

TOWN OF EAST KINGSTON PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 20, 2023

Pound School
41 Depot Road
East Kingston, New Hampshire

Josh Bath, Chair
Tim Allen, Vice Chair
7:00PM

AGENDA

Joe Manzi – 5 Depot Road – MBL# 09-03-10 – Discussion
Steve Morrison – 1 Main Street – MBL# 09-07-01 – Conceptual Consultation
Housing Needs Assessment Project

Board Members present: Josh Bath – Chair, Tim Allen – Vice Chair, Rob Caron – Ex-Officio, Janet Smith, and Eleanor Cornoni.

Others Present: Julie LaBranche – Planning Consultant, Dennis Quintal – Town Engineer and Conservation Commission Chair, Joe Manzi, Steve Morrison, Mark Coorsen, and other members of the public who did not participate in public comment.

Chairman Bath opened the April 20, 2023 Planning Board meeting at 7:00pm followed by the roll call. Noting there were no public hearings scheduled, he opened the floor to the first discussion item.

DISCUSSION – JOE MANZI – 5 DEPOT ROAD

The purpose of this discussion was for Mr. Manzi to present his proposed plans to expand the parking area with gravel at 5 Depot Road, MBL# 09-03-10, premises for Ace Cleanouts, which is an approved business located within the Town Center.

Mr. Manzi stated he recently purchased the property and is excited to be a part of the community. His plan is to clean up the property which would consist of filling the potholes in the driveway. He originally was going to expand the driveway, which is why he was directed to consult with the board but has since decided to fix the driveway now and possibly construct barriers to protect the wetlands on the property. He cited cost as the reason for the change of plans. He noted he also purchased the storage units and 13 Depot Road and was hoping to merge 13 Depot Road with 8 Depot Road to make both pieces commercial at some point in the future.

Vice Chair Allen informed him the voluntary merger plan would be something they could address at another meeting after the proposal is publicly noticed. Mr. Manzi replied he was provided Dennis Quintal's name to assist him with this when he moves forward with the merger.

Mr. Manzi then went on to explain he would like to repair his driveway (not extend the gravel area) and raise and/or create a swale of sorts to keep any runoff from going into the wetlands.

Town Engineer Quintal suggested a site walk be conducted to delineate the edge of the wetlands; once done they continue on with the plan from there.

Chairman Bath agreed that if Mr. Manzi was to create berms to direct the water to another location, a site plan may need to be submitted.

Planner LaBranche also agreed that a site walk was a good idea.

Mr. Manzi reiterated he was not looking to expand the driveway at this time, only fill in the potholes and even off the areas. The access to the business will remain the same (by way of the storage unit driveway).

Vice Chairman Allen stated that filling in potholes on the existing gravel driveway and fixing uneven driveway surfaces does not warrant a site plan review; expansion of the driveway would, but not repair and maintenance of an existing driveway.

Mr. Manzi stated he would be using 5-10 yards of gravel with a primary focus on the strip of driveway located when first driving onto the property. He agreed to not create any berms or wetland buffers without consulting with the Town Engineer and receiving the appropriate approvals. He stated the driveway area by the gate slopes towards the garage creating a puddle.

Town Engineer Quintal stated Mr. Manzi may need to bring in crushed asphalt instead of gravel to address this. He stated that what Mr. Manzi is proposing seems more like a maintenance issue – anything more than this would require plans to be drawn up.

Planner LaBranche recommended she and Mr. Quintal conduct a site walk to document what is on the property for wetlands. Should the proposal not require a full site plan, then Mr. Manzi should provide a full statement of his proposal for consideration.

Vice Chairman Allen responded that those recommendations are overly burdensome to the property owner as he is only proposing to repair an existing driveway. If there are no alterations to the property being proposed, then there is no need for a site walk. The property owner should be able to fill in potholes and even out the driveway without undo burden.

Planner Le Branche responded that if there are drainage issues, they should be addressed. Town Engineer Quintal stated he only needed 5 minutes to inspect the driveway; he knows what maintenance looks like. He can also take the opportunity to talk to Mr. Manzi about his future plans. Planner LaBranche restated her position that it sounds like there is a drainage issue.

Town Engineer Quintal stated that plowing snow on an unpaved surface can create the type of scenario Mr. Manzi is describing. Vice Chair Allen concurred noting he maintains lots of gravel roads and one good storm can wash them out. Town Engineer Quintal stated he can provide input on how best to drain the areas in question, but if expansion is required, the property owner will need to come back to the board.

Planner LaBranche added they should document if the gravel is washing out. If so, then the wetlands may be impacted, and they may need to recommend wetland barriers.

It was agreed that approval to repair the driveway was not required by the board. The discussion ended at 7:18pm.

CONCEPTUAL CONSULTATION – STEVE MORRISON – 1 MAIN STREET

Chairman Bath opened conceptual consultation with Steve Morrison regarding a site plan review proposal to operate an agricultural retail business within the Town Center at 1 Main Street. This conceptual consultation phase will allow the property owner to discuss with the Board, in very general terms, the types of uses suitable for the property and to receive instruction on the site plan review process.

Mr. Morrison stated he owns Middleton Farm Supplies located in Salisbury, MA which is a hay, shavings, grain, erosion control company. He would like to explore moving the business from Salisbury to his property in East Kingston. This would entail parking two trailers behind the barn and using the barn to store everything else.

