

Town of Searsmont
Draft Planning Board Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2023
6:30 PM

1. Call to order: The meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:31 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
Jack DeGraff
John Lightner

Others:

Patricia Chapman, on Teams
Andrew Coppo
Nancy Darlington
Troy Jackson

3. Applications:

a. Ingraham permit from last meeting:

- i. They dropped off a sketch that showed where the house would be located and confirms it meets the setback requirements from the road (75') and the side boundary (65').
- ii. We still need the dimensions of the house to calculate the permit fee. C. Halsted will contact them about that.
- iii. J. DeGraff made a motion to move forward on the condition that they provide the size to C. Halsted to calculate the fee, S. Crosby seconded. Motion passed, 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

b. Zaccadelli permit for 368 Woodmans Mill Road.

- i. This a 16'x17' plus a 5'x7' landing
- ii. No changes to the septic plan as there is no additional plumbing.
- iii. Fee = \$157.45
- iv. C. Halsted made a motion to approve the permit, J. Thurston seconded. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

c. Eric Fuller's permit (Emma Hamm is the owner), 16 Brushfire Lane map 6, lot 76:

- i. 30'x46' residence – new construction
- ii. 1200' back from the road
- iii. There is a question about the side setbacks. If drawing is to scale, it should be fine with upwards of 400'. There appears to be at least 300' from the back line.
- iv. The Planning Board members are comfortable that the side boundaries are set back far enough.
- v. S. Crosby moved to approve the permit, J. DeGraff, seconded. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- vi. Fee = \$533.00

d. Darlington permit, map 10, lot 34; 50 Main Street:

- i. Same location but smaller footprint than the house that burned down prior to the current owner purchasing the property.
 - ii. 60' from the road, 26' & 42' feet from the side boundaries. No concerns about the back boundary – plenty of room.
 - iii. Driveway, well, and septic already exist from the old house.
 - iv. House will be 24'x36' plus a 6'x24' covered porch and 23'x23' garage; total is 42'x24' = 1,537 square feet
 - v. Fee = \$587.95
 - vi. Right of way? There is a right of way on the deed for the Searsmont Water Company. The owner would like to look into getting it removed since the company doesn't exist anymore. They should consult a lawyer.
 - vii. S. Crosby made a motion to approve the proposed Darlington project, J. Lightner seconded. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
 - viii. The plumbing permit is separate. They have already submitted the request so she will hear back about that or can reach out to the town office.
- e. Nelson permit; new residence at 64 Borough Road, map 9, lot 100:
- i. There is no driveway as they are behind their father's land with a right of way to use his driveway.
 - ii. 32'x48' house, 12'x20' breezeway, 28'x24' garage = 2,448 square feet
 - iii. Setbacks are listed on the permit and meet the requirements. This is an 11 acre lot. C. Halsted requested an updated tax list from the town staff. This lot may have been deeded to the applicant but it's not reflected in the records being reviewed tonight.
 - iv. C. Halsted to talk to the assessor about when he updates his records so the board can keep their records up to date.
 - v. J. DeGraff made a motion to accept the permit as is, C. Halsted seconded. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
 - vi. Fee = \$906.80
- f. Andrew Coppo; 11'x9' structure at 73 Levenseller Pond Road:
- i. This is a pre-permit discussion to help advise the applicant how they can move forward.
 - ii. Purchased non-conforming structure in 2017. It's a screened in building on a platform.
 - iii. The storms this past spring caused flooding and some branches fell on the roof.
 - iv. Several screens are damaged and can't be replaced without taking the structure apart because they are screwed into the wood frame which is rotting out.
 - v. They are looking at purchasing a prefab, lean-to type structure on the platform to be more sturdy.
 - vi. The current platform is in pretty good shape but they would like to put it on a better surface (concrete slab?) as the cinderblocks underneath are crumbling.
 - vii. Their proposal is to increase the existing footprint from 12'x16' to 12'x20' which is within the 30% expansion allowance in the ordinance.
 - viii. New structure will take up the whole new platform (12'x20').
 - ix. This project would use their one-time non-conforming expansion and they are concerned they would not be able to do anything with the primary structure on

the property in the future. It's not clear if the primary structure is non-conforming as it is unclear how far that structure is from the high water line. If it is more than 100', it would not be considered non-conforming. They want to confirm the status of the primary building before moving forward with this project.

- x. The lean-to will face the water. They do not plan to have a deck surface on the outside, just a step or two up to the door.
- xi. A permit is needed but the fee will only be based on the expansion. Current footprint is 12'x16' and it will be increased to 12'x20'. The expansion will be in the direction opposite the water so it doesn't get closer. The height restriction will not be an issue as it is currently 9' and they don't expect it to be taller.
- xii. They will stay in the existing 12'x16' footprint if the primary structure needs to be included in the one-time expansion rule.
- xiii. There was some discussion about whether you need to keep at least one wall of an existing structure when rebuilding a non-conforming structure. There were "rumors" about this restriction but no one was able to find it in the LUO. It does require that there was damage to the structure that needed to be repaired or replaced and that has been met.
- xiv. The applicant can apply for a permit for this project. They can request a permit application at the town office and then complete it and get it back before the next meeting on Sept 5. The board is comfortable with C. Halsted approving a permit before the Sept 5 meeting if the application is complete and there are no variations from what was discussed tonight.
- xv. The fee would be \$66.80 for the additional space (12'x4').

4. Approval of Minutes:

- a. The board did like the process of reviewing the minutes before they get posted publicly.
- b. J. DeGraff moved to accept the August 1, 2023 minutes as written, C. Halsted seconded. Motion passed with 4 in favor, 1 abstained (J. Lightner), 0 opposed.

5. Treasurer's report:

- a. C. Halsted talked to the selectmen about purchasing a projector. They were in favor of the idea in principal so he is going to start getting some quotes.

6. Communications:

- a. The past two weeks have been busy with inquiries about buildings and plans including some of tonight's applicants.
- b. There were questions about building a second residence on an existing lot and moving a trailer on to an existing lot.
- c. There is nothing in the ordinance about having 2 separate primary residences on a single lot.
 - i. There are plumbing & septic requirements that need to be met in that situation so C. Halsted referred the inquiry to the plumbing inspector.
 - ii. This situation relates to the LD2003 discussion and may need to be addressed.
- d. MCOG provided a guidance document on LD2003 that C. Halsted will scan and distribute to the board members.
 - i. Every town that has zoning has to address LD2003 by next July (2024).

- ii. Many people are building 2nd residences on their lots as income properties – Airbnbs, etc.
- iii. MCOG may be offering a workshop that we can send representatives to. If they don't offer a workshop, we will need to have more discussions and research.
- iv. We don't know where MMA stands on the issue now that it has been signed. They spoke up against it during the proposal stage.
- v. This will be the board's project for this year along with updating the permit forms.
- e. We do not know if the LPI situation has been finalized. They do have a potential interested person.
- f. Permit spreadsheet has been updated.

7. Committee Reports: None.

8. Old Business: None.

9. New Business: None.

10. Adjournment: J. DeGraff made a motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Thurston. Motion passed by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Chapman, Planning Board Clerk

J. Lightner made a motion at the September 5 meeting to approve the August 15th minutes as written. C. Halsted seconded. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.