

Washington Planning Board
Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes - Draft
April 2, 2024

- 0.0** Assembly: 6:30PM, Assessor's office at Town Hall
- 0.1 Members present: Crandall, Douglas, Martin, Florence and Schwartz
 - 0.2 Alternates present: Kluk (on FaceTime)
 - 0.3 Visitors: Jon Piatt, Christine Piatt, Rachel Richardson, Rich Caughey, Robert Giglio, Evan Caffery, Scott Depot, Kathy Depot, Don Revane, Eric Stenzel, Kate White, Sam White, Cherri and Scott Chausee, Cecil O, Andrew Kniskern, Donna Stone, Julie Brine, Anthony Lucas, Tim Tyler, Rose Tyler, Ben Brickmore, Martin Danahy, Kevin Lawrence and Nick Cashorali.

Crandall determined that a quorum was present and called the hearing to order at 6:30PM.

- 1.0 Public Hearing for Jon Piatt's Business Permit** - Crandall stated we are here for a public hearing on Jon Piatt's business permit for his woodworking/carpentry business. Crandall asked if anyone was in attendance that was here in opposition. Rich Caughey wanted to speak. Caughey said that this application is for an LUO 200.4 business. Caughey had several points to make; he thinks that the noise from the business takes away from the rural character, he thinks that materials and tools stored on the property take away from the esthetics as they are in view of their back porch. There is also a shipping container in view and he said that he thinks there is a health and safety problem because on humid nights they had fumes coming in their back window, he believes their property values could be effected, he stated that noise and vibration from the jointer/planer and central vacuum system make a lot of noise and in the building they wear ear protection so they yell at each other. On sanitary he had no comment. Caughey said he worked his way through the LUO and said there was significant outdoor lighting on the property and no effort on screening. Caughey shared pictures of the driveway that he claimed was not properly permitted and of the lighting on the building. Caughey had a video with the sound of the planer taken in November 2023. Caughey is worried about trailers going in and out. Caughey says he is here because he feels this is a problem. Caughey said he was called out over not being a nice person, but he has had conversations with Piatt and they were not nice or cordial either. He asked if the Board had any questions for him. Martin asked about rural character and noise. Florence asked about the decibel levels and Piatt said he has that information. Revane said there has not been a formal complaint made to the BoS about noise.
- Piatt asked to share his story. Piatt grew up here as a kid and is a woodworker by trade and lost his job during the pandemic. Piatt said there was an existing camp on the lot, now removed and he hasn't cut trees on the property line. Piatt believes he has been accommodating to his neighbor; not going up until later on weekends, he has residential lighting including one flood light on the front of the building on a motion detector. Piatt said that in the fall there was a lot of construction going on and they did spray on smelly stain, which was the odor. Piatt said that when the neighbor complained there was only a black tarp on the doorway. He has since studded it and insulated and will make the door soon which will be 3" thick with wood inside and out with insulation between the layers. Piatt said that he checked

the decibel readings for the planer and it was 53 when being used. Piatt said there will be noise but it is not constant. Piatt said he has been working hard to get the building project done, he feels it is a nice building and he will be building an additional house on the lot. Piatt said he has been trying really hard to be quiet and keep his friends quiet, he wants to better the town. Piatt said that the driveway was existing and he added gravel to improve it. Crandall reminded everyone that because we don't have zoning a business can go anywhere in town. Caughey wanted to say that Piatt called him a liar and he told him he needed to get back to work and was using the space for work. Crandall asked comments be kept non-personal. Douglas asked where Caughey's house is, it is 150' away, Piatt's building is 75' from his property line. Douglas asked how often Caughey is here and he replied that they come up weekends and not that often but he is entering semi-retirement and full retirement in Washington soon. Christine Piatt spoke about buying the property in 1999 from an abutter and kept the land in separate parcels, hoping her kids would come back one day. She confirmed that the driveway was existing and Jon has done a little brush clearing along the driveway. Piatt said she is blessed that Jon has returned. Donna Stone wanted to speak in favor of Piatt and said that he has helped with projects at the Library. Scott Chausee said he lives across the street and is in favor. Chausee asked Caughey if he shoots guns and Caughey said he did but not recently, it is someone else. Evan Caffery stated that he is a lawyer for the Piatt family and wanted to speak in favor, he believes that the complaints are due to the construction phase. Scott Depot stated that he and Jon have worked together for 4 years and that the nature of the work is that it is offsite. Depot said that the nature of this business and the ability to earn a living is difficult but Piatt is working really hard, He said the size of Piatt's building is for no more than a 1 or 2-man shop. Depot said that Piatt is talented.

Crandall asked if anyone else wanted to speak and there being no one, he closed the public hearing at 7:09PM.

Crandall opened the regular meeting at 7:10PM

2.0 Minutes: March 5th Meeting – Crandall asked if any changes were needed in the minutes. Jon Piatt wanted to amend 3.1 to say that he was willing to consider putting in an outhouse and that he would consider screening. Crandall made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Douglas seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

March 4th site walk - Crandall asked if any changes were needed in the site visit minutes. Piatt asked that we say that he will consider working with the abutter on screening the sideline. Douglas also found a couple of typos. Schwartz will make the requested changes. Crandall made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Douglas seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

3.0 New Business:

3.1 Business Permit for Jon Piatt – Crandall asked if there needs to be a restriction on noise. Florence stated that there is a noise ordinance and quiet hours are 10PM to 7AM. Lawrence commented that if Piatt is a carpenter he would probably start before 7AM. Kluk commented that she saw the lighting picture and asked if that was typical. Piatt answered that it wasn't as the picture was taken during construction. He has a light on the front of the building that comes on with movement and he is rarely there after 7PM. Piatt said the rest is interior lighting and there aren't any windows on the front of the building. Kluk asked if the

