

PLANNING BOARD

DATE: July 24, 2014
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Large Meeting Room
FOR: Regular Meeting
PRESENT: Jonathan Hankin, Chairman; Suzanne Fowle; Malcolm Fick

Mr. Hankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

FORM A'S:

Michael Parsons from Kelly, Granger, Parsons & Associates was present with a Form A plan on behalf of Ronald Majdalany, Berkshire Farm Partnership for two parcels of land located on the east side of Alford Road. The property is land locked and not to be considered separate building lots. Parcel 1 contains 14.7 acres of land. Parcel 2 contains 7.351 acres of land.

Ms. Fowle made a motion to endorse the plan, Mr. Fick seconded, all in favor.

MINUTES: JULY 10, 2014

The minutes from July 10th were not ready.

HOUSATONIC ZONING CONTINUED DISCUSSION:

Mr. Hankin asked if there was anything that stands out from the discussion at the last meeting regarding Housatonic zoning.

Mr. Fick said he was impressed with the discussion regarding where businesses should be encouraged. He said Jim Stark questioned the Main Street boundary and he said anything the Planning Board proposes should not take anything away from what people currently perceive they have. Mr. Fick said it seemed that people want to maintain the characteristics of Housatonic, encourage business and have the ability to easily improve their properties.

Ms. Fowle said the people reminded us to make zoning work for Housatonic residents. She said the Planning Board needs to be clear in its message that we are doing this for current property owners.

Mr. Hankin said we also need to make an area that is viable for future development.

Ms. Fowle suggested that Pleasant Street and Front Street could be striped designating parking spaces. She said it would be helpful to know what exists before working on parking needs. She said there is a lot of space for parking in the streets but we don't know how much. She said we need a baseline to work from.

Michelle Loubert asked if the road along the Brick House restaurant is owned by the Town or private. She said many people park in that area. It would be good to know if it should be included in the parking scheme.

Mr. Hankin said we should start by looking at the overall zoning to see what would apply and be beneficial to Housatonic. He said there is not a big difference between the R-3 and R-1-B zoning districts. He said by changing the zoning to R-3 approximately 11 of 38 non-conforming properties would be brought into conformity. He said the R-3 zoning would adjust the lot size, lot width and frontage requirement. The R-3 zone has the smallest residential lot size.

Mr. Hankin said the B-2 zone which is the zoning for Stockbridge Road and Route 7 south is not appropriate for the village center. He said we have a B district that may have some features that could be utilized in the village center. He suggested also looking at the Village Center Overlay District (VCOD). The VCOD was designed with the intent of recognizing the existing fabric.

Mr. Fick said downtown Great Barrington and Housatonic village center are very different areas. He suggested making everything R-3 then applying the VCOD.

Mr. Hankin said nothing we have in zoning is friendly to Housatonic. He suggested we need to make everything that exists legal then apply "new zoning" to future development.

Mr. Fick asked if the next step is for Mr. Rembold to draft ideas to try to determine impacts for the future.

Mr. Hankin said he would like everyone to read through the zoning districts keeping Housatonic in mind to try to figure out what would work.

Ms. Fowle asked if Mr. Rembold could do the numbers to let us know how changes would bring properties into conformity.

Mr. Fick said we seem to agree that B-2 does not work for the area. We need to think if there is an existing district to replace the B-2. We need to look for a solution instead of a substitute.

Mr. Hankin we want to make a zone conducive to business.

Mr. Fick said the area where business will be allowed should be defined then apply an overlay district.

Mr. Hankin agreed. He said many towns across the country are being rejuvenated with art galleries and the arts.

Eileen Mooney commented that when the task force met it was agreed that they didn't want change. They couldn't think about what would be acceptable but they didn't want more commercial growth. They would go as far as to agree that it would be nice to have an ATM and a small grocery store but that was as far as they would go.

There was discussion of the former Catholic Church on Front Street. It was agreed that it should be included in the overlay zone.

Mr. Fick suggested making an inventory of places outside of Pleasant Street and Main Street that should be considered.

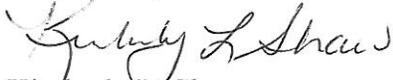
Mr. Hankin said we need to work with the fabric that exists. He suggested everyone should drive around the village and look at what is there and what could be there.

The Board said there will be additional meetings to discuss this topic.

Mr. Hankin said Tom Doyle may be returning to discuss his property on South Main Street.

At 8:12 P.M. Mr. Hankin adjourned the meeting without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly L. Shaw".

Kimberly L. Shaw
Planning Board Secretary