

Webster Planning Board Minutes - Meeting of August 21, 2008

Present: Chairman Cliff Broker, alternate selectmen member Thomas Mullins; members Jere Buckley (Secretary), Richard Doucette, and Alan Hofmann; and alternates Richard Cummings, Sue Rauth, and Susan Roman. Also present: Planning and Zoning Secretary Mary Smith, selectman George Hashem, resident Robert Lake, Town office staff Judy Jones and Wendy Pinkham, road agent Emmett Bean, resident Sue Roberts, and Provan and Lorber Engineering representative Ted Kupper.

Chairman Broker convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance was taken, with the results noted above.

The Board reviewed the minutes of their 17 July meeting. Upon motion made by Mr. Doucette and seconded by Mr. Hofmann, the Board voted unanimously to endorse those minutes as written.

A scheduled conceptual discussion with Michael & Laurie Spencer and Charles & Deborah Spencer involving lots on Deer Meadow Road had been postponed.

Mr. Ted Kupper from Provan and Lorber Engineering in Contoocook was present to discuss the services his firm might provide to the Board in support of their several responsibilities. He had previously been in discussions with the selectmen, who have been looking for a source of consolidated engineering support with expertise applicable to building inspection, Zoning Ordinance compliance, and other requirements of the several Town boards. Mr. Kupper had submitted a draft of a proposed agreement to supply such services, and copies of that document were supplied to Board members.

It was clear that such support could be helpful with respect to both subdivision and driveway issues, but much of the ensuing discussion focused on how Mr. Kupper's firm might support the Board on driveway-related issues, including questions related to culverts, ditching, and drainage. Questions addressed included:

- Should driveway permit applications require a professionally prepared engineering drawing, or is a dimensioned sketch sufficient? There was concern about the poor quality of some of the sketches that have been submitted in the past. Mr. Kupper opined that, in the case of applications submitted by an individual property owner, a properly prepared sketch should be acceptable and that applications with inadequate sketches would be returned to the applicant for improvement.
- How can Board requirements be most effectively enforced? One possibility might be imposition of an occupancy permit requirement, although it was not clear what the implementation process might be. Another option would be to require some form of financial guarantee, e.g. posting a bond. There was some concern that, while such a requirement might be readily dealt with by developers or contractors, it could be an excessive burden on an individual property owner.
- To what extent should the road agent be involved in the driveway permitting process? It was noted that, until relatively recently, the Board had delegated driveway application to the road agent, that there had been problems, and that a prior road agent had been much relieved when the Board reassumed direct responsibility.
- What fee structure will be established, and how will we handle situations in which problems necessitate a larger number of inspections (and hence greater costs) than anticipated by the established fee?

The consensus of the Board was that the selectmen's goal of a consolidated source of engineering support is a good idea, and that the Board could benefit from such support on both driveway and subdivision issues. Members felt that such support should be applied both to the application review process and to ensuring subsequent compliance. It was agreed that the Provan and Lorber proposal should be revised to explicitly reflect the Board's needs, as selected by the discussion at this meeting.

Upon motion duly made and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned 8:28 p.m.
The next Board meeting will be on 18 September at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jere D. Buckley, Secretary