

**Ashland Planning Board Meeting
Minutes
May 6, 2015**

Members Present: Susan MacLeod (chair), Carol Fucarile, Fran Newton, Normand DeWolfe, and Cheryl Cox

Members Absent: Mardean Badger with notice

Others Present:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Chairman Susan MacLeod.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

Fran Newton made a motion to accept the minutes of April 29 as written. Cheryl Cox seconded the motion. With all other votes in the affirmative the motion passed. The minutes were accepted as written.

CORRESPONDENCE

Susan MacLeod was in receipt of an email which stated there was a party interested in the purchase of the property at 613 Route 175 on Hicks Hill Road in Ashland. The property is owned by Ms. Suzanne Fisch. The inquiry centered on whether Hicks Hill Road and accompanying bridge over Spring Brook were owned and maintained by the Town of Ashland. A search of town records revealed that Hicks Hill Road had been discontinued by town meeting vote in 1926 for one section of Hicks Hill Road and again in 1940 for the remaining section of Hicks Hill Road. The discontinuation ran from Rte 175, Seven Pine Hills Road to property identified as "Taglibeau house".

The site in question had a 200' bridge over Spring Brook, 150' frontage on Rte 175 and the house was set back near the bridge. The ~~previous~~ owner Ms. Fisch has an out of state address.

With a discontinued road the town has no ownership of the road so the ownership of the road reverts to the abutters to the property. The abutters own to the middle of the road. The town is no longer responsible for this discontinued road. The property in question according to a recent tax map contains 45 acres of current use land. A livable structure cannot be built within current use land. To be put into current use, a property must have at least 10 contiguous acres outside of any building envelope. The road is presently considered the present owner's driveway. The house construction was done but not finished in 1990. Susan MacLeod will email the party sending the inquiry with appropriate attachments.

OLD BUSINESS

The Planning Board discussed the creation of a Design Standards Policy for the Town of Ashland. The policy when written and adopted by the Town would set standards on how the business district in town will look in terms of uniform style, colors, style of windows and uniformity of store fronts in town. These standards will be presented to developers interested in building or remodeling within the business district of Ashland.

The members of the board discussed the present lack of parking within the town. There are local residents who would like to be able to park in front of or near the business they would like to frequent. There are local residents who would be more interested in municipal parking and being able to walk to and from their business destination. The problem of municipal parking is finding a parcel of land that does not have a major grade to it. Any municipal parking parcel in town would have to come off the tax rolls which would impact income to the town.

The Board would like to have a policy in place going forward as both residential properties and business properties are sold. The town will be able to negotiate with franchises such as Burger King concerning design standards for their buildings. With several design standards plans having been compiled from 1967-1997, selective plans from the 1980s forward will be electronically sent to members for their review. Design standards will be a topic for discussion in the future.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting is the Work Session, May 27, 6:30 pm at the Town Office.

With nothing more to come before the Board Normand DeWolfe made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Minutes submitted by Paula Hancock