- lighting is dark sky compliant, there can be light wash that can be annoying to neighbors. Schwartz commented that the fixture on the front of the building is downward pointing. Piatt said he is willing to be quiet from 7PM to 7AM and on weekends to 10AM. Florence questioned whether we should be having this discussion after the public hearing. Revane raised one LUO issue he is concerned about; he said this is a freestanding business and usually we are dealing with businesses when there is a home on the property. He understands the business has no running water and isn't required to have facilities but he feels that a port-potty should be considered. Christine Piatt said she owns the property and allows use of her bathroom. Jon Piatt said that the LUO says that it is not required since he doesn't have running water. Revane thinks it is a unique situation. Florence doesn't think we should be having this conversation. Douglas made a motion to approve the business permit, Martin seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Schwartz will send Piatt a bill for the fees and a copy of the signed permit.
- 3.2 Savanna Snelling** – Business Permit application for a farm cart, 122 South Main Street, TM 22-53. Florence thinks that parking will be an issue. Kluk questioned the difference in Snellings name and the name on the property. Florence said that he stopped there when he was running for BoS and spoke with them, he thinks they recently got married, hence the name change. Crandall commented that this isn't a cottage business because the farm cart is outside the home. We determined complies with LUO 200.3. Schwartz will send Snelling a site plan review application for a minor business.
- 3.3 Cindy Cullen** – annexation of garage and land from TM 20-48 to TM 20-45, abutting across Bailey Road. Schwartz said that she spoke with Cullen and she put this on hold until they have the survey completed. We will move this to Unresolved business for now.
- 3.4 Election of Officers for 2024** – Crandall made a motion for Schwartz to continue as the board secretary, Florence seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Martin motioned to have Crandall stay on as Chair and have Douglas become Vice Chair, Schwartz seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Florence has become our Ex-Officio member as he was elected to the Select Board at Town Meeting.
- 4.0 Old Business:**
- 4.1 Peter Mellen** – Schwartz reported that she sent an email to Mellen stating our decision on the validity of the lot merger and whether the lot across the road was abutting the merged property (the Board determined it is). Schwartz didn't hear anything back from him so she assumed it was all set.
- 4.2 LUO certification** – Schwartz had everyone present sign the certification page for the updated LUO. She will copy the updated LUO document and certification and bring a copy to the Town Clerk.
- 4.3 Town Center Vision** – Crandall mentioned that the shed building at the Library adjacent property was approved at Town Meeting and will be in the works.
- 4.4 Camp Morgan Protection Committee** – No news.
- 4.5 Master Plan** – Douglas said he received a contract from Sullivan County UNH Extension Service regarding facilitating our community engagement. Douglas said they will charge us \$2500 for this. Douglas said that we only have 2 sections that we are required to update this time; the Vision and land use. He said that we have to update these sections every 10 years. Florence said that when he did his visiting sessions that people complained to him about the ordinances and restrictions. He feels that Cashorali is right and the ordinances are bloated, difficult to understand. Florence thinks that our focus should be on he LUO and

we should go through them and tinker with them. He thinks our business regulations are confusing and discouraging, we need to figure out what kind of businesses we want. Florence wants businesses like Jon Gibson's and Jon Piatt's. Florence feels that updating the Master Plan is not what we need to do, the vision section is fine and we can wordsmith the stats in the Land Use section. Schwartz said that we need the community's input for the Master Plan, that is what the Board bases what we do on. Florence wants us to have breakout working sessions each month and spend time looking at the LUO. Schwartz said we need to do a questionnaire and the public community session. Crandall commented that zoning is needed but people won't go for it. Martin asked Kluk what she thinks. Kluk said that it isn't until something comes up that we know there is a problem, the Board should also look at the Site Plan Review document and revisit the Economic Development chapter of the MP. Kluk suggested we don't sign the contract and figure out the scope of what we need to do and what sections we need to revise. Martin agreed. We will revisit the issue after review of the document.

4.6 ZBA Report – Florence said that the ZBA is close to losing its quorum, he has asked 3 people to consider joining but all have said no. He asked PB members to let him know if they have any to recommend. Crandall said that the PB needs alternates too.

4.7 UVLSRPC – No report.

5.0 Unresolved Business:

5.1 Halverson – subdivision or alternative access to property for building.

5.2 Solar Energy Systems – Schwartz said that when members are back in town we will schedule a working meeting on this issue.

6.0 Driveway Permits:

6.1 Andrew Kniskern, Dole Schoolhouse Road, TM 20-163. Florence said that Ed Thayer (DPW) received Kniskern's permit application and brought it to the BoS and wasn't happy about it. Thayer said he didn't get enough input on it the application and he thought the application was confusing. Florence said that the application that Thayer brought in was one page of the old application and a page from the new application. This was a part of the problem. Florence said that the permit to excavate form from the old application was added to the new application but it didn't look right so he word smithed it and added it as part 3. Florence thinks there may be warts in the application and it needs changes and Ed's input. Schwartz suggested that we live with it for 6 months and then we can tackle changes that are needed.

7.0 Mergers: None

8.0 Communications:

9.0 Date for next Planning Board meeting – Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 6:30PM, in the upper hall at Town Hall.

10.0 Adjournment: Time: 8:13 PM
Motioned by Douglas, seconded by Martin, all voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nan Schwartz

