

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT PLANNING BOARD

June 7, 2016

Whitsett Town Hall

The meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board was held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at the Whitsett Town Hall. Those in attendance were Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Board members Joe Wheeler and Craig York, and Council Member liaison Jerry Rice. Absent was Board Vice Chairwoman Ella Efirid.

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia called the meeting to order, noting that a quorum was present, and asked Council Member liaison Jerry Rice to offer the invocation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of Minutes

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia asked for any changes to the minutes from the Planning Board meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2016. With none made, Chairman Maccia asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Board member Joe Wheeler made a motion to accept the minutes as written; motion seconded by Board member Craig York. Adoption of the May minutes carried by unanimous vote of those members present.

2. Relook at Language for Ordinance Sections on Self-Storage Facilities

In follow up to discussions initiated early this year, where there had been some confusion over the 2009 “conditional-use” label to a Highway Business (HB) parcel at the corner of Burlington Road and Brightwood Church Road, then used solely for outdoor storage of recreational vehicles, the Board continued to address minor modifications to clarify sections of the zoning ordinance that dealt with indoor and outdoor self-storage facilities.

First, for Section 4-7.9 on Outdoor Storage, the “conditional-use” tag was unnecessary since a set of specific development standards had been developed when the parcel was first rezoned commercial in 2009. The Town records would need to be revised for conformance with the zoning records in Guilford County.

The 2003 [warehouse] 4-7.18 section that now reads “No outside storage shall be permitted” is believed, at that time, to be intended to prevent items such as pallets, boxes, etc., from piling up around storage units. The insertion of the phrase “with the exception of 4-7.9 [specified] use” would prove the simplest remedy; and this is what the Board would recommend to Council for adoption next week at the public hearing and regular meeting.

Board Chairman Maccia asked for the formal motion to effect these modifications to the zoning ordinance; and the motion was made by Board member Craig York, to recommend the text amendments to the Town Council for adoption. Motion was seconded by Board member Joe Wheeler; and the motion carried by unanimous quorum vote.

If adopted by Council next week, the minor refinements would clear up past inconsistencies and gray areas to legitimately allow self-storage operations to span both HB parcels.

3. Review Pre-Construction Plans for Two-Story Self-Storage Building

Board members to another look at conceptuials and construction plans, including comparable materials to match existing structures on the facility property. The brick and mortar would match the residential home where management offices for the operation are housed; and the vinyl siding for the new two-story structure would complement the siding on the mini-warehouses on the adjacent lot.

The Board took notice of the sloped roof that would serve natural storm drainage into the existing sediment pond. The efficient roof would be seemingly invisible, however, with its surrounding wall giving a clean look to the building. The new warehouse would have a footprint of close to 25,000 square feet with two stories offering almost 49,000 square feet of space.

All in all, Board members agreed that the new facility would be an attractive improvement to the existing self-storage business and an asset to the town.

4. Continue Discussion on Ordinance for Solar Farms

Board Chairman Maccia turned to Board member Craig York, who at the previous Board meeting had offered to research regulations with respect to solar farms that are evolving across the state and nearby. Board member York had formulated a fact sheet to distribute to those present for reaction.

York described the three categories of solar energy systems, with levels 1 and 2 limited to ½ acre plots usually for single-family purpose or specific-purpose projects and not considered a threat to the landscape of the Town. Level 3, however, is a vast-land system typically on large tracts of AG property used

for generating massive solar energy for profit. This level is the focus of concern with an objective of ultimately banning level 3 systems within Town boundaries to protect the landscape of the community and its residents from the negative environmental impacts of solar farms.

Board members felt York's presentation was an excellent beginning towards containment and/or prohibiting any potential development of such mega-sites; and Board Chairman Maccia asked Board member York to be present at next week's Council meeting to present his talk sheet to Council members

5. Any Other Old Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other old business; and there was brief discussion about an inquiry made this morning to Town Hall by a real estate agent with regard to the RS-40 3.27 acre Busick property located at 6902 Burlington Road. The agent would not offer up any ideas in mind for the property; but, asked about rezoning requirements and the process involved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Any Other New Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other new business; and there was none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Planning Board Chairman Maccia invited a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Board member Joe Wheeler to adjourn; motion seconded by Board member Craig York. By unanimous vote of those Board members present, the June 7, 2016 meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:38 p.m.

The next meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 5, 2016 at the Town Hall. [NOTE: The August and September Board meetings were subsequently cancelled, making the next Planning Board to be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016.]

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Bob Maccia, Planning Board Chairman

APPROVED: October 4, 2016