

Planning Board Minutes February 21, 2017

Present: Chairman Pitney, Vice Chair Fletcher, Member Talbot, Member Raftery, and Member Carmichael. Absent: Member Pearce and Member Cardillo.

Also at the meeting were: Anita Schwerner, Shirley Talbot, Stuart Hirshfield, Charles Kenny, Christine Rasmussen, Don Chabon and Bob Tublitz.

Chairman Pitney asked for a motion to accept the minutes from January 17th, Member Carmichael moved to accept the minutes as presented and Member Raftery seconded. The vote was: Chairman Pitney – Yes, Member Raftery – Yes, Member Carmichael – Yes, Member Talbot - Abstain and Member Fletcher – Abstain, the motion carried.

Member Pitney recognized the passing of Jack Spencer as a mentor and friend to many, a big part of Stockbridge and former chairman of the Stockbridge Planning Board. Member Talbot mentioned that Jack was a guidepost to the Town of Stockbridge and had friendships with many of his students after they graduated. He will definitely be missed.

We will meet with the Selectmen in March to discuss zoning in the Town. Member Fletcher mentioned the last Town Meeting and the article for the transfer of funds into the Planning Board budget. She would like to take a step back; take a close look at the zoning bylaws, look into hiring a zoning expert who would have no conflict of interest and understands a small Massachusetts town and Mass General Law. Member Raftery asked if this was heading towards a master plan or not. Member Fletcher said the need to address zoning is now a priority. Member Raftery was interested in hearing from someone at BRPC where we might get some good guidance and tap into their expertise; Member Talbot felt BRPC would be a good resource and the first place to go. Member Fletcher will speak to Tom at BRPC but does not want to limit the board to one resource, she will also speak with Chris Rembold. Whoever we use will have to commit to no conflict of interest; we have had tremendous uneasiness over this in Town. Member Carmichael suggested using BRPC as a starting point to get names or places to look. Member Pitney: in speaking with the Selectmen regarding a committee, finding a diverse all-inclusive group with board members and citizens is what we should strive for, not unlike what we would do for a master plan. Given the financial constraints on the Town, if this comes to fruition and the zoning review gets somewhere, it can be folded into the master plan. Zoning is the most important piece at this point that will have the biggest impact. Chairman Pitney asked for questions from the audience and said the Board would be looking for community participation when decisions are made, not just a Planning Board piece but a community piece with Town Boards; zoning affects everyone. We need to be aware of the repercussions; what may seem like a good idea on further consideration may not be. He suggested looking at the whole idea then deciding what is the best solution. Member Fletcher would like to focus on definitions too. Anita Schwerner offered to help look into what resources are available. Stuart Hirshfield was encouraged to have the community involvement and mentioned that has not always been the case. When a proposal that has not been shown to the community is then put in front of a board to decide the fate of a whole community, there is confusion and upset. Member Raftery agreed that when the people who are concerned have input rather than a board saying

what will happen the community feels they have been involved with the decision. We do need someone from the outside to help with legal things. Mr. Hirshfield: There is confusion as to what the true bylaws are and when amending them we will be amending the true bylaws; having a zoning expert would help to clarify what should be in the zoning bylaws. Ms. Rasmussen recommended going through town meetings to footnote all bylaws as to when amendments went into effect and when the Attorney General approved those. Member Fletcher and Chairmen Pitney felt starting with the zoning bylaws would be a good place to begin.

Chairman Pitney asked for a motion to adjourn, Member Fletcher moved to adjourn and Member Raftery seconded the vote was Chairman Pitney – Yes, Member Talbot - Yes, Member Raftery – Yes, Member Fletcher – Yes, Member Carmichael – Yes, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jennifer Carmichael, Secretary