

## **MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT PLANNING BOARD**

**April 4, 2017  
Whitsett Town Hall**

The meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board was held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at the Whitsett Town Hall. Those in attendance were Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Board Vice Chairwoman Ella Efird, Board members Joe Wheeler and Craig York, and Council Member liaison Jerry Rice. Also present were Town Administrator Ken Jacobs and prospective Board member Tyler Harris.

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia called the meeting to order, noted 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, March 7, 2017. With none made, Chairman Maccia asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Board Vice Chairwoman Ella Efird made a motion to accept the minutes as written; motion seconded by Board member Joe Wheeler. Adoption of the March minutes carried by unanimous vote.

#### **2. Further Discussion on Procedure for Registering a Complaint**

Chairman Maccia opened continued discussions on an agreed method by which residents can file a complaint. Supposition was that a practice was instituted years ago during a Council meeting stating that only adjoining property owners or residents could file a complaint, which was required in writing for submission to the Town Hall and action by the Enforcement Committee. It was preferred that a future improved procedure for lodging complaints would be incorporated into an adopted ordinance to make it more concrete and easier to reference since it would then be published on the website as public record.

This topic was the major discussion at tonight's meeting, and concerns included who could file a complaint, the means by which to file a complaint, and the confidentiality, anonymity of the submission, and then the progression thereafter.

The concluding consensus was that an adjoining property owner would be the prime bona fide complainant or a property owner directly affected by conditions whether visually or by proximity could file. An example of proximity would be the devaluation of properties as a result of the violation. Complaints be submitted by way of a signed and dated letter or email, or filed in person to the Town Hall or Enforcement Officer for Enforcement Committee review and action.

Town Administrator Ken Jacobs will consult the Town attorney on the Board's recommendations and report next month.

### **3. Continued Discussion on Imposing Fines for Violations**

Chairman Maccia invited further discussion on fines. Article IX on Enforcement currently reads that a violator is subject to a \$25 fine for the first offense, \$50 for second, \$100 for third, and \$200 for fourth and any succeeding violations. Council Member liaison Jerry Rice favored some leniency at the outset by first sending a notification letter to the violator, but then stiffer fines to recoup labor and administrative costs if the issue is not resolved.

Board members determined that the amounts for assessing penalties should be amended to \$25 fine for the first offense, \$100 for the second, and \$250 for the third, and any succeeding violations. These recommendations will be presented to the Town Council next week for their reaction and inclusion on the docket for the June public hearing.

### **4. Any Other Old Business**

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other old business; and a brief discussion took place about the recent receipt of the Town's annual financial audit and its outcome primarily with respect to gains or losses of the Town's water system. The audit documented an over \$2,000 loss for the enterprise fund; and staff was ascertaining how that occurred, and would be taking steps to avoid any losses next year and future years. This would generally indicate a jump in rates and fees is in store.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Attendance of Prospective New Board Member**

Chairman Maccia welcomed Tyler Harris to the table, and expressed gratitude for his interest in serving on the Board. Mr. Harris, being in the process of purchasing his dwelling at 802 NC Hwy 61, would mean that at present he could not officially serve on the Board until he became a property owner, according to the Planning Board by-laws. Harris said that he should close on the property in a month or so, at which time appointment to the Board would be recommended for Council approval.

Meanwhile, Chairman Maccia and Board Members appreciate Mr. Harris's presence at meetings and his input on discussions and projects.

**2. Probable Zoning Options for Proposed Development of Hudson Property**

Chairman Maccia looked to Town Administrator Jacobs for information on this topic, who stated that he had a meeting with the Town attorney on zoning options relative to the land development project at the east edge of Town, and was expecting a response tomorrow, which would then be shared with the Board.

**3. Any Other New Business**

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other new business; and Town Administrator Ken Jacobs explained that on behalf of the Town Council, he had a "homework assignment" for the Board, and that was to formulate a Town-wide Land Use Plan. To date, a formal plan had not existed, although Planning Board and Town Council discussions had taken place in the past designating the U.S. Hwy 70 corridor for highway business.

Current zoning maps and instructions were distributed to Board members; and so the work begins. Subsequent Planning Board meetings should prove interesting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Bob Maccia invited a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was made by Board member Joe Wheeler; motion seconded by Board member Craig York. By unanimous vote of Board members, the April 4, 2017 meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:22 p.m.

The next meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at the Town Hall.

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Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

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Bob Maccia, Planning Board Chairman

**APPROVED:** May 2, 2017