



Brewster Planning Board
2198 Main Street
Brewster, Massachusetts 02631-1898
(508) 896-3701 ext. 1233
FAX (508) 896-8089

Approved: 8-28-13
Vote: 5-0

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BREWSTER TOWN CLERK

TOWN OF BREWSTER PLANNING BOARD
Regular MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday July 17, 2013 at 6:30 pm
Brewster Town Office Building

Chairman William Hoag convened the Planning Board meeting at 6:42 pm in the Brewster Town Office Building with members: Scott Collum, Jason Klump, Rick Judd, John Leaning, and Elizabeth Taylor present.

Absent: John McMullen

Other attendees: Sue Leven, Elbert Uleshoeffter, Stan and Sandra Godwin, Marie Jainchill

Documents: 071713_A Sign by-law comments from Elbert Uleshoeffter

Hoag read the Recording or Taping Notification:

"As required by the Open Meeting Law we are informing you that the Town will be audio and video taping this public meeting. In addition, if anyone else intends to audio or video tape this meeting he or she is required to inform the chair."

6:30 pm Public Hearing

Hoag read the agenda. The Planning Board is seeking comment on Sign Regulations in Brewster and proposed changes to be brought to Town Meeting in May of 2014. Specific topics on which the Board is seeking comment at this meeting include:

- *The green and white ladder signs at various intersections in Brewster.
- *The appropriate maximum square footage for signs in Brewster.
- *Whether signs should be regulated by use, or by location in a zoning district.

Leven presented a PowerPoint that included photographs of sign examples in Town, some from nearby towns and some from the Internet. Examples included: awnings, a frame, sandwich, animated, banner, business open flag, business directional or traffic safety, cautionary, celebratory banner, changeable copy, cluster, construction, ground sign-VB, Ground sig-RM, home occupation, home products, informational, interpretive display, intersection island, ladder (generic and non generic), municipal permanent, off premise, conservation land.

Purpose and Scope

The Board discussed purpose of scope of the sign by-law. (Hoag read from the current by-law) Taylor, Judd agreed with the proposed by-law. Klump asked if it is necessary to make changes. Klump and Leven discussed further.

Uleshoeffter was in favor of the proposed scope and purpose. The Board agreed to leave it as-is.

Leaning suggested an edit to the text. "accordance"

Whether signs should be regulated by use, or by location in a zoning district

Leaning – Both, by use or by location in a zoning district

Collum – agreed, both, by business – “I” zone more privilege. “CH” extra leeway. Not by district, except for specific instances.

Judd – By Use, except for the Captain’s Golf Course. Ex. They cannot have advertising on the street. “I” and “CH” balance by Use.

Klump – Ideally by Zone, as the zoning map is now not feasible. He referenced the zoning map for the public and believes in the long run they should extend the VB zone and do it by Use.

Taylor stated there should be separate rules for “I” but not “CH” since “CH” is mixed residential and commercial.

Uleshoeffter acknowledged this is a real issue. He noted Lemon Tree Shops in the wrong zone since it is half-residential and half on Route 6A. He counted 35 signs from Stony Brook to the Town Hall in the RM zone. All within 4 square feet and all permitted in the RM. Only 7 actually are a permitted use. He expressed his concern about going to 30 square feet total. He questioned what was allowed by permit in the RM zone. He suggested they look at specific uses in the RM zone. He suggested they do it by district since Route 6A has unique character.

Marie Jainchill addressed the Board.

She has a business on Route 6A. She is allowed 4 square feet and it does not work for her. She was not in favor of giving everyone 30 square feet. She would love to have 16 or 20 square feet. Her open sign or her A frame sign directs people to her antique shop.

Jainchill expressed concern about the character of the town. She suggested they are not too restrictive and that they stay with the proposed by-law and do by Use rather than location.

Uleshoeffter explained that he was not in favor of roof top signs on the roof ridgeline. They could be allowed on the roof surface.

Stan Godwin of Stony Brook Road addressed the Board. He was in favor of by use if universally applied across the town. He noted it is hard to get people off Route 6A. He is only allowed a 4 square foot sign.

Klump asked Godwin if he wanted Stony Brook Road as commercial as Route 6A.

Godwin explained he was not allowed to keep his large historical sign. He wants the same rights as businesses on Route 6A.

Hoag summarized.

- By Use rather than Zone
- Square footage in proposal is too large
- They need to look hard at the square footage

Taylor asked the Board to rethink the 30 square feet. She believes it is too much. 2 different uses near each other could be a problem. She questioned by use. She expressed concern about the town character.

Judd asked the Board to think about the entire town and look at use. He asked about the HDC guidelines. He expressed concern about consistency with the large signs on Route 6A. He was in favor of by use.

Klump noted that by use was fine. If only by use, commercial may creep in over time. He expressed concern about the residential areas.

Leven reminded that pre existing non-conforming use is just that.

Klump and Godwin discussed home occupation vs. licensed commercial business. Leven shared an example and Collum noted that home occupation includes 40% or less of the square footage of the home and allows two employees.

Hoag was in favor of use. He measured many signs in town and believes that 30 square feet was too generous. He noted 15, 16 square feet at Lemon Tree Shops. Underpass Road – a sign more than 32 square feet. He believes the sign frames are too large. He was in favor of a standard open sign, 3 x 5. He noted most A-frame and commercial signs come in standard sizes.

Leaning acknowledged he voted for 30 square feet total and now feels that was too big. He is thinking of maximum of 20 square feet or smaller and they should include the sign frame.

