

Town of Searsmont
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
September 6, 2022
7:00 PM

1. Call to order: The meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:59 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
Guy Hamlin

Others:

Patricia Chapman, PB Clerk
Jeff Caswell, Robbins Lumber

3. Applications:

- a. 1102.7 Amendments or, Additions/Expansions to Approved Site Plans: Robbins Lumber – 2 additions to existing buildings for storage and manufacturing:
 - i. J. Caswell: they want to build additions on two separate buildings:
 1. Sawmill – need more storage at the head of the end feed to the edger – 30'x70' extension with a full basement where there is existing pavement.
 2. Shavings bagger – extend from the existing roofline over the two garage doors to create space to put a robot at the end of the bagging line to fill pallets to go on trucks. No basement, built up to the existing floor levels.
 - ii. The plan is to start construction in the spring as the contractor is not available right now.
 - iii. This is an amendment to an existing site plan so we don't need to go through all of the usual requirements for a major or minor site plan.
 - iv. F. Therio did not inform the applicant about the permit fee or collect the payment. Under Section 1100, new application or amendment for a minor project, the fee would be \$1,225.00 - \$5 per \$1,000 cost of the project for projects over \$10,000; min \$400, max \$5,000. Estimated cost is \$245,000
 - v. C. Halsted made a motion, seconded by S. Crosby, to hear the application tonight with the condition that the payment is received by the end of the week (close of business Friday). Motion passed 7 in favor, 0 opposed.
 - vi. None of the board members had any concerns about the usual site plan requirements (noise, impacts, storm damage, lighting, etc). The project is near the center of the existing grounds so it should not increase noise, lighting, etc. in relation to neighboring properties. It is already on an impervious surface.
 - vii. Robbins Lumber will also be increasing sprinkler system to include the additions.
 - viii. Robot will be a stationary arm that takes the bale of shavings off the machine and sets it on the pallet in alternating pattern 9 bales high and there is an automatic wrapper that shrink-wraps it.

- ix. S. Crosby made a motion to approve the amendment request from Robbins Lumber (conditioned on receiving the payment by the end of the week per motion above), seconded by J. Thurston. Motion passed 5 in favor, 2 abstained (C. Halsted, J. DeGraff), 0 opposed.
- x. The board will sign copies tonight and applicant can pick up a signed copy tomorrow.

4. Approval of Minutes:

- a. J. DeGraff moved to accept the August 2, 2022 minutes as written, J. Robbins seconded. Motion passed with 7 in favor, 0 opposed.

5. Treasurer's report: None.

6. Communications:

- a. CEO Report: F. Therio is not in attendance.
 - i. The board noticed that the last few reports have been exactly the same except for one or two minor details. F. Therio replied that those are things he works on every month. In the future, we will include more details about things that are "out of the ordinary".
 - 1. "Multiple site visits" – report could indicate how many or what kind of projects.
 - 2. How many violations and what kind?
 - 3. There are no restrictions on what F. Therio can share with the Planning Board in the monthly reports.
 - 4. More details can help the Planning Board when discussing the new state legislations around ordinances.
 - ii. Do the Selectmen have a plan moving forward to prepare for a transition in the CEO position? C. Halsted has discussed this with them and they agree there should be a plan but one hasn't been created yet.
 - iii. The hours listed on the permit application do not reflect F. Therio's actual office hours which can make it difficult for applicants to get what they need.
 - iv. C. Halsted will talk to the selectmen. If the report is not detailed, the board will be asking the same questions each month.
- b. There is no update on a replacement for P. Chapman. The position has been posted. Is Zoom an option to keep P. Chapman on longer? Possibly.
 - i. P. Chapman updates the permit spreadsheet by pulling all the permits from Frank's drawer and updating the sheet. She puts a small check mark on each one to indicate it's been added.
 - ii. Could the new part-time bookkeeper do the PB Clerk job as well? The selectmen don't feel like that is a viable option.
 - iii. The file cabinet drawer for the Planning Board next to the conference tables has "in process" applications. Once a file is complete, it is moved to the vault.
- c. What qualifications are needed to be CEO?
 - i. The person would need to be able to get their LPI.
 - ii. They prefer someone with experience but it's not necessarily required as there are trainings available through the state.
 - iii. It could be a good position for a retiree.

d. Building Permit spreadsheet:

- i. Three new permits were added to the spreadsheet today: 3 season addition, 2-car garage, and a mobile home.

7. Committee Reports: None.

8. Old Business: None.

9. New Business:

- a. Planning Board will start working on next item on the suggested to do list for this year in October: review/revise sign ordinance.
- b. The town voted down the idea of purchasing an electronic sign for the town office.
- c. E. deFrees and J. Robbins will not be at the October meeting. J. Thurston isn't sure. The sign ordinance will likely take more than one meeting.
- d. The selectmen are still waiting for information from the state about updating the town's comp plan before creating a committee and starting the process. The state is reinstating their program to have staff available to assist towns with their comp plans.

10. Adjournment: J. DeGraff made a motion to adjourn, seconded by E. deFrees. Motion passed by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Chapman, Planning Board Clerk

J. Thurston made a motion at the October 4 meeting to accept the September 6 minutes as written. S. Crosby seconded. Motion passed 4 in favor, 0 opposed.