

Town of Winchester  
Planning Board  
Minutes  
10-17-16

Meeting opened: 7:00pm.

Members present: Chris Rurka, Mike Doherty, Herb Stephens (SR), Gus Ruth (V. Chair), Brooke Sharra (Chair), and Dean Beaman. Larry Hill was absent. Margaret Sharra is the Land Use Administrator.  
Public: Ken & Claudia Harvey, Barry Montgomery, Ken Cole, Mike Coope, Jordan Sharra, Christy Davis, and Karey Miner.

First order of business: The board reviews the minutes of 10-3-16 for approval. Members recommend two changes, "what" to "why" and add "Winchester". **D. Beaman moves to approve with the corrections, G. Ruth seconds. The vote is 5 yes and 1 abstain (HS).**

Second order of business: The board reviews an application for site plan submitted by Margaret Sharra, Jim Shannon & Mike Shannon. Brooke Sharra recuses herself and Margaret Sharra leaves the table. G. Ruth is acting Chairman. Minutes are done for this section by Karey Miner. M. Doherty asks the board if he should recuse himself since he is also the PB rep on the HDC. Members did not see a reason because he is dealing with a usage here not the look of the outside. They felt he can act in both capacities. He continues as an acting member.

Second order of business: by Karey Miner

An application for site plan review was submitted by Margaret Sharra, James Shannon and Michael Shannon for 71 Main Street. The purpose is to construct and operate a retail/restaurant/lodging/office building. If the application is accepted as complete the board will enter into a public hearing. All abutters were notified and notices were posted.

**D. Beaman makes a motion that it is not an impact to the region (DRI). M. Doherty seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0.**

G. Ruth asked all members if they reviewed the application.

**D. Beaman makes a motion to accept the application as complete that was submitted and move into the public hearing. M. Doherty seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0**

Margaret Sharra presents the application for 71 Main Street for a first floor retail area or small restaurant. The upper level will be 3 or 4 rooms for lodging or offices. Within 5 years an addition would be added with additional 6 to 8 rooms for lodging or offices on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and the lower level as an event hall. The total foot print will be about 3800 sq ft. Demo work on the building has been started. They are trying to save some of the original structure. It will be left as a large colonial with a farmers porch added. The ell in the back of the building will be removed. Most of the building will look the same except for new windows and siding. The restaurant will seat 49 or less. The proposed event hall would seat about 100 people. Parking fits within the ordinance because there are 4 and half acres of land. D. Beaman asked about the sedimentation & drainage. Who approves the erosion control regulations? The board reviews the regulations and it's determined the activity well under the 20,000 sqft, so no permit or approval is required. C. Stephens asked if Rick was informed on the connection to water & sewer. Margaret stated that they had spoken and Rick approved the connection. The hours of operation for the

restaurant & lodging would be 7 days a week. When the event hall opens they would be open until midnight. There would be 1 wall sign and 1 ground sign. Solar panels would be used and located on the back roof out of the view of the public. Around the building will be lots of plants & flowers. The big tree in the front will stay but will need to be trimmed. The dumpster will be in the back. D. Beaman asked about a sidewalk. Would the town approve a crossing walk? Margaret stated there would be a sidewalk from the driveway going to the front porch. The town would have no say in a crossing lane, it's a State Road. C. Stephens asked where the event building would be. Margaret stated where the ell in the back is now. The ell will be removed and we would put the addition in the same location. The current ell is about 25ft long and 20ft wide. The new addition would be about 40ft long and 35ft wide.

Ken Harvey stated that he welcomes the idea for a few reasons; employment, expand the tax base and having lodging in town. He supports this project.

Barry Montgomery wanted to know if the rules and reg's that he submitted back in February for his Country Inn were looked at. The board will look into it. Barry also supports this project too. He said this is what he thought it should have been all along and would support the idea.

**D. Beaman makes a motion to close the public hearing, C. Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0**

G. Ruth would like to go over the hours of operation. Inn 24/7, Restaurant & office 5am-9pm & event hall 5am-1am.

**D. Beaman makes a motion to approve the application for 71 Main Street for the operation of office/ restaurant/ lodging/retail and event hall with some conditions; HDC approval for the outside, follow all fire & safety codes, obtain approval from water/sewer department, start project within a year and to be finished in 5 years. Hours: the Event Hall until 1:00am, Restaurant/office 5am-9pm and the Inn 24/7. C. Stephens seconds the motion. Motion carries 5-0. D. Beaman would like to add that the sedimentation & erosion controls requirements are well under the 20,000 sqft of disturbance for this site so no approval is needed. The members agreed.**

M. Doherty asked what happens if is not done in 5 years. G. Ruth said they could file for an extension.

Third order of business: Other business.

B. Sharra and the LUA return to the board. The LUA informs the board, and confirms with Chan, the Selectmen approved the expenditure of \$6000 for an update to the Master Plan with SWRPC to begin this fiscal year and after Jan.1, 2017.

The board reviews a colored plan of the proposed village or downtown area. The board agrees to the green lined map. **D. Beaman moves to send the plan to the Selectmen for review and ask for their input, C. Rurka seconds. The vote is 6 yes.**

The board reviews a map of Ashuelot highlighting the historic district. The board had decided at the last meeting to define a village/downtown area. There is a brief discussion and it was decided to ask for direction from the Selectmen and the residents of Ashuelot.

The board is in agreement with the proposed changes to the APD and the ADU sections of the zoning ordinance. These will be discussed again at a public hearing in December or January. The board reviews a draft solar energy ordinance. There was quite a bit of discussion. The members liked the ordinance but wants input from the HDC. They will be invited to the meeting of Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> to get their thoughts on solar construction in the historic district. Mike Coope who is a member of the HDC asked that consideration be given to fireman getting on a roof to fight a fire that has solar panels.

The board will meet on 11-7-16 for a hearing on a boundaryline adjustment and again on the 21<sup>st</sup> for other business.

**H. Stephens moves to adjourn, M. Doherty seconds. The vote is 6 yes. 8:42pm.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Margaret Sharra, LUA & Karey Miner, interim TA 

Minutes approved by the board on:

Minutes signed by:

 11/7/16

Brooke Sharra, Chair

Gus Ruth, V. Chair