

**SUFFIELD ZONING AND PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
December 9, 2015**

Present: Mark Winne
Mark O’Hara
Ginny Bromage
James Henderson
Brendan Malone, Alternate
Jeff Peak, Alternate

Absent: Jacek Bucior
Patrick Keane
Gina Pastula, Alternate

Also Present: Bill Hawkins, AICP, Town Planner
Eleanor Binns, Administrative Secretary
Gerry Turbet, Town Engineer

The proceedings of this meeting were voice recorded.

I. ELECTION OF ACTING CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND SECRETARY

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm and the first order of business was to appoint acting officers for the meeting. The election for officers will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 21st. Mr. O’Hara made a motion to appoint Mr. Winne as acting chairman. Ms. Bromage seconded and the motion was carried unanimously by the regular members 4-0-0. Ms. Bromage nominated Mr. O’Hara for acting vice chairman Mr. Winne seconded and the motion was carried unanimously by the regular members 4-0-0. Mr. Winne nominated Ms. Bromage for acting secretary Mr. O’Hara seconded and the motion was carried unanimously by the regular members 4-0-0.

II. ROLL CALL

Acting Chairman Winne asked Ms. Binns to take a silent roll call. In the absence of Mr. Keane and Mr. Bucior, he appointed Mr. Peak and Mr. Malone to act as full members. Acting Secretary Ms. Bromage, then read the legal notice into the record.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

File # 2015-14: Request for a special permit for a commercial building at the corner of Bennett Rd and East Street South. Map 71H-Block 52- Lot 11-2. Applicant- CS Landscape Design & Construction.

The applicant, Lee Corbert distributed copies of a computer rendering of the building he is proposing and the landscaping around it to the commission. He explained that he is currently renting building space on Ffyer Place and needs to relocate. He would like to keep his business

in town and has made an offer on the property on Bennett Road contingent upon getting the necessary approvals. Mr. Corbert described the property as 2.63 acres with a manmade culvert separating this property from the adjoining town property to the west. He will be staying 50 feet back from the culvert with his construction and is planning to have the curb cut on Bennett Road for his driveway entrance. He intends to keep much of the existing woods intact. There will be storage bins in the back for the retail sale of mulch, gravel, stone and topsoil. There are no wetlands on the property and his application has been approved by the Conservation Commission. Mr. Corbert stated that he will be installing the required 5 parking spaces which will be paved, with the rest of the parking lot being gravel and has indicated that he will use arborvitae to screen the parking lot and loading areas from the road. All outdoor lighting will be LED.

Mr. Winne asked Mr. Hawkins to give his report.

Mr. Hawkins read his report into the record. He indicated that the WPCA had given a provisional capacity letter on the property. The proposal is to build a 3,630 square foot building to house landscaping equipment with an additional area under an attached lean-to that is on the south side to bring the building up to the required 5,000 square feet for a contractors yard building. He also noted the parking, loading, lighting and screening that are on the plan. Mr. Hawkins stated that the proposal meets all setback and coverage requirements in the regulations. He indicated that the applicant has asked for a waiver from having to provide a full lighting plan per Section III.M.1 of the Zoning Regulations. Given the size and scope of the proposal, Mr. Hawkins recommended that the waiver be granted.

He recommended that additional screening be required if commercial vehicles or equipment is stored outside and visible from the public road. He also recommended that the type of trees to be used be indicated on the final plan, as well as additional lighting on the north side of the building which should be full cut-off and that the lean-to structure that was proposed is also put on the final plan for approval by staff.

Mr. Winne expressed concern about the proposed building on the plan not being 5,000 square feet. Mr. Corbert showed on the plan how he intended to put up a lean-to on the building to cover material that would bring the foot print up to 5,000 square feet. His intention is to have the area under the lean-to fully enclosed within 5 years. Discussion ensued and Mr. Winne explained that the 5,000 square foot requirement was put into place to encourage larger buildings on property to maximize the tax base.

Mr. O'Hara asked about the choice of arborvitae and Mr. Corbert explained that they are a good choice because they grow quickly and are easy to maintain.

Mr. Winne asked Mr. Turbet to read his report into the record. His report stated that the traffic impact would be minimal and there were no sight distance concerns with the driveway. He recommended that the final plan indicate more specifics for the grading and that the loading area be detailed.

Mr. Winne asked if anyone wished to speak in support of the application.

Ms. Bromage then read a letter in support of the application from George Beiter of 360 South Main St.

Greg Gouvin, 29 Old Farms Lane, spoke in support of Mr. Corbert as a small business owner and an active involved member of the community.

Mr. Hawkins questioned Mr. Corbert about putting up the lean-to and Mr. Corbert stated that he would put the lean-to on as soon as the building was up.

Mr. Corbert addressed the tax advantage he would bring to the town rather than having the lot remain vacant.

With no further comments, Mr. O’Hara made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Bromage seconded the motion which passed unanimously 6-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

File # 2015-14: Request for a special permit for a commercial building at the corner of Bennett Rd and East Street South. Map 71H-Block 52- Lot 11-2. Applicant- CS Landscape Design & Construction

Mr. Hawkins read the definition of a building from the regulations and also pointed out there are few properties that meet the criteria for a contractor’s yard in Suffield.

There was discussion by the commission about the minimum square footage and the consensus was that the lean-to met the criteria of a building. Therefore, the lean-to combined with the enclosed part of the building would total 5,000 square feet.

With no further discussion, Mr. O’Hara made a motion to approve **File # 2015-14** with the following conditions:

- A lean-to structure off the south side of the building will be constructed to bring the building size up to the required 5,000 square feet and be shown on the plans.
- Additional screening will be required by the Commission or their designee if commercial vehicles or equipment stored outdoors is visible from a public road.
- The type of trees proposed as screening for the parking and loading areas be identified on the plans.
- Additional lighting is shown on the north side of the building for the parking spaces. All lights shall be full cut-off as required by Section III.M of the regulations.
- A revised plan be submitted better showing proposed site grading, particularly by the building.

And that a waiver from providing a full lighting plan due to the minimal outdoor lighting proposed on the plans per Section III.M.1 of the Zoning Regulations be granted.

Ms. Bromage seconded the motion which passed unanimously 6-0-0.

V. NEW BUSINESS

File # 2015-15: Request for 8-24 Report on the sale of lot 11-2 on the corner of East Street and Bennett Road to CS Landscape Design & Construction.

Applicant – Board of Selectmen

Ms. Bromage read into the record the letter from the First Selectman requesting an 8-24 report for the sale of the property and Mr. Hawkins explained the State Statute that requires this report.

Mr. O’Hara made a motion to send an affirmative 8-24 recommendation to the Board of Selectmen for the sale of lot 11-2. Ms. Bromage seconded the motion which passed unanimously 6-0-0.

VI. CORRESPONDANCE - NONE

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to come before the commission, Mr. O'Hara made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 pm; seconded by Ms. Bromage. Motion carried unanimously 6-0-0.

Submitted,

Virginia Bromage, Acting Secretary

cc: Assessor, Building Official, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Director, Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Engineer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Commission Counsel