

Town of Searsmont
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2023
6:30 PM

1. Call to order: The meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:33 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 John Lightner Evie deFrees	Others: Patricia Chapman, on Teams Russell Fuller
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3. Applications:
 - a. Russell Fuller, 292 New England Road, 10'x16' storage shed on skids
 - i. Need setback details – it will be located in the driveway where there used to be a turnaround. It is at least 30' from the property line (possibly 70' based on town maps) – definitely more than the required 15'.
 - ii. S. Crosby made a motion to approve the permit application, seconded by J. Lightner. Motion passed 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
 - iii. Fee = \$106
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. J. Lightner moved to accept the August 15, 2023 minutes as written, C. Halsted seconded. Motion passed with 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
5. Treasurer's report:
6. Communications:
 - a. C. Halsted had some questions from residents about what you can do in Shoreland Zones.
 - b. Wilson wanted to take some dead browntail moth trees down in the SLZ.
 - c. Across from Ames School – owner wanted to do a farm stand; first they wanted to build a house. They need to do a site plan. C. Halsted will get more clarification on the size of it – just a temporary table or a more permanent stand.
 - d. Someone interested in purchasing Martz's property on the Appleton Ridge to do a campground.
 - i. C. Halsted went through the LUO for land and square footage requirements. They want to have a bathhouse and probably a full septic. Not sure how the individual trailers would hook up.
 - ii. Property was mined in the past.
 - e. Calls and permits have slowed down.
 - f. No new CEO applicants. We do have an LPI. The training is intertwined for both positions.

- i. It is supposed to be advertised but many members have not seen any notices.
 - ii. Selectmen have reached out to potential people but no one has been interested.
- g. The Planning Board is not handling the enforcement piece of the CEO job. If a member sees building/construction happening that they don't remember seeing a permit for, they can bring it to C. Halsted's attention and he will bring it to the Selectmen or they can contact the Selectmen directly. Selectmen are responsible for enforcing permit applications.

7. Committee Reports: None.

8. Old Business: None.

9. New Business:

a. Building permit form review:

- i. Move to a single layer document vs carbon copy form.
- ii. Is there or can we create a simple FAQ to go with the application with some basic info such as minimum lot size and set back requirements?
 - 1. We have had a checklist for staff to use when talking to a potential applicant but they are currently out of date.
 - 2. Include the Table of Land Use with the application?
- iii. Creating checklists of FAQs would require regular updates and might not have enough detail. It may be better not to give out information than to potentially give out inaccurate information. Office staff can just refer people to the Planning Board (or the CEO when we get one).
- iv. Once the forms are revised, we can add them to the website. Forms online can be fillable or printable.
- v. If we want to connect the map & lot information to the permit, the town would need to invest in the map software that C. Halsted is currently providing personally for Planning Board use.
- vi. Change the Received Date line to a box the office staff can actually stamp it received.
- vii. Add space and detail about the actual fee calculation.
- viii. Add links to relevant websites – fee schedule, ordinance, etc. We can link to specific pages as needed.
- ix. Re-organize the details to be easier to navigate with pertinent information on the first page (see online form for [Town of Camden](#)).
- x. Language from upper right of current form (about the process) can be moved to a different page – possibly a cover page.
 - 1. Cover page could have the process details and links to relevant pages on the website.
- xi. Add revision date so everyone knows it is the most recent form.
- xii. Do we need all of the boxes at the bottom of the page? Is that data used for anything?
 - 1. Could it be one sentence that says "Proposed Use" with a space to fill in the use vs all the check box options?
 - 2. Why do we need a serial number for mobile homes?

- xiii. Keep statement that information is accurate and applicant signature as is.
- xiv. The town is not responsible for making sure new construction is up to code – the owners and their contractors are responsible.
- xv. In Addition Section (not a good title) details in this section are necessary (about driveways and interior and exterior plumbing, etc).
- xvi. Specify that we need setbacks and road frontage, etc. We don't need to state requirements as we are linking to that information on the cover page.
- xvii. Anticipated start date is still important. Estimated cost of the project is generally not accurate and not relevant to the board's decision so it is not necessary for this document.
- xviii. We do still need the sketch. We can rearrange the instructions and use larger print.
- xix. We want to keep the dimensions. We need to specify that:
 - 1. Dimensions should be feet
 - 2. We need outside dimensions of the building including porches and overhang, etc. Building footprint.
- xx. Keep the questions about whether the property is in a subdivision or a shoreland zone. This is more for the board's reference as the applicant may not know.
- xxi. This document will be in Word so it can be revised regularly as ordinances change and if LD2003 creates additional changes.
- xxii. Where is the best place to put the form on the website? How best to add links to the form in other places?
 - 1. We will need to coordinate with office staff.
 - 2. It may not matter as most people find specific pages by searching Google vs navigating the site itself.
 - 3. There is a FAQ page and a Useful Links page that we can request the permit link be added.
- xxiii. How do we get unique numbers on the permits?
 - 1. Use date plus a digit on the end for the number of permits that day. Example: 09052023-1, 09052023-2, etc. The office staff receiving permit would need to number them.
 - 2. Can Word generate a number each time it's used?
- b. Site Plan Form:
 - i. Create a cover sheet similar to the permit application with relevant links to the website.
 - ii. Add a revision date and possibly some reformatting.
 - iii. Nothing major seems to be missing or unnecessary.
- c. The LUO should always be the primary reference when answering questions vs using FAQs and forms.
- d. C. Halsted will do a draft of the permit application for the next meeting. Everyone should look at the Site Plan Form for discussion at the next meeting. S. Crosby made copies for everyone.
- e. Next meeting is scheduled for September 19th unless there are no permits to review. C. Halsted will let everyone know closer to that date.

10. Adjournment: E. deFrees made a motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Lightner. Motion passed by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Chapman, Planning Board Clerk

J. Robbins made a motion at the September 19 meeting to accept the September 5, 2023 minutes as written, J. Thurston seconded. Motion passed with 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained (J. DeGraff).