

**Town of Gilsum
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
December 12, 2024**

Board Present: Vicki Ayer, Chair; Heidi Bukoski, Member; Bill Whyte, Member; Tom Julius, Member; Brian Bazarnicki, *Ex Officio*; and Carol Ogilvie, Alternate Member

Also Present: Bill Mitchell, Selectman; Mike Gokey; Konstantin Cherkassov; and Iryna Karneyeva

CTO: Chair Ayers called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

I. Minutes

Vicki distributed the minutes of November 14, 2024 and asked if anyone had comments or changes. *Motion by Tom Julius/seconded by Heidi Bukoski to approve the November 14, 2024 minutes, with all in favor.*

Vicki distributed the minutes of October 10, 2024 and asked if anyone had comments or changes. *Motion by Brian Bazarnicki/seconded by Tom Julius/ to approve the October 10, 2024 minutes, with all in favor.*

II. Cherkas Public Hearing

At 7:05 P.M. Vicki opened the public hearing. The application is to sell and store Siberian birch plywood from a warehouse located at 351 Route 10. Mr. Cherkassov has two pre-existing companies on the site already: (1) automotive repair of FedEx trucks; and (2) an office for FedEx transport.

Vicki explained that last month the Board deemed the application to be complete; tonight is the public hearing. She asked the Board if they had any questions. Heidi had a question about the timing for online sales; and Tom asked what drew them to Gilsum.

Vicki stated that if there were no more questions, she would entertain a motion to close the public hearing and vote on the application.

On a motion by Heidi Bukoski/seconded by Bill Whyte, the Board voted to close the public hearing at 7:21 P.M.

On a motion by Bill Whyte/seconded by Heidi Bukoski, the Board voted to approve the site plan application from Cherkas Automotive for sales and storage of plywood at 351 Route 10, Map 406 Lot 56, with all in favor.

III. Recommendation for Sale of Town-Owned Land

Vicki reported that there are Town-owned properties that the Select Board are putting up for sale, and to do this requires a recommendation from the Planning Board. Bill Mitchell presented the information on the lots that are available for sale. He explained that on the list he distributed, the lots that have a name next to them are lots the Town uses; those without any function are lots that the Select Board intends to sell. Vicki said that no recommendations would be made tonight; this needs review by the Board.

The Board discussed the reasons for selling Town properties (e.g., put properties back on the tax rolls), and the challenges involved since many of the lots are very small and unlikely to be developable. They could perhaps be used for conservation, but not likely for building.

Bill Mitchell explained that an auctioneer has been engaged, and that he would like to start the process in the spring. The abutters will be notified and the Select Board must hold two public hearings. The sale of the properties has already been approved at Town Meeting.

Bill Whyte suggested that this item go on the agenda for the next meeting at which the Board will come up with recommendations for the Select Board. Tom suggested it would be good to have some criteria to use when considering each parcel. Vicki suggested that the Planning Board meet with the Conservation Commission after each has had a chance to review the properties.

Vicki is requesting that the Select Board take a formal vote on a list of properties that does not include the properties that have a function for the Town.

IV. Planning Board Membership

The current membership of the Planning Board is seven (7) full-time members. Since it is difficult to fill all seven positions, the question is whether the membership should be reduced to five (5). If so, this needs a vote at Town Meeting. The Board discussed the pros and cons of seven versus five, and also discussed whether the Board should be elected.

On a motion by Heidi Bukoski/seconded by Vicki Ayers the Board voted to change the membership from seven to five, with Bill Whyte abstaining.

V. Round Table Update

The Southwest Region Planning Commission held a planning board peer-to-peer roundtable in Temple on December 5, 2024. Tom and Heidi attended and reported on the event. This was the second roundtable and the volunteer board members have responded very positively to these get-togethers. The information and resource sharing are so valuable for these people, since most of the attendees come from small towns with no planning staff. Themes: help understanding regulations; how to effectively manage the planning board – paperwork, filing, working with applicants, facilitating meetings; how to work with other boards; planning function. The challenge of proposing zoning amendments and educating the public. Communication is important and difficult. Noah Hodgetts from the state Office of Building and Development was there, as well as two staff persons from the UNH Cooperative Extension Service. They noted that Cooperative Extension does not work much in Cheshire County because the County Commissioners do not provide funding to Extension for a Field Service Specialist. The next meeting will be in Harrisville after Town Meeting. The tentative plan is to have four of these meetings a year.

Vicki and Heidi thought joint meeting with pb and zba would be very beneficial. Also, the Town should have a Facebook page.

VI. Other Business

- A. Vicki submitted the Planning Board budget request for \$4,500.
- B. Mike Klein. He explained how previous planning boards tried to communicate with the public – through the newsletter, for example. Have information on voting day with a table. But, it is really difficult to get the word out.

VII. Agenda for Next Meeting – January 9, 2025

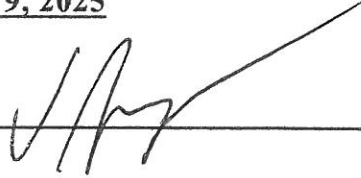
- A. Minutes of December 12, 2024
- B. Sale of Town-Owned Properties

Motion by Tom Julius/seconded by Brian Bazarnicki to adjourn at 8:55 P.M. with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Carol Ogilvie

Approved January 9, 2025



Victoria Ayers, Chair



Brian Bazarnicki

Heidi Bukoski

Heidi Bukoski

Tom Julius



Bill Whyte



Carol Ogilvie