Chairman Bath informed the parcel is located within the Town Center thus mixed uses of the property are permitted. Storing trucks behind the barn and the use of the barn as the base of operations appears (in general) to be an allowed use of the property.

Mr. Morrison stated that in moving the business from Salisbury, he would be looking to downsize the operations to roughly one-third its current size with the installation of fencing (erosion control) being his primary operation which consists of three employees including himself. He is reluctant to open the property to the general public as the property also serves as his residence. He stated 95-98% of the business is delivering products to his customers – two to three trips per day. He anticipates very little foot traffic (maybe 15 people per week by appointment only). The majority of his products are picked up by him and brought directly to the job site, though there would be some storage of materials at the premises including deliveries of Canadian hay. He spoke to navigating the slope of his driveway with

hay delivery trucks and modifications that might be needed. A second driveway opening is shared by the Town and he would need to do further research to determine whether or not that opening could be modified – this driveway has less of a slope. Hay deliveries consist of truckloads holding 770 bales with one delivery every two to three weeks. He would not advertise for the retail portion of the business as he is pushing to do more with the erosion control part of the business. Some erosion control materials would be stored at the premises while most are brought to the job site; he does not carry hazardous materials.

Chairman Bath stated that in general terms, the proposed use is suitable for the Town Center district.

Upon further discussion about the driveway access and the 3-way intersection, he was provided with the DOT contact information for obtaining state approval to change his driveway from residential to commercial.

Mr. Morrison stated the business operations would be small in scale, not open to the general public, and would have a small sign.

Vice Chairman Allen spoke to the process for commercial use by quoting Article IV – Commercial District: *Applications for commercial structures and uses must be submitted to the Planning Board for approval and comply with the following regulations: 1. No use shall be permitted which could cause any undue hazard to health, safety or property values or which is offensive to the public because of noise, vibration, unsanitary conditions, noxious odor or similar reason.* He stated that Mr. Morrison will need to come up with a plan addressing these items.

Mr. Morrison replied he would do so and further indicated he owns two box trucks, three one-ton trucks, and one personal truck. He then inquired if it would be okay for him to mow the back section of the field which is now owned by the town. Mr. Nigrello will ask the Board of Selectmen and get back to him.

Discussion ended at 7:37pm.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROJECT

Planner LaBranche provided an update on the Housing Needs Assessment Project which included a review of the community survey and the public outreach and engagement schedule. She noted board members did not complete the survey that was sent to them via email, thus she would keep it open until the following day. She reviewed the confidentiality statement in that only a summary of the results would be made public, that her plan is to release the survey to the public the following week, and the efforts to be undertaken to promote the survey (Planning Board website, social media, Carriage Towne News, flyers around town, etc.). Additionally, hardcopies of the survey to be made available at the library and town offices.

Mr. Nigrello recommended electronic surveys be promoted over paper copies and further suggested the posting/flyers include a QR code for people to scan with their phones to access the online survey. Planner LaBranche agreed electronic surveys are best; however, practice shows people will complete paper surveys as well. She noted the survey window will be from the end of April through the month of May.

Discussion then ensued on strategies on getting the word out which included: social media, Facebook, Carriage Towne News, Planning Board website, that advertising include language to share the survey with friends, double-sided signs at intersections, the Fire Department sign, East Kingston Elementary School, QR coding, posting at various locations in town, and the four senior housing associations.

Planner LaBranche added she would utilize a Tiny URL to simplify the URL address to the survey. The 11 questions are mostly point and click, choose all that apply, a couple comment options, and a participation option. In addressing earlier board concerns, she noted the survey is self-selective; therefore, the results may not be a full representation of the town; however, they will look at trends and detail.

Mrs. Cornoni noted the survey did not include a reference to being an East Kingston resident as survey participants may also be nonresidents employed within town (EKES, Fire Department, Rare Drive). Vice Chairman Allen agreed to

making this delineation and noted any further demographics would require the survey to be longer to which he recommends the survey be short. Planner LaBranche will add a prompt for non-residents to skip certain questions.

She then stated that additional demographics can be obtained from the Rockingham Planning Commission and the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau. She went on to say the data collected from the survey and discussion groups will inform the board on creating a housing profile. This will also be reflective of what the town will support with respect to housing needs initiatives. She is now looking for board approval to launch the survey.

MOTION: Chairman Bath motioned to approve launching the Housing Needs Assessment survey; seconded by Vice Chair Allen. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Planner LaBranche stated she would speak to the Town Administrator about a drop box at the town offices and the library. Mr. Nigrello reiterated he wants to discourage handwritten surveys.

Planner LaBranche then reviewed the public outreach and engagement schedule: April – launch survey and distribute flyers; May – promote project on social media and place paper copies of survey at town locations; and June – summarize, post and compile survey results for public viewing and group discussion sessions. Once the housing profile is completed, the board can look at zoning and regulations to address the town’s housing needs.

MEETING MINUTES

The board reviewed the March 16, 2023 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Chairman Bath motioned to approve the March 16, 2023 meeting minutes as presented; seconded by Vice Chair Allen. The motion passed 5-0-0.

FORMAL COMPLAINT

The board was in receipt of a complaint about refuge and debris on an abutting property to the light industrial park noting the complaint was being provided to the board for informational purposes only.

With no other business before the board,

MOTION: Vice Chair Allen motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mrs. Smith. The motion passed 4-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Belcher

Land Board Secretary

Minutes approved on May 18, 2023.