

PLANNING BOARD
Town of Peterborough, New Hampshire

Minutes of April 1, 2019

Members Present: Bob Holt, Ivy Vann, Alan Zeller, Sarah Steinberg Heller, Tyler Ward, Jerry Galus, and Dario Carrara

Staff Present: Peter Throop and Laura Norton, Office of Community Development

Chair Holt called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and introduced the Members and Staff. He noted this was a special meeting to make a vote to support or not support a citizen's petition zoning amendment discussed at a Public Hearing on March 11, 2019.

Minutes:

A motion was made/seconded (Vann/Zeller) to approve the Minutes of March 11, 2019 as written with all in favor.

Mr. Throop noted a correction of the Minutes of February 25, 2019 where a statement had been attributed to the wrong person. He noted the Minutes had been corrected to rectify the error. A motion was made/seconded (Vann/Zeller) to approve the correction with all in favor.

Chair Holt read the Citizen's Petition to rezone a parcel located at 10 Laurel Street, Parcel No. U018-087-000, from the Family District to the General Residence District. He reiterated a duly noticed public hearing on this petition amendment was held on Monday March 11, 2019, and no further public comment or testimony will be taken. Chair Holt then appointed Ms. Heller to sit on the decision and asked Mr. Throop to explain RSA 675:4 III.

Mr. Throop noted this statute governed the method of enactment by Petition and that Section III read "each petitioned amendment shall be placed on a ballot which may be separated from the ballot used to elect town or village district officers. A notation on the ballot stating the Planning Board's approval or disapproval shall immediately follow the question's description.....:

Mr. Throop noted "as you recall the Board opted not to make a statement in support of or against the petition." He went on to say, "having consulted with the Town Attorney, I am recommending that you are required make a choice one way or the other."

Mr. Zeller asked if the decision to support or not was a simple majority with Mr. Throop replying, “it is a simple majority.”

A motion was made by Ms. Vann to support the Citizen’s Petition to rezone a parcel located at 10 Laurel Street, Parcel No. U018-087-000, from the Family District to the General Residence District, “to open discussion” she said.

Mr. Zeller spoke briefly on change. “People don’t want to see change or increase density in their neighborhoods. That being said, we have been advocating for infill for a long time and I think it would be good thing. This won’t create a building spree on the block overnight the density may still be years out. I support this petition to rezone the parcel from Family to General Residence.”

Mr. Galus disagreed noting his belief that rezoning this lot would create a parcel without adequate infrastructure. “The area is not equipped to handle it and it isolates the property from the others around it” he said. Mr. Galus concluded that if the Board voted to support the petition, improvements to the infrastructure would have to come hand in hand.

Ms. Vann interjected she had thought a lot about it and suggested the Members look at the neighborhoods around the parcel (Grove, Winter, Central and Scott Streets) and they would discover there are almost no lots in the whole area that are an acre in size. She noted she had counted up to 21 lots that were *just over* a half-acre and 18 more that were *less* than a half-acre in size. “It is no secret that I am an advocate of narrow streets” she said adding “and I don’t see that increasing density on this lot is going to create a burdensome amount of traffic.”

Looking to Mr. Gallus Ms. Heller said, “we don’t have to agree but the lot will not be isolated, it is not non-contiguous with the General Residence District.”

Mr. Ward said he’d be back and forth on his decision. “Why change one lot? He said adding “why not change the whole area if we are going to do that?” He briefly reviewed the reason the request was submitted in the first place (the creation of affordable dwelling units) but asked “what if that does not happen as planned or anticipated?” He went on to note “we have been talking about affordable housing for years, so I guess I go on faith for the opportunity to have a parcel for affordable housing.”

Chair Holt added “I think the map speaks volumes” adding “the lots around it in the Family District are (legally) non-conforming. This would allow it to be a conforming lot in the neighborhood.”

A motion was made/seconded (Vann/Zeller) to support the Citizen's Petition.

With all in six (6) in favor one (1), Mr. Galus, who was against.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 8, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant