

Town of Acton, Maine

Planning Board Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: December 7, 2017 (approved January 18, 2018)

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Bob Smith – Chairman
Tom Cashin – Vice Chairman
Leslie Berlan
Yoli Gallagher
Gavin Maloney
Lincoln Marston, Alternate
Joyce Bakshi, Alternate

Also present: Ken Paul, CEO; Brenda Charland, Recording Secretary; Virginia Deboer, Video Recorder

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and declared a quorum.

Approval of Minutes of November 16, 2017: Moved by Tom Cashin, seconded by Leslie Berlan, to approve the Minutes as written. The motion passed 4-0-1.

New Business: The Chairman reported that the Shapleigh Planning Board is reviewing an application to convert the lot in immediately beyond the bridge from Acton on Route 109 to a marina. A meeting has been scheduled on Tuesday, December 12th to discuss the application provided that the plans have been received by the Planning Board Secretary.

Old Business:

- **Arnie Martel re Map 216, Lot 003, Buzzell Road:** No action was taken regarding the seven-lot subdivision proposal. Leslie Berlan noted that she read that the common space designated in cluster divisions has sometimes caused problems with materials that are dumped on those sites. Bob Smith explained that the common areas are generally overseen by the Association.
- **Timber Harvesting in Resource Protection Districts:** Board Members reviewed the report of the site walk written by the Chairman. Lincoln Marston asked about the statement noting that not many more trees might have been harvested if State Standards had been followed. Mr. Smith noted that this would be specific to each site but that considering the harvested area that Board Members visited on H Road, in his opinion, that statement would be true.

Tom Cashin outlined the reasons that he supports changing the Ordinance to comply with State-wide Standards, eliminating the Town's two-acre wetlands relative to timber harvesting, are:

1. State would provide assistance with enforcement;
2. criteria would be consistent and less confusing, improving the Town's relationship with foresters and loggers.
3. the standards are outcome-based over a prescriptive approach removing harvesting practices limitations;

4. the State's criteria is less intrusive in land owners' use of their properties.

Joyce Bakshi asked about the role of the Steve Bodkin, the Town Forester. Ken Paul replied that Mr. Bodkin oversees and manages the Town-owned forests; he does not do any enforcement. Mrs. Bakshi noted that from a practical point of view, in the absence of a dedicated employee who is responsible for overseeing and enforcing harvesting functions in town, relying on the State could be a resource if information is reported in a timely manner.

Gavin Maloney suggested including the requirement that a licensed forester be required to oversee all commercial harvesting projects.

Tom Cashin noted that when he voted originally on designating smaller wetlands sites as Resource Protection Districts, he did not understand that it would affect timber harvesting; he thought it was just to prevent commercial and residential building in those fragile areas.

Mr. Cashin moved that the Board proceed with aligning the Town's Timber Harvesting Ordinance with State-wide Standards: applying the criteria to wetlands as defined by the State, no harvester would be required and the property owner would not be directly responsible for notifying the Town of intent to cut. The motion was seconded by Leslie Berlan. The motion passed 3-2.

Linc Marston expressed interest in knowing the reasons why Kennebunk declined adopting State-wide Standards and why York recently adopted the Standards. Mr. Paul will contact the two communities and report back with what information he can get.

Adjournment: The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.