

Minutes of the December 16, 2009 Planning Commission

Meeting called to order at 7:05 P.M. by Chairman Martin Sokolich. Planning Commission members Margaret Haven and Jeff Garrett; and Zoning Administrator Nick Cappella were in attendance.

Approval of the Minutes

A motion for approval of the October minutes was made by Margaret, seconded by Jeff, unanimously approved.

Reports and Updates

Ridgeway Estates – Martin asked if a current address had been obtained for the Ridgeway Estates developer. Nick said yes, and that he sent that information to Butch King. Nick also said that Robin Eaton (Public Works Director) had some issues regarding Ridgeway, and neither Nick nor Robin could locate a complete set of approved, signed documents for that development. Nick said the landscape plan for Ridgeway has changed from the original plans.

Martin said that at this time, they are still trying to figure out what exactly is going on with the education requirement for planners. The issue will be discussed at the next Assoc. of Municipalities meeting. Martin also introduced a form to be used for motions and votes.

Old Business

Sign Permit for the Telephone Exchange building – Martin reviewed the status and provided an overview of the sign permit. In the Zoning Ordinance a 10' setback is required, but the applicant is asking for a 5' setback. He said that as you go down (Railroad Street) there isn't anything that is that close to the curb. Martin also said that the Planning Commission is under no obligation to approve the permit, even though the sign has already been erected. He said there are a couple of alternatives to consider instead of the applicant(s) being turned down by the Planning Commission and having to go to the Board of Appeals, such as hanging the sign on the building. There was discussion about the Board of Appeals process and Planning Commission policies and procedures. Margaret made a motion to table the application for the sign at the Telephone Exchange Building in Railroad Park until members of the Historic Society can be contacted about alternative placement, seconded by Jeff, unanimously approved.

Request for Rezoning of 201 Central Avenue – Martin said that Lisa Takala made a request to have the property (currently zoned residential) rezoned as commercial. There was discussion. Martin said he would have Missy mail the letter he drafted to Lisa Takala.

Martin also said that there should be a similar letter to the Historic Commission regarding the sign permit application for the Telephone Exchange Building.

Commission Roundtable Discussion

Proposed Solar/Wind Generator – Martin stated that the residents at 14 Central Avenue have considered erecting a wind turbine on their property. He said that the town does not have anything specifically addressing wind turbines in the Zoning Ordinance, but the feasibility of something that would comply with the Zoning Ordinance and supply the power they want is probably pretty slim.

Margaret asked about the height. Martin said that a proposal has yet to be received. There was some discussion.

Nick stated that there was a garage torn down, without a permit, today at 202 Caroline Avenue. He also said that Cary Malkus is going to look into it, and that the building may have fallen down because of the recent windy conditions.

Margaret suggested addressing the Design Guidelines in the New Year, and she offered to compare Ridgely's Design Guidelines to the Design Guidelines of other locations. Nick asked if the Planning Commission would like to tackle the Design Guidelines first, before the Zoning Ordinance or the Subdivision Regulations. Martin said that there are recommendations addressing Design Guidelines, zoning recommendations, building character, etc. in the Comprehensive Plan.

Adjournment

Jeff made a motion to adjourn at 8:16, seconded by Margaret.

Sincerely,

Missy Vanskiver
Asst. Clerk