

TOWN OF NORTHBRIDGE



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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Approved on September 9, 2010

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

MINUTES OF MEETING

JULY 8, 2010

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Thomas Hansson. Other members present were: William Corkum, Sharron Ampagoomian, Diane Woupio, Associate Member Stephen Witkus, and Associate Member Brett Simas. Also present was Brenda Ouillette, Administrative Assistant.

Absent from this meeting were Member Carol Snow, Associate Member Harold Hartmann, and Associate Member Daniel Batt.

A motion was made by Diane Woupio to approve of the minutes of June 10, 2010, motion seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian, the vote being 4-0. Thomas Hansson and William Corkum abstained from voting as they were not present at the June 10th meeting.

Reorganization of the Board

A reorganization of the Board did not take place due to the absence of some of the members. It was postponed until the Board's next meeting or until such time as all the members are present.

PUBLIC HEARING: (8-SP-10) DEAN HANSON JR., APPLICANT

This hearing was held to consider the application of Dean Hanson Jr., 1131 Quaker St., Northbridge, MA for a Special Permit pursuant to Article IX, Section 173-30 of the Town of Northbridge Zoning By-laws, Extensions and Alterations, in order to allow the construction of an addition to a pre-existing, non-conforming dwelling located at 1131 Quaker St., Northbridge, MA. The existing dwelling does not meet current front set-back requirements nor will the proposed addition.

The property, shown on Assessor's Map 28 as Parcel 172, is located in a Residential-1 zoning district and is owned by Dean Hanson Jr.

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The public hearing was opened at 7:05 P.M. with the reading of the public hearing notice by Board Member Sharron Ampagoomian. Assigned to this hearing by Chairman Thomas Hansson were: William Corkum, Sharron Ampagoomian, Diane Woupio, Associate Member Brett Simas and himself.

Dean Hanson was present to discuss his application. He explained that the house was originally owned by his grandparents. He is now the owner and has since removed a portion of the house that was deteriorated but left the screened porch which is now enclosed as a 3 season room. He would like to construct a 12 ft. x 26 ft. mudroom off of this 3 season porch. Mr. Hanson stated that once he adds the addition, it will be the same size that the original structure was before he removed the deteriorated portion and he would not be encroaching any further into the front setback. The addition would be flush with the existing house. Mr. Hanson presented the Board with photos of what the house looked like before he removed a portion of it.

There were no abutters present to speak in favor or against the application.

A motion was made by Diane Woupio to close the public hearing and take the matter under advisement, motion seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian, 5-0 in favor.

Board members agreed that the house was pre-existing non-conforming, built prior to zoning regulations. Even though the addition would not meet today's requirement of a 40 ft. setback from the road, it would be consistent with the existing house and would not encroach into the setback requirement any further. Allowing the construction of the addition would not be detrimental to the neighborhood nor would it impact the character of the neighborhood as the existing house is located on a 2 acre parcel with over 400 ft. of frontage.

A motion was made by Brett Simas to grant the Special Permit to allow the construction of the addition as shown on the plan submitted, motion seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian, the vote being 5-0 in favor.

Sharron Ampagoomian will write the decision.

PUBLIC HEARING: (9-SP-10) JOHN & MAUREEN BRIAND, APPLICANTS

This hearing was held to consider the application of John & Maureen Briand for a Special Permit pursuant to Article V, Section 173-12 of the Town of Northbridge Zoning By-laws, Table of Use Regulations, in order to allow the conversion of an existing single family home back to a two family dwelling located at 172 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville, MA.

The property, shown on Assessor's Map 5 as Parcel 58, is located in a Business-2 zoning district. The new owners of the property are John & Maureen Briand who have recently purchased the property from the estate of John's parents.

The public hearing was opened at 7:20 P.M. with the reading of the public hearing notice by Board Member Sharron Ampagoomian. Assigned to this hearing by the Chairman Thomas Hanson were William Corkum, Sharron Ampagoomian, Diane Woupio, Associate Member Stephen Witkus, and himself.

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Present on behalf of the applicants was Attorney Gary P. Sanginario. Also present were the applicants John and Maureen Briand. Attorney Sanginario stated that John and Maureen are now the owners of the property purchased from the estate of John's parents. The house was originally built as a two family home but was converted back to a single family to accommodate a large family. The Briand's own and reside in the house next door and would like to convert this home back to a two-family home for rental purposes. This would enable them to receive rental income and yet be able to control the property as they live in such close proximity and share a large driveway into the back yard. The other side of the property is owned by the Town of Northbridge and is the parking lot for the Northbridge Middle School. Attorney Sanginario stated that there are many two-family and multi-family homes in the neighborhood, therefore it would not be more detrimental in any way. There would be no exterior changes to the property other than an additional means of egress to the rear of the house for the street level apartment. If you drive into the back yard the second apartment is at ground level and not visible from the street. There is a basement under the lower level apartment.

