



Town of Hampden

Planning Board

Wednesday December 14, 2016, 7:00 pm

Municipal Building Council Chambers

Minutes

In Attendance:

Planning Board

Eugene Weldon, Acting Chair

Kelley Wiltbank

Michael Avery

Andrew Scott, Alternate

Staff & Others

Karen Cullen, AICP, Town Planner

Tyler McIntosh

Acting Chairman Weldon called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Administrative – minutes of November 9, 2016 meeting: Motion by Member Scott to approve as submitted, seconded by Member Avery, so voted 4/0/0.
2. Old Business: none.
3. a. Public Hearing: Site plan review application for a modification to an approved site plan for an existing firewood and Christmas Tree business at 5 Pond Road in the Rural district.

Acting Chairman Weldon read the hearing notice into the record and confirmed with Planner Cullen that the proper notice for the hearing had been given. He then opened the public hearing at 7:02 pm.

Tyler McIntosh, owner, gave a brief presentation, noting that nothing has changed since the site plan was approved last year in regard to the business itself. At the time of the original application, he was unsure of the specifics for the buildings so had noted “future buildings” on the site plan, which the Planning Board was not comfortable with so a condition was placed on that decision requiring removal of the building area, thus rendering the site unbuildable until the site plan is modified by the Planning Board. Mr. McIntosh is now ready to move forward with construction this spring. The location for the buildings will be in the old gravel pit area, far back from the road where they will not be visible.

There being no other speakers on the application, Acting Chairman Weldon closed the hearing at 7:04 pm.

Town Planner Cullen reviewed her report on the application. Discussion on several points ensued:

- Christmas Tree operation will be small (100-300 or so trees, not thousands) and no trees will be ready for harvest for another 7 to 10 years. At this time Mr. McIntosh is unsure whether customers will come to the site or if he will cut trees and truck offsite. If sales are onsite, parking will be in the field area at the back of the site, not near the road.
- The driveway is currently between 1 to 1.5 vehicles wide, but they do not have any difficulty with two vehicles passing each other now. Board members were concerned if the driveway would be wide enough for customers to pass each other, in the event sales take place on the site. After discussion the Board decided to set a condition that prior to sales of Christmas trees on site, a site plan be submitted showing adequate parking and adequate ingress and egress.
- Drainage seems to be handled adequately, given the site where the buildings will be is an old gravel pit and it has not been excavated below the high water table.
- Lighting is not going to happen anytime soon; there is no power to the site and Mr. McIntosh isn't sure he will put it in due to the cost. Currently he uses a generator when power is needed. However, when the larger building is built he may want to extend power to the site and would like the option of having lights on the building. The Board is primarily concerned with the fixtures being downcast and not creating any glare or light trespass onto abutting properties. The Board decided to set a condition that any lights be installed to prevent glare or light trespass onto abutting properties.
- The Board agreed there was no need to include trees over 12" DBH on the site plan, given the nature of the site.
- Regarding signage, it was established that any future signs will be at the edge of the field near the road. After discussion the Board agreed that this business qualifies for two signs up to 16 square feet each under Section 4.8.5 of the Zoning Ordinance; they're interpretation of "farm products" and "agriculture" includes Christmas Trees. They further understand that the two sign faces could be mounted on a single sign structure. Mr. McIntosh indicated he would like to eventually have a 16 square foot sign with the name of the business on it, and removable panels that say "Christmas Trees For Sale" or "Firewood For Sale" (or something to that effect) which could be swapped out as the season dictates.

Motion by Member Wiltbank to approve the application and Planning Board Order as amended, including the findings which are detailed in the Order, and to grant a waiver to the requirement for items to be shown on the site plan as detailed in the Town Planner's report; seconded by Member Scott; passed by unanimous vote (4/0/0).

- b. Stormwater Management Training – Planner Cullen gave a presentation on stormwater management in Hampden. She reviewed the basics of our program, gave updates on progress made in the last couple of years and briefly discussed what we expect for changes in the next MS4 stormwater permit cycle.

4. Planning Board Comments: None.

Planner Cullen asked the Board if they would be willing to consider changing the date of the January meeting at the request of an engineer representing the two applications tentatively scheduled for public hearing in January, who is unable to attend on January 11th. After discussion, it was decided to keep the January meeting date and the hearing will be held in February if no one is available to represent the applicants. Planner Cullen noted that as of now, there is no other business scheduled for the January meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm by motion of Member Wiltbank with second by Member Avery; motion carried 4/0/0.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Cullen, Town Planner

Materials reviewed at the meeting:

- Application, Report from Planner Cullen, and draft Planning Board Order, Tyler McIntosh site plan
- PowerPoint presentation given by Planner Cullen on Stormwater Management in Hampden