

*These minutes approved as amended by a vote of 4-0 on July 7, 2017.*

Ashfield Planning Board  
Ashfield Town Hall  
June 21, 2017

Present: Michael Fitzgerald (MF), Chair  
Alan Rice (AR), Clerk  
Ken Miller (KM)  
Jim Cutler (JC)  
Rick Chandler (RC)  
Meghan Bowen (MB), scribe

Absent:

Guests:

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

1. Board reviewed minutes from June 7, 2017. RC moved to accept minutes as amended, JC seconded. AR abstained, as he was absent from the previous meeting. Vote was 4-0-1, motion carried.
2. JC asked whether a Board member who has recused themselves from a discussion has a right to abstain from voting. MF replied no, since technically that person is not considered a member of the Board for the purposes of that particular discussion. JC asked when it might be appropriate for other member of the Board to recuse themselves, since so many people have some relationship to short term rentals. MF replied that if the Board member or their relative makes income from an activity, the Board member must recuse themselves. AR added that a disclosure of appearance of conflict of interest may be necessary in some cases. JC said that he will not continue to pursue communications with Jim Cerone and Glen Ayers, since he has recused himself from the discussion of short term rentals.
3. RC has a copy of the new policy from AirBnB. MB will print and distribute for the next meeting.
4. MF submitted a form for a reserve funds transfer to cover the Board's budget shortage through the end of the fiscal year.
5. KM distributed a zoning practice handout from a recent FRCOG meeting.
6. Board discussed short term rentals. JC recused himself. AR asked whether the main purpose of the Board discussing this topic was to prevent a disparity between requirements made of short term rental properties and bed & breakfasts. MF pointed out that under the current zoning bylaws, a Special Permit is already required of businesses that become large enough to impact neighborhood character by influencing traffic patterns, etc. MF said that the Board could ostensibly regulate the number of rooms a short term rental property owner can rent out, but

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that the Board does not currently have enough information to determine what that number of rooms should be. RC said that the Board should continue to gather information about short term rental issues in order to decide how to proceed. AR moved to table the discussion on short term rentals, RC seconded. All in favor, 4-0, motion carried.

7. AR has been updating the Board's forms for the new website. Board discussed the form for registering a home occupation or cottage industry with the Town. MF requested that AR change the word "Application" to "Declaration" to reflect the fact that there is no approval or fee required. RC suggested that the form cross-reference the section of the zoning bylaws that defines home occupation and cottage industry, and potentially include a check box for the registrant to declare which type of business they own. AR will type up different versions of the form for the following meeting for Board approval.
8. Board discussed the agenda for the following meeting.
9. AR moved to adjourn the meeting, JC seconded. All in favor, 5-0, motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meghan Bowen, scribe