Leven read from the current by-law in regards to commercial signs – 12 and 16 square feet.

Uleshoeffter asked if that includes the sign framework. Leven notes she has never seen a by-law that included the post. The Board discussed the idea of including the post or framework.

Collum was in favor of the sign alone and agreed that 30 square feet was too large. He questioned doing it by use maybe designating particular uses. (antique, 12 – grocery, 20?) Should they limit signs to permitted uses? A special permit could control the size.

- By use, different uses? Different sizes?
- Guidelines, special permit for certain limits?
- Signs in neighborhoods

Leaning added 20 square feet or less.

Judd acknowledged that square footage and the face of a building is a lot to take in now for consideration. They discussed restrictions by use.

Hoag noted the concern of large signs in residential zones.

Klump stated it makes no sense by use in a commercial zone, but in a residential zone, it might make sense. He added that uses that rely on tourist traffic need larger signs. Nursing homes do not need larger signs.

Collum suggested in the “I” zone, add a percentage more than a number.

Uleshoeffter stated that was problematic. He noted by doing it by use you have taken the highest number and spread it out. He suggested they take the lowest number. In “CH”, allow larger signs. In a “RM” zone, permitted use is 12 square feet. He noted 20 square feet is good. Lemon Tree Shops is a unique situation. All other uses on Route 6A you would allow in a residential zone. 30 square feet is too much. He suggested designating a number for “VB” zone and “CH” zone and any other use in “RM” zone gets a number.

Board Comments, cont.

Hoag liked different zones having a different number or limit.

Taylor was in favor by district, 20 square feet maximum.

Taylor and Leven discussed regulations vs. guidelines. It was corrected, it is regulations.

Hoag was in favor of signs not any bigger than the ones at Lemon Tree Shops. 15 – 16 square feet.

Klump stated that Foster Square and Underpass Road need more signage.

Leaning noted that many businesses develop attractive combinations of signs.

Leven shared a 6 square feet real estate signs example.

Leaning stated the Brewster Farms sign is too large and the Dion painted sign is very big.

Godwin asked about grandfathered signs. Why?

Leven explained it is allowed by MA General Law, 40A, Section 6. She suggested the Board consider a sunset clause. In the HDC guidelines, it is 3 years. It was determined in 1975 and is never enforced. She recommended that one or more Planning Board members get on the HDC agenda and ask them their questions.

Judd stated he cannot attend many meetings and he thinks HDC should come here.

Hoag questioned why they care what HDC thinks since HDC supersedes the town by-law. Klump noted the entire town is regulated except their district.

Taylor and Leaning were in favor of inviting the HDC to a meeting.

Square Footage

Klump suggested that the long-term plan come before determining square footage. He was in favor of extending "VB" to the Fire Station and "VB" from Lemon Tree Shops to Millstone/Rte 137. (Comprehensive plan)

Hoag noted that was a tremendous change. Taylor agreed.

Taylor stated that people are waiting for a sign by-law.

Klump and Taylor discussed maximum square footage. Klump does not think 30 square feet is too much.

Taylor noted 16 square feet maximum. She asked the Board to think about the ease of enforcement.

The Board discussed what signs count toward the total square footage allowed.

Godwin noted that an open sign (flag) and directional signs do not count towards the total.

Judd suggested eliminating visual clutter and going with 20 square feet total.

Collum was undecided.

Leaning restated he was in favor of 20 square feet total maximum, prefers 16, and in favor of a sunset clause.

Collum noted the sunset clause should be at change of use or transfer of ownership.

Taylor agreed and added sale of property. She questioned the large sign on Underpass Road.

Collum stated that all are required to get a permit even if non-conforming.

Leaning explained if people know they are discussing a sunset clause they will come to the meetings.

*Square footage discussion was put "on hold" until the next discussion.

Ladder Signs

Uleshoeffler was in favor of the Board doing ladder signs. He suggested ancillary roads off Route 6A. They should be on the town's public connection. They should be a maximum of 8 ft. tall and 4 ft. wide including the post. He likes the Dennis ladder sign design. He explained that Dennis communicated with Historic and came up with a uniform design that is permitted by the town. HDC can give input on aesthetics. Locations – Underpass, Millstone, Stony Brook, AP Newcomb, and off Route 124 and 137. These sign would help businesses off Route 6A but they must be generic.

Godwin agreed with Uleshoeffler. He is not allowed off premise advertising so there is no way to bring people off Route 6A. Generic or non-generic is fine. "antiques", "fine art" The small antiques sign brings in 80% of the business.

Leaning asked for coordination with HDC so they can look at the ladder signs and help develop the sign code.

Collum asked the Board to look at ladder signs and consider maximum height.

Taylor explained that she spoke to Bob Bersin and they can do ladder signs. They can make them but do not have the staff. She asked the Board to consider if they should be consistent with road signs, made out of carved wood and should they include signs that say "beach" – added to existing road signs.

She also would like to see signs that point people to "Police Station" "Herring Run" and the "Mill Site". She would like to make the signs tourist friendly.

The Board decided to hold an advertised public hearing on 8-7-13 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. They will invite the HDC. The following will be discussed. 1) Ladder Signs 2) Square Footage 3) Sunset Clause

Topics the Chair did not reasonably anticipate

There was none.

Collum made a Motion to close the public hearing, Judd Second, All Aye, Vote 6-0.

Leaning made a Motion to adjourn, Collum Second, All Aye, Vote 6-0.

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm.

The next meeting is 7-24-13 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Klump, Planning Board Clerk



Kelly Moore, Senior Dept. Assistant - Planning