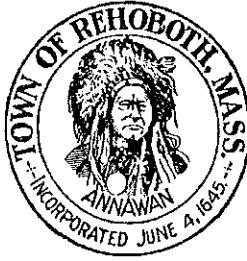


PLANNING BOARD
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Christopher Cooper, Chairman
Robert Moitozo, Vice Chair
Edward Bertozzi
Tomas Ennis
William Costa
Michael Costa
Michael Costello
Leeann Bradley – Town Planner

**Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2017
Town Offices
148 Peck Street
Rehoboth, MA 02769
7:00 PM**

RECEIVED
17 NOV 16 AM 9:50
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK
REHOBOTH, MA

Present: Christopher Cooper, Robert Moitozo, Edward Bertozzi, Michael Costa, William Costa Sr.

Town Planner – Leeann Bradley

Absent: Tomas Ennis, Michael Costello

Mr. Cooper began the meeting with the Pledge at 7:05p.m.

Form A

1. Erik Brisson – 31 Pond St. – 17-08A – Ms. Rachel Smith was present on behalf of the applicant Erik Brisson. She is proposing a division of 3 lots from a 12 year old hand drawn plan that was never submitted. One lot will create 2 new lots on either side of an existing house. Each lot has excess of the minimum area and required frontage. She noted there is a small area of wetlands in the back but plenty of upland on each lot. There is a piece of land in the back owned by Mr. Brisson that is not a buildable parcel. She did not survey this as part of the Form A application. Mr. Moitozo questioned the access to Lot 3 and the kettle hole. Ms. Smith has had the kettle hole looked at by a contractor and believes Tonya Brainsky looked into the bottom of the kettle hole to make sure it was not wetland. She feels it can be filled in to allow for the driveway to cross it. Mr. Moitozo motioned to endorse the Form A plan. Mr. William Costa Sr. seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. E. Otis Dyer, Trustee – Off Winthrop St. – 17-09A – Ms. Rachel Smith was present on behalf of the applicant. They own large parcels of land in Squannakonk Swamp. The trust wants to keep the section near Winthrop St. shown as map 49 Lot 63. Ms. Smith noted there is a typo showing Lot 63 should really read Lot 93 and she will make the necessary correction. They want to divide a large piece of backland they own and want to take off 1.47 acres to keep with the front piece of land. The remainder of the land is to be donated to the Rehoboth Land Trust. This is the reason for establishing an official right of way to allow the Rehoboth Land Trust access to the back land. Mr. William Costa Sr. motioned to endorse the Form A. Mr. Bertozzi seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Public Hearings

New Business

1. Planning Reform Discussion – Scott Douglass - Mr. Cooper stated that Rehoboth resident Scott Douglass asked to come before the Planning Board to have a discussion around Planning Reform which he believes began on the Rehoboth Talk website. Mr. Cooper encouraged him to come to the meeting and give the board his thoughts. Mr. Douglass began by stating he is a Rehoboth resident and noted he volunteered here in 2006. He is currently employed by an urban design company. He is not making a specific request, he just wants to point out some things he has learned working in other rural towns and what he has seen work. He thinks he has some suggestions that might work very well in Rehoboth.

He began with the first question: Why is a public process good for planning a rural town like Rehoboth? He gave an example of a community he has been working with, which is New Castle, Maine. It is similar to Rehoboth for many reasons including the Town Meeting format. He feels it's a large hurdle to overcome for any sort of reform in a rural town, especially a large rural town such as Rehoboth. The public process is important. It gives ownership over the design/reform process. When town meeting time comes around people feel ownership over what's being proposed and generally more people come to the polls.

Mr. Douglass went on to discuss The Charrette Style Public Process. It is mostly associated with big city planning. It is a series of intensive workshops that occur in the location that is being designed by a consultant. All interested parties engage in meetings, design work, dialogue and presentations, over the course of 3 to 7 days. A lot of material is produced and most of it goes into a final report. It is beneficial because it gets people to see their suggestions be discussed by town government and neighbors. He noted there is more specific information in the handout he provided to the Planning Board prior to the meeting. Lastly, Mr. Douglass sees Rehoboth specifically using this kind of process. He feels Rehoboth needs a vision plan that will aid the town and citizens to correct the dis-connect between the zoning bylaws and the aspirations of the people in the community. He is suggesting a visioning process where they talk to people in different parts of town and create a vision plan which is a strategic idea of where in town people would see development happening. What do they want out of that development? What do they want development to look like? What is the trade-off they need to see? The town can then go forward and make an informed decision. Mr. Douglass added as an example that Somerset Town Planner Vanessa Farr created a strategic vision plan.

He stated the next hurdle is financing. He has worked with SRPEDD for grants. He added that CPC and DLTA grants would be compatible. He then asked the Planning Board for their comments and questions.

Mr. Bertozzi noted a large committee worked on Rehoboth's Master Plan that was approved at Town Meeting, many years ago. It was a big disappointment. Getting the implementation of the plan has proven to be almost impossible. He agrees with Mr. Douglass that a really good public process is needed. Mr. Bertozzi noted the only time people come out is if they don't like what is being done. He thinks the general attitude of the townspeople is that they like Rehoboth the way it is. They don't want more development. They don't feel it will create more jobs. He is not opposed to the Charrette process. He does not see a dis-connect between the zoning bylaws and town residents. He asked Mr. Douglass what he thinks is wrong with the zoning bylaws. Mr. Douglass responded by stating the "dis-connect" statement is specifically based on the zoning maps and imagining the potential businesses being developed on Route 44 and Route 118. It is not something that would realistically happen. That scenario would not be attractive to the people of Rehoboth. Mr. Bertozzi noted the biggest problem is the strip commercial zoning.

Mr. Cooper agrees there is a dis-connect between how Route 44 looks and maintaining the rural character of Rehoboth. Mr. Bertozzi feels a lot of people need to get involved. Mr. Douglas added that a lot has changed very rapidly about this process over the last 10 years with social media. The engagement part of his work plan is to have events such a picnic in Providence and a beer garden outside an abandoned gas station in Maine. He gave a possible example as the small commercial area on Route 118 which would be a good site to choose for a visual preference survey. There would be a meeting to allow towns people to state what they like and dislike about this area. They can discuss what they would like to see in that area. Mr. Bertozzi felt that was a good example. Mr. Douglass suggested creating a small district overlay area as a pilot project to see how it works and then potentially move onto another area. Mr. Bertozzi checked the zoning map and was surprised to find areas that were zoned commercial. He added that businesses in town have had a tough road and many have gone out of business. Mr. Bertozzi asked Mr. Douglass what is needed? Do they need to hire a consultant? Mr. Douglass stated that generally a sub-committee would be formed to select a consultant. The sub-committee would act as a liaison between the Planning Board and the townspeople. The sub-committee would be a mix of representatives from the Planning Board, business community, zoning etc. They would be the partner on the ground with the consultant that knows the town, the people and they would facilitate the engagement and be very strongly involved. They can agree or disagree with the consultant and decide if the plan is ready to go to the next level. The Planning Board should dictate the mission statement. Mr. William Costa Sr. stated he has worked on several Master Plans and they sit on a shelf and are never implemented. He asked how they would implement something if they don't have the power to implement it. Mr. Douglass responded by stating the visioning process is not as intensive as the Master Plan process. It's essentially a document that has certain wants that everybody agrees to. It is a tool for future work with no immediate impact on how land is used. It catalogues people's expectations.

Ms. Bradley added that they try to include the public in everything the Planning Board and Conservation Commission does. She stated it would be great if Planning and Conservation had a Facebook page, however the town hall restricts Facebook access. Most towns have Facebook, Instagram or Twitter pages. If they were allowed to have access to social media it could change some things. The town has not caught up to that, so it is difficult to get word out to the public. Mr. Douglass asked if distributing the handout would it be counterproductive. Mr. Cooper stated that anything that will make the public come to meetings and talk to them is a good thing.

Mr. Bertozzi would like to see them get going. He feels County Street and the Pavao area, and most of Providence Street should be turned into some type of rural business, low impact zone. Mr. Bertozzi motioned to have the Planning Board take steps to form a sub-committee to use the Charette Public Process to work on reform of the zoning on County Street and the intersection of Brook and Plain Street and also Providence Street, to down-zone to residential or a very low impact rural business zone. He wants to see if they can get some grant money to hire a consultant to go further with this project

Mr. William Costa Sr. seconded the motion made by Mr. Bertozzi. Motion passed.

Mr. Bertozzi asked Mr. Douglass if he could be part of this sub-committee without causing a conflict of interest. Mr. Douglass feels there is no conflict of interest. He is before the Planning Board as a concerned resident of Rehoboth not because of his own professional interests. Mr. Douglass suggested that when they speak to SRPEDD they should explain how this meeting went since they may offer some suggestions. Mr. William Costa Sr. will speak to SRPEDD on September 27, 2017 regarding this. Mr. Bertozzi asked who the Planning Board thinks should be on the sub-committee. The board felt one sub-committee member should be Mr. Douglass. He stated he would definitely be interested.

