

Town of Searsmont  
Planning Board Meeting Minutes  
January 2, 2024  
6:30 PM

1. Call to order: The meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:30 pm. These minutes are a summary of the Board's discussions. A recording of this meeting is available at the Town office.

2. Roll Call - Members Present:

Christian Halsted, Chair  
Jon Thurston  
Sarah Crosby  
Jon Robbins  
John Lightner  
Evie deFrees, Vice Chair

Others:

Gail Gary-Cox  
Ken Cox

Patricia Chapman, Clerk (on Teams)

3. Applications:

a. Building Permit Applications: None

4. Approval of Minutes:

a. J. Lightner moved to accept the December 05, 2023 minutes as written. E. deFrees seconded. Motion passed with 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

5. Treasurer's report: None.

6. Communications:

a. Planning Board questions:

- i. Gail Gary-Cox and Ken Cox met with C. Halsted about a site plan for a "Rage Room" on the New England Road. [Safe place for people to destroy stuff to relieve stress/release pent up emotions] Do they need a survey done?
  1. The project only involves indoor renovations – no changes to anything outside.
  2. Gartley & Dorsky suggested they ask the board about this. If a survey is needed, can it just be a boundary survey showing the outline of the building(s) within the property boundaries.
  3. No surveyors (including Gartley & Dorsky) were available before April.
  4. No survey was done during the most recent purchase of the property.
  5. They already have plans to have the septic inspected and updated if needed.
  6. The board did not have any concerns with having just a boundary survey plan vs a full survey.
  7. They need the site plan review before opening the new business but they need a regular building permit before they can start the interior renovations.

8. C. Halsted let the applicants know they need to submit the application at least one week before the meeting they want it reviewed.
- b. CEO Report – W. Wetmore
  - i. CEO is out of state this week and could not attend.
  - ii. C. Halsted and the Selectmen met about the transition of permits from the board to the CEO.
    1. They agreed that the CEO and Planning Board would work together on permits for the first month or two.
    2. The CEO would start the process with the applicants but the board would still be part of the approval process.
  - iii. W. Wetmore has started taking the CEO courses online.
  - iv. Once the transition is complete, C. Halsted will continue to meet with the CEO regularly and the CEO will plan to attend Planning Board meetings.
- c. The building permit spreadsheet and the digital maps are up to date.

7. Committee Reports: None.

8. Old Business:

- a. C. Halsted will get MCOG's LUO revisions (from the recent work sessions) before the January 17<sup>th</sup> work session.
- b. The public hearing on those revisions will be on Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30. If there are no major revisions from this hearing, the information will go to the office staff to be put on the warrant for the April Town Meeting.
- c. We will still have a regular Planning Board meeting on Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.
- d. We will hold the February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting date for potential work session based on the public hearing but otherwise it may be canceled. We may be able to go back to just one meeting per month (first Tuesday) after that.

9. New Business: None.

10. Adjournment: J. Thurston made a motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Robbins. Motion passed by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patricia Chapman, Planning Board Clerk

J. DeGraff made a motion at the February 6 meeting to accept the January 2<sup>nd</sup> minutes as written. J. Robbins seconded. Motion passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed.