

Town of Searsmont
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
August 2, 2022
7:00 PM

1. Call to order: The meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:56 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 Sarah Crosby, Vice-Chair Jon Thurston Evelyn deFrees Jack DeGraff Jon Robbins	Others: Patricia Chapman, PB Clerk
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3. Applications:
 - a. Section 1102.5: General Review Standards for James Baum Restorations, LLC – site plan for auto restoration business:
 - i. James Baum did not work with Frank to prep for this meeting or pay the permit fee so this item is canceled.
 - ii. The Selectmen provided the Planning Board with a copy of the lease that was shared with J. Baum with his written comments on it.
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. S. Crosby moved to accept the July 5, 2022 minutes as printed, J. Thurston seconded. Motion passed with 5 in favor, 1 abstained, 0 opposed.
5. Treasurer's report: None.
6. Communications:
 - a. CEO Report: Report is from June and F. Therio is not available for questions.
 - b. Building Permit spreadsheet: there were a few new applications added since the last meeting.
 - i. A sign on the trail of the George's River Land Trust with an estimated start date in 2020.
 - ii. There were a few accessory buildings and one residence.
7. Committee Reports: None.
8. Old Business: None.
9. New Business:
 - a. Auto Body Shop vs Auto Restoration Shop discussion and how they are addressed in the LUO.

- i. C. Halsted spent time explaining the definitions currently in the LUO to the Selectmen. The Automobile Repair Shop definition was excluding specific details from the definition, not saying that they were not allowed by the ordinance.
 - 1. Section 1400 – Definitions (p. 30): Automobile Repair Shop: A business establishment engaged in general repair, engine rebuilding, or parts replacement. Automotive repair shall not mean body, frame, or fender straightening and repair or painting and undercoating, nor the sale of gasoline, other motor fuels or motor oil.
 - ii. Is there a reason this definition is so narrow and specifically excludes these activities? We aren't sure but it could have to do with the sale of gas and motor fuels being something that should be regulated separately. Previous Planning Board members may have been trying to get away from paints, motor oil, gasoline – liquids that can go through floor drains and cause issues.
 - iii. The state definition of automobile repair (Title 29A Motor Vehicles, Chapter 15 Inspection Repair) defines repair by talking about maintenance, servicing, improvement, replacement, removal, installation but not limited to, including, but not limited to body work, painting, and incidental services. It does exclude the sale of motor fuel but allows storage and towing.
 - iv. Restoration does seem to fit with our current definition of Automobile Repair except that it could include painting. Modern painting techniques are not as hazardous as they have been in the past.
 - v. Are there other areas of the LUO that reference different types of “restoration”? i.e., furniture restoration. C. Halsted did not find anything with a word search of the LUO.
 - vi. What is the difference between adding restoration to the existing automobile repair definition vs adding a new category for restoration?
 - 1. Either change requires a town vote.
 - 2. We do not know if there is a legal reason to keep them separate.
 - 3. If we add restoration to the definition, we would need to remove the statement stating that it does not include body frame or fender straightening or repair.
 - vii. Should we just change the name to Automobile Repair and Restoration and remove the excluded items?
 - viii. There are other businesses in Searsmont that likely do both repair and restoration based on the current definitions.
 - ix. C. Halsted made a motion to add “restoration” to the title – Automobile Repair or Restoration Shop – and change the second sentence to say that it includes the items currently excluded but that it does still exclude the sale of gasoline, other motor fuels, and motor oil (strike the word “nor” in the exclusions). The motion was amended to include changing the heading in the Table of Land Uses to say Automobile Repair, Restoration, and Sales. Seconded by J. DeGraff. Motion passed 6 in favor, 0 opposed.
- b. Has there been any follow up from the Selectmen on our suggested projects for the year? No, the Selectmen have not come back with any feedback.

10. Adjournment: J. DeGraff made a motion to adjourn, seconded by C. Halsted. Motion passed by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Chapman, Planning Board Clerk

J. DeGraff made a motion at the September 6 meeting to approve the August 2 minutes as written. Seconded by J. Robbins. Motion passed 7 in favor, 0 opposed.