The board felt someone from County Street should also be on the sub-committee. Other potential members could be a member of the Board of Selectmen, and perhaps Mike Costello who the Planning Board feels knows the town very well. Mr. Bertozzi feels someone from the Zoning Board should be considered. Mr. Cooper stated he will be part of the sub-committee and also Mr. William Costa Sr. stated he would also take part. Mr. Bertozzi mentioned that the meetings need to be public and posted. Mr. Bertozzi also suggested Steve Palmer who is a resident of Horton Estates be part of the sub-committee. Mr. Douglass agreed and also suggested someone from the Water Department, someone from the business community, a developer as well as a lawyer as well. Mr. Bertozzi feels a good developer would be in favor of this and want to part of the sub-committee. He also feels it's important to talk to the business owners that are on the streets they are studying and he asked Ms. Bradley for a list of the people who live there. Mr. Douglass suggested that the experts they are trying to find now are the ones that should probably draw the boundaries of where they think this process should cover. Mr. Bertozzi agreed. The Planning Board thanked Mr. Douglass for his input.

*Not on agenda: Mr. Christopher Jastram came before the board. He has been away at school but has recently come back and is surprised by some of the changes in town. He is a medical student and will know in February where he will do his residency. He would like to live in Rehoboth a long time and would like to help maintain the rural character of the town that he grew up in. Mr. Bertozzi knew Christopher's grandparents and stated they are two of the finest people he has ever met. Mr. Jastram thanked Mr. Bertozzi. Mr. Jastram added that the Planning Board is the seeds of where things happens and he has a lot of learning to do in terms of who does what, and how things work. The Planning Board thanked Mr. Jastram for coming forward and asked him to keep the board informed regarding his residency placement and hope he will remain in this area.

2. Open Space and Recreation Plan – Committee Members – Ms. Bradley began by stating they received a grant from SRPEDD to begin the update on the open space plan. The first thing to do is to form a committee under the direction of SRPEDD. As to who should form the committee, they suggest one member of the Planning Board and one member from the Conservation Commission and the Agricultural Commission. It should consist of 5 board/committee members and two members at-large. She put out a blanket email and also posted it on the Town of Rehoboth website for the at-large members. She is now waiting to hear back from the chairpersons of the board/commissions as to who they will appoint to help form the committee. Mr. Cooper asked if there were any volunteers.

Mr. Bertozzi nominated Mr. William Costa Sr. to help form the committee for the Open Space Plan.

Mr. Moitozo seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business

1. Sign Bylaw Rewrite – Update – Mr. Cooper stated they passed the updated version from the Sign Bylaw Sub-Committee. Right now they have a version that they feel is ready to go to town meeting. Ms. Bradley stated they need to set a public hearing. The town meeting is November 6th and the public hearing could be on October 4th or the 18th. Mr. Bertozzi noted there could be a few more exclusions. Ms. Bradley stated the language needs to be set in stone prior to the public hearing. The language cannot be changed at the public hearing. Mr. Bertozzi stated if someone comes forward at the public hearing and states they missed something very important that should not be regulated and they agree with that, they may have to propose a change on the floor. Mr. Cooper suggested an opinion from town counsel on this matter. Mr. William Costa Sr. asked if town counsel has reviewed the re-write? Mr. Cooper is concerned about making changes and the

need for a second public hearing before town meeting. Ms. Bradley suggested that at the next meeting she will let it be known that the by-law is a revision of the bylaw they discussed at town meeting. If anybody is interested before the public hearing to voice their concerns and wants to take a look at it, they should come to the meeting. She can put a draft on the town website. The Planning Board decided to hold the public hearing on October 4, 2017. Mr. William Costa Sr. motioned to hold the public hearing on October 4, 2017. Mr. Bertozzi seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. Hydrogeological Assessment Regulations –update from Ed. B. – Mr. Cooper asked Mr. Bertozzi for an update. Mr. Bertozzi stated he is waiting for Bette Dyer to put the regulations in it's final form. It will then go to Laura Schwall to be put on the town website. It will be added to the Board of Health regulations. He added the public hearing was held and it was unanimously approved.

Minutes

1. June 7, 2017 2. June 21, 2017 3. July 19, 2017

Mr. William Costa Sr. motioned to approve the minutes.

Mr. Michael Costa seconded the motion. Motion passed.

*Mr. William Costa Sr. notified the board he would not be able to attend the next meeting on September 20, 2017.

Adjournment


Mr. Moitozo motioned to adjourn at 8:45pm

Mr. William Costa Sr. seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted



Christopher Cooper, Chairman



Robert Moitozo, Vice-Chairman