

*These minutes approved as amended by a vote of 4-0 on May 3, 2017.*

Ashfield Planning Board  
Ashfield Town Hall  
March 15, 2017

Present: Michael Fitzgerald (MF), Chair  
Lauren Preston-Wells (LPW)  
Alan Rice (AR)  
Jim Cutler (JC)  
Ken Miller (KM)  
Meghan Bowen (MB), scribe

Absent:

Guests:

Meeting called to order at 7:15 PM.

1. Board reviewed minutes from March 1, 2017. LPW moved to accept minutes as amended, AR seconded. All in favor, 5-0, motion carried.
2. Board discussed the possibility of holding a Special Town Meeting for the proposed Senior Citizens Housing Bylaw. AR suggested that the Board request that the bylaw be on the warrant for Annual Town Meeting instead. MF concurred. The request to be on the warrant must be submitted to Town Administrator Kayce Warren by March 17, 2017. Public Hearing for the bylaw would need to be held by mid-April. AR moved to submit a request that the proposed Senior Citizens Housing Bylaw be included on the Annual Town Meeting warrant by March 17, 2017, and that the Board hold a Public Hearing for the proposed bylaw on April 5, 2017. JC seconded. All in favor, 5-0, motion carried. MB will contact The Recorder to post advertisements by March 17, 2017.

Public Hearing for Maryellen and Robert Abbatiello's Special Permit application opened at 7:35 PM. Special Permit would allow MA and RA to use the ground floor apartment of their property on Main Street as office space. Duncan Coulter and Elizabeth Stewart from the Water District currently rent the space.

- A. LPW asked whether there would be potential for increased noise or light disturbance. MA said that the space would be used for offices, which would operate during the day and would not cause noise or light disturbances. MF added that there may even be less potential for disturbances with offices as opposed to residences.
- B. AR asked how many offices MA and RA would rent out. MA said there would be space for four offices, plus a hair salon business that is covered under a separate Special Permit.

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- C. AR asked whether there would be a need for additional lighting on the building. MA said that there is already abundant lighting on the building. MF asked whether the lights are directed downward, and MA replied yes.
  - D. ES from the Water District, which is renting the Abbatiellos' space now, said that MA and RA had offered the space when the Water District was being evicted from another building in town, and that this had been helpful.
  - E. Janet Clark had sent an email to the Board to be submitted into the record, and MF read the email aloud. JCL offered much support for MA and RA, stating that Hair By The Lake, (MA's hair salon,) is an excellent small business that has a positive impact on the town.
  - F. MF asked how many tenants MA and RA are planning on having. RA said there would be up to six spaces for tenants, including spaces shared by multiple tenants.
  - G. LPW asked whether the sign for the building would stay within the same footprint it has right now. MA said yes.
  - H. AR moved to close the Hearing, LP seconded. All in favor, 5-0, motion carried. Hearing was closed at 8:03 PM.
- 3. Board told Abbatiellos that it would fill out Decision of Hearing and drop it off to them on Friday, March 17, 2017.
  - 4. Board voted unanimously to approve the Abbatiellos' Special Permit Application.
  - 5. Board discussed rule #15 of the Planning Board Rules. MF asked whether the Board should reconsider having Special Permit applicants arrange for legal postings themselves, since it can be a confusing process that is costly and time consuming if the postings are made incorrectly. Also, if the Board reassumes responsibility for these tasks, should the Board reconsider the application fee. AR made a list of application fees from other towns for comparison. Board discussed the cost of holding hearings versus the amount applicants would be willing to pay for a Special Permit. AR suggested that the Board table the discussion for another meeting.
  - 6. Board discussed nominees for LPW's replacement, as her term is expiring in May.
  - 7. LPW moved to adjourn the meeting, AR seconded. All in favor, 5-0, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meghan Bowen, scribe