

PLANNING BOARD
148 Peck Street
Rehoboth, MA 02769
(508) 252-6891 Telephone
(508) 252-5342 Facsimile



James Muri, Chairman
Edward Bertozzi, Vice Chair
Robert Moitozo
Tomas Ennis
Christopher Cooper
Stephen Brooks, Jr.
William Costa
Michael Costa, Assoc. Member

Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2016
Town Offices
148 Peck Street
Rehoboth, MA 02769
7:00 PM

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OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK
REHOBOTH, MA

Present: Edward Bertozzi, Robert Moitozo, Tomas Ennis., Michael Costa, William Costa

Town Planner – Leeann Bradley

Absent: James Muri, Christopher Cooper, Steven Brooks, Jr.

Mr. Muri was not present. Mr. Moitozo began the meeting with the pledge at 7:02p.m.

Form A

1. Albert and Debra Tatton – 30 Reynolds Ave. 16-14A – *Continued from the August 3, 2016 meeting.* Mr. Otis Dyer was present on behalf of the applicant. He made a revision to the plan as requested by the Planning Board at the last meeting. The revision made a correction on the frontage.

Mr. William Costa motioned to endorse the Form A.

Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. Santos -26/32 Davis St. - 16-11A – Ms. Bradley stated the plan has been resubmitted with fees.

Mr. Santos did not want to wait for the public hearing as the house is under agreement to sell.

Nothing has changed.

Mr. Ennis motioned to endorse the Form A.

Mr. Bertozzi seconded the motion. Motion passed.

3. J&J Realty Dev. Corp. – Slater St./Lois Ct. – 16-12A – The plan has been resubmitted with new language as suggested at the last meeting.

Mr. William Costa motioned to endorse the Form A.

Mr. Bertozzi seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Ennis abstained.

4. Stephen Szydlowski and Jackie Lantry – 417 Tremont St. 16-17A – Mr. Otis Dyer was present on behalf of the applicant. He is proposing cutting off parcel A which is .12 acres to make 2 conforming lots. Lot A will end up with 2.61 acres.

Mr. Bertozzi motioned to endorse the Form A.

Mr. William Costa seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Public Hearings

1. Zoning By-Law Amendment – Chapter E, Zoning By-Laws, Article 2.0 – Definitions and Article 5.6 – signs.

A roll call vote opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Ennis motioned to open the Public Hearing.

Mr. William Costa seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Moitozo opened up the Public Hearing asking for comments and/or questions from the audience.

Mr. Otis Dyer approached the Planning Board asking who is proposing the bylaw and why? Ms. Bradley informed Mr. Dyer this matter has been on the agenda for several months. They are trying to change the sign bylaw so that signs conform more to the rural/agricultural character of Rehoboth. Mr. Moitozo noted that new digital signs are the real reason behind the proposed change. Mr. Bertozzi added political signs are not even mentioned in the bylaw. Mr. Dyer recommended a change in the timing of political signs. It does not seem practical. Mr. Dyer stated the bylaw has no provision for agricultural farm stand signs. He feels they should be exempt. Mr. Bertozzi suggested working on some language regarding farm stand signs and bringing it up at the Town Meeting.

Ms. Rebecca Smith approached the Planning Board with concerns regarding house numbers, welcome signs, banners etc... on residential property. Mr. Moitozo stated churches and schools are exempt from local zoning bylaws regarding signs. Ms. Smith gave numerous examples of signs, banners, flags, statuary etc... on residential property and homes, or businesses that have not been addressed in the bylaw. They could all be considered under the definition of signs. She does not agree with a regulation on political signs as this could fall under “freedom of speech”.

Mr. John Ferreira came forward with concerns for businesses in town and how restrictive the current bylaw is. Strip malls with multiple businesses will not be able to have a sign for each business. He feels the current bylaw is very vague and restrictive for businesses.

Mr. Bertozzi suggested composing language regarding different types of signs in residential areas

Mr. John Jordan, 114 Fairview Avenue came before the board with his concerns. His interpretation of the bylaw essentially states that for all intents and purposes, no back lit signs are permitted. It is not conducive for businesses coming into business districts along route 44 and route 6 to restrict their ability to have illuminated signs. Back lit signs are much easier to see than front lit signs. Mr. Jordan added there is a trend in the sign business toward electronic billboards rapidly replacing the old front lit signs. He feels these kinds of restrictions drive business away. According to a survey conducted by the Economic Development Committee, residents in town would like to see moderate business growth. This kind of action pushes business away. Rehoboth tax base is mostly residential. There are problems funding anything in this town. Nobody wants tax increases. One of the best opportunities we have is to build business in this town and this bylaw is drastically working against it. Mr. Bertozzi asked Mr. Jordan what he would like to see as far as permitted signage. Mr. Jordan feels that in 2016 it is a reality that you have to allow interior illuminated signs. Light levels can be set that do not exceed certain levels. He knows extreme light is a bad thing. The light level can be defined. He then asked what the rationale is for home based business signs. Those who want a sign on their property can only have a sign a maximum of

based business signs. Those who want a sign on their property can only have a sign a maximum of ½ the size of real estate sign, a sign for an event or a sign for a construction contractor which is currently 12 square feet. Why is a home-based business limited to 6 square feet? How was that size determined? Mr. Jordan also added he does not think it is legal to limit political signs and the time they are allowed to be posted. He stated the entire document is absurd from beginning to end.

Mr. Jordan feels if someone has a business on Route 44 they want to draw business from the traffic that goes by. Their opportunity to present the fact that they are there, is a significant part of promoting their business. He does not feel the Planning Board is going far enough toward what businesses need. He feels the board wants attractive signs but they can't be seen for the most part. Mr. Bertozzi stated they will try to rectify that.

Ms. Rachel Smith approached the Planning Board with her comments. She does not like the bright flashing signs that are in town, but she is pro-business. She does not want Rehoboth to look like Seekonk. She thinks there are a few problems with the revision. She is concerned with protection for farm stands. She will research language for that.

Ms. Susan Pimental approached the Planning Board with concerns regarding Hillside Country Club. She relies on signs to direct people to Hillside since it is difficult to find. She would like a few more signs but is not in favor of lighted signs. She has been told she cannot have a sign on Route 44 unless she conducts business at that location. She feels the bylaw is very restrictive.

Mr. Jordan approached the board again with a few final concerns. He had a question regarding "Event" signs and that the bylaw only allows 3 signs in the entire town. He wonders how anyone can promote an event with only 3 signs in a town of 46 square miles with approximately 200 miles of road. How did the 3 sign limit come about? Mr. Jordan also questioned signs that are allowed on a temporary basis of less than 7 days providing the Zoning Enforcement Officer has provided approval in advance. He does not understand what criteria the Zoning Officer uses for the approvals or disapproval and how he does not end up in an untenable position.

Mr. Bertozzi motioned to continue this Public Hearing discussion at the next meeting on September 7, 2016.

Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

New Business

1.

Old Business

1.

Minutes

1.

Invoices

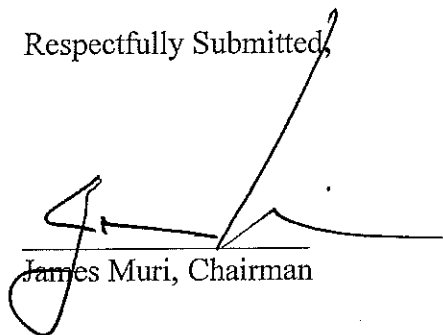
1.

Adjournment

Mr. William Costa motioned to adjourn at 8:30p.m.

Mr. Bertozzi seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,



James Muri, Chairman