



Town of Mount Holly Planning Commission

Town Office & Remote Electronic – Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Commission Members Present: Jon McCann (Chair), Jim Seward (Vice Chair), Andrew Seward, Andrew Schulz (Secretary, via Zoom), Stephen Michel

Also present: Robert Garrow, Maurice Turco, Peggy Turco, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Gary Norton, Lori Norton, Tiffany Norton, Christopher Corsones (via Zoom)

1. Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm
2. Changes to agenda: none
3. Approval of minutes
 - a. The minutes of the regular meeting held on February 21, 2024, with approved without objection.
4. Reports & Announcements
 - a. Administrative Officer
 - None (the Administrative Officer is not in attendance).
 - b. Planning Commission Chair
 - None.
5. Correspondence
 - a. Subdivision proposals:
 - i. Turco sketch plan review
 - Chris Corsones, attending via Zoom, confirmed that he is representing Vincent and Maurice Turco with respect to their application to subdivide a 134-acre property on Branch Brook Road into two lots. Vincent Turco provided a new sketch plan, which the Commissioners reviewed to determine whether the information requested at the prior meeting had been added. All concurred that it appears to have the additional information, except for the signature block needed for the Planning Commission's approval. Except for that, which can be added prior to the hearing on the application, the application looks complete. With the applicant's consent, the hearing is scheduled for 6:30 PM on April 17.

ii. Garrow sketch plan review

- Mr. Garrow informed the Commissioners that he has submitted his proposal to subdivide his 76-acre property on Old Turnpike Road to the State for approval. He reports that the State told him that it does not do “deferral of permits” anymore, and that all that is necessary for State approval is to include language in the deed that the successor owner is required to design and obtain approval of a wastewater and water supply system. The Chair noted that the Planning Commission must wait until State acts on the application, and Mr. Garrow acknowledged that he understood. Mr. Garrow expressed confusion about how the town’s process differs from the State’s. The Commissioners unanimously agreed that the Town’s regulations, which predate the State’s by many years, should be updated.
- Discussion ensued on the question of where road access would be to the new lots from Old Turnpike Road. Mr. Garrow stated that the road access will be wherever the buyer wants to put it. The Nortons expressed concern about this, noting that they have deeded water rights on the Garrow property in an area where a buyer might create an access road.
- Next, there was discussion concerning possible discrepancies between the locations of monuments on the ground as compared to where they are indicated on the survey. There are two surveys, one by Ralph Michael and one by Deb Daniels, but the latter was never recorded. After lengthy discussion, it appeared that there is a disagreement between Mr. Garrow and the Norton family as to the precise location of the boundary lines, although the general location and the size of the Norton lot (1.00 or 1.12 acres) are not disputed. The Commissioners agreed that it would be inadvisable to approve a subdivision application if there is a dispute as to where the boundary lines are. The Chair urged that the parties find a way to amicably resolve their disagreement, possibly by having their surveyors walk the lines. Tiffany Norton asked whether there was a way to resolve it without the expense of hiring surveyors. Commissioner Schulz stated that there may be, but cautioned that an inexpensive solution could have the effect of deferring the dispute to the next owners of the properties.
- There was further discussion of the differences between State and town regulations, specifically with respect to the provisions that allow subdividers to pass the obligation to obtain wastewater and water supply permits to successor owners. Commissioner Schulz and the Chair pointed out that the town’s regulations allow such a procedure only in limited circumstances, and although they agree that the

regulation should be changed, until that happens it must be followed. The provision in the town's regulation was read aloud, and Mr. Garrow was given the citation to the provision (Section II(D)(1)(b)). Mr. Garrow reiterated that he doesn't want to pay for a septic design for a home in a location that may not be where the next owner wants to build. Commissioner Schulz stated that he understands Mr. Garrow's concern, but that often having an approved septic plan can increase the sale price of a lot. The Chair urged Mr. Garrow to consult with his surveyor, invited him to amend his application form to add the surveyor as an authorized agent, and assured him that his application will be on the Commission's agenda next month.

b. Email / Other:

- The Chair reported that a copy of a State wastewater permit issued to Patrick Hazlett, on Maple Hill Road, had been received.

6. New Business:

- a. None.

7. Unfinished Business

a. Town Plan adoption – Report and Next Steps

- The final adopted Plan has been sent to State and the RRPC. It will be on the RRPC's docket for their meeting on April 16. Our regional representative will probably be there. The draft report on the plan was updated to reflect changes and approval by the Select Board. The updated report was approved by unanimous consent.

b. Belmont Village Center Designation Renewal Application

- The minutes of the Select Board meeting were amended to reflect the fact that the Select Board approved submitting a renewal application. The application needs to include this and also needs to include quotes from the town plan supporting renewal. The Chair noted that it is now encouraged that Village Center designations follow existing property boundary lines, which ours do not. This will be something to address in the future. The Chair shared a cover letter that he had circulated earlier in the day, which was copied almost entirely from prior renewal applications. Commissioner Michel offered some factual corrections, some additional information, and wording suggestions. Discussion ensued about the usefulness of obtaining letters of support, and all agreed that they would be helpful. Commissioner Michel offered to help get a letter from the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum.

8. Public Comments: None

9. Upcoming meetings

- a. Regular meeting: April 17, 2024 at 7:00 pm

10. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

For the Commission,

Andrew Schulz, Planning Commission Secretary

In draft form until approved on April 17, 2024