

Rowley Planning Board Minutes January 27, 2021 at 7:00 pm

DATE: January 27, 2021
LOCATION: Online
TIME: 7:00pm

Members Present

Chris Thornton (Chairman), David Jaquith (Vice Chairman), Kevin Moriarty (Member), John Urbaczewski (Member, Troy Spaulding (Member), and Kirk Baker (Town Planner) were present.

Thornton called the meeting to order. Meeting conducted by remote participation to the greatest extent possible, due to Governor's orders on suspending open meetings and gatherings of more than 10 people.

New Public Hearings

Proposal to Amend the Rowley Protective Zoning Bylaw/Special Permit Review of Accessory Buildings Size

After Baker read the legal notice Baker, a motion was made by Thornton to open the public hearing. Seconded by Jaquith and all voted in favor (5-0).

Thornton stated this is a Planning Board request for amendment to the zoning bylaw. Currently, the threshold for special permit review of an accessory building is 1,500 square feet. Anything less than that current threshold is permitted by-right with a building permit. However, there have be times when accessory buildings less than the 1,500 sf threshold are not appropriate to the scale of the neighborhood. The proposal is for the Board to lower the threshold for review to a lesser amount. Discussion among the Board ensued on past projects, and why they are requesting the amendment. Jaquith asked about the description of accessory use, and Baker read the official town definition.

Discussion continued on what the proper threshold for special permit review might be. Thornton stated that an 800 square foot accessory building would allow a 2-car garage with room for work bench area. Anything beyond that size, the Board wants to know why an applicant wants more square footage. No community members wanted to comment. Spaulding asked about a ratio for an undersized lot. Thornton asked what the current maximum building coverage for a lot is and Baker notes that it is a 25% maximum standard across the town.

Thornton also talked about floor area and the definition of such, which was read from the zoning bylaw by Baker. Jaquith talked about other towns and what their limits are for a special permit. The Board agreed that changing the by-law from over 1,500 square feet to over 800 square feet for an accessory building is an acceptable amount. The Board also agreed that it should be made explicit in the text that accessory buildings are detached rather than being additions likes the one at 54 Haverhill Street which they contended should not be subject to review. They ask Baker to write up the change and to present it to the Board for review prior to presenting it at town meeting.

Jaquith makes a motion to vote to change the threshold for special permit review of accessory buildings from, 1,500 square feet to 800 square feet in the town zoning bylaw and the motion was seconded by Spaulding. They take a roll call vote in favor of the motion as follows with all voted in favor (5-0).

Per Baker, a few other items will be brought up at a future Board meeting regarding by-law changes that will need town meeting approval.

The Board discussed the former Veteran's Gas Station lot along Route 1. Baker notes that the Water Department did contact him, and stated they had conducted a meeting to discuss the possibility of a fuel station on this lot. The Water Department determined they would not be able to support having a filling station in that location due to the proximity

of the Town's most productive water well and would not recommend or support any amendment to the Zoning Bylaw that would allow underground storage tanks at that location.

Other Business

Urbaczewski and Moriarty stated they reviewed the minutes presented by Baker. Jaquith made a motion to accept the minutes from June 30, July 22 and Aug 12, 2020. Urbaczewski seconded the motion and all voted in favor (5-0).

Baker then brought up the questions whether due to these times of not meeting face-to-face if the the Board agree to make one person a signatory for ANR plans. Thornton made a motion to make Baker the ANR signatory subsequent to a Board vote for endorsement, while the remote meetings are being held. Jaquith seconded the motion and all voted in favor (5-0).

Baker had 28 hours of vacation time left in 2020 and would like to carry it over to 2021. He will put in the request with the Town Administrator. Board was in agreement.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Baker. Jaquith seconded the motion and all voted in favor (5-0). Meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.