frame for the issuance of administrative sign permits from 60 days to 45 days.

Section F: The proposed change would delete the owner's record keeping requirement pertaining to their use of special event signs.

Section G: The proposed change would establish a range of \$50.00 to \$300.00 for fines issued for violations of the sign regulations in Section 7, whereas the fines for other zoning bylaw violations are fixed at \$300.00.

Article ZE – Political Signs: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change will eliminate certain regulations for political signs that appear in conflict with constitutional rights.

Article ZF – Specifications for Access, Frontage, Width and Front Yard: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change would clarify the definitions and specifications for access, frontage, width and front yard consistent with past and current interpretations of the zoning bylaw.

Article ZG – Residential Garages, Barn & Sheds: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change would clarify the language of Section 3.8.1.1, which regulates garage, carport, tool shed and barn as accessory to residential uses.

Article ZH – Nonconforming lots: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change would attempt to clarify a notoriously confusing area of the zoning law.

Article ZI – Renting & Boarding Room: Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change makes the Acton ZBL consistent with the Massachusetts General Laws; the section of the state law governs licensing of boarding houses and requires a local license for boarding more than 3 (three) persons. The local licensing authority under that section is the Board of Selectmen. This article would reduce the boarding by right under the Acton ZBL from four (4) to three (3) to conform with State Law.

Article ZJ – Motor Vehicles Sales As Accessory Use To Vehicle Repair: Mr. Bartl stated the owner of a vehicle repair shop in WAV zoning district has approached the Planning Board about adding a used car sales business. The proposed article would accommodate the sale of used motor vehicles as an accessory use to auto repair shops with certain conditions and requirements.

Article ZK – Pharmacy Drive-Through Window: Mr. Bartl stated a development group has approached the Planning Board about adding drive-through windows to pharmacies. The article is an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw to accommodate drive-up facilities as an accessory use to pharmacies with certain conditions and requirements.

Article ZL – Vehicle Sales, Rental Repair and Body Shop: Mr. Bartl explained the article would increase the gross vehicle weight limit for vehicles sold and serviced in Acton from 10,000 to 14,000 pounds.

Board members agreed to remove Article ZB – Mobile Businesses and Movable Office Pods and Storage Containers from the list of potential zoning articles for public hearing review, but would like to monitor the matter over the coming year. Mr. Yacouby motioned to move forward and place the Articles ZA,ZC-ZL on the upcoming public hearing on February 21, 2012, Mr. Bourdon 2<sup>nd</sup>, all in favor.

Board members have cancelled the February 7, 2012 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.