Associate Member Brett Simas asked about the parking for the street level apartment as the entrance to that apartment is on the street side. It appears that it would make sense that the tenant living in that apartment would want to park in front which would mean that they would be parking along the street. Attorney Sanginario replied that it is their intent to construct a second means of egress from the street level apartment at the rear of the property which would then encourage the tenants to park in the back where there is ample parking space available.

There were no abutters present who spoke in favor or opposition.

A motion was made by Diane Woupio to close the public hearing and take the matter under advisement. Motion seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian, the vote being 5-0 in favor.

The majority of the Board members agreed that there were more two-family and multi family homes than there are single family homes and therefore the site was appropriate for a two-family home and would in no way be more detrimental to the neighborhood. The exterior of the existing house would not change other than a second means of egress for the street level apartment, however, this would be constructed at the rear of the house and would not be visible from the street. Therefore, there would be no impact on the character of the neighborhood.

Associate Member Stephen Witkus argued that the house should not be switched back and forth from a single family to a two-family. It is set up now as a single family and in his opinion should remain a single family.

A motion was made by Diane Woupio to grant the Special Permit to allow the conversion of a single family home located at 172 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville, MA back to a two-family dwelling. The motion was seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian the vote being 4-1 in favor. Stephen Witkus voted in the opposition.

Diane Woupio will write the decision.

PUBLIC HEARING: (10-V-10) MILFORD REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, APPLICANT

This hearing was held to consider the petition of Milford Regional Medical Center, 14 Prospect St., Milford, MA for a Variance pursuant to Article VII, Section 173-22 (B) of the Town of Northbridge Zoning By-laws, Signs permitted in any residential district, in order to allow the installation of one additional sign at 18 Granite St., Whitinsville, MA, known as Whitinsville Medical Center.

The property, shown on Assessor's Map 14 as Parcel 162, is located in a Residential-3 zoning district. The owner of the property is Milford Regional Medical Center.

The public hearing was opened at 7:35 P.M. with the reading of the public hearing notice by Board Member Sharron Ampagoomian. Assigned to this hearing by the Chairman were: William Corkum, Sharron Ampagoomian, Diane Woupio, Associate Member Brett Simas, and himself.

Present to discuss the petition were Norman Gamanche from Guerriere & Halnon and Joseph Boczanowski, Facilities Management Director of Milford Regional Medical Center. Mr. Gamanche stated explained that there is need for the sign in order to direct people to the rehabilitation and sports medicine facility, especially those who are physically handicapped. The proposed new sign would be 36" wide by 34" high, illuminated from the inside. It will be constructed to match the style of the existing parking and menu signage already on site. The read appears on one side only with the back of the sign a solid panel. The sign will be place at an angle at the intersection of the Granite Street sidewalk and the entrance sidewalk to the facility entrance. Total height of the sign would be about 5 ft. with the bottom of the sign 18 inches above the ground.

Associate Member Brett Simas clarified for the record that the applicant is in fact looking for a variance for one additional sign and a variance to allow the sign to be internally illuminated as opposed to illumination with white light by indirect method. Those are the two regulations the applicant is requesting relief from, as well as possible relief from the setback requirement.

Chairman Thomas Hansson asked the distance from the street to the sign and Mr. Gamanche replied that it appears it would be about 3-4 feet from the sidewalk placed diagonally. Mr. Gamanche added that it would be at the Board's discretion where the sign should be placed.

A motion was made by Diane Woupio to close the public hearing and take the matter under advisement. Motion seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian, the vote being 5-0 in favor.

There were no abutters present who spoke in favor or opposition.

Board Members agreed that a directional sign was needed as the entrances are very confusing. Mr. Witkus expressed concern that it was in a residential district. Associate Member Brett Simas stated that even though it would be closer to the residential section of the street and would change the look of the street somewhat, the signage that is there now is insufficient and directional signage to the correct entrance is needed. Board Member Sharron Ampagoomian agreed and because the sign would be placed diagonally it would be less intrusive

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on the residential aspect of the street and not highly visible from the homes. Mr. Simas added that it will be internally lit giving it a softer look than a spotlight shining on it.

Board Member Diane Woupio made the motion to grant the variance for one additional internally lit sign no larger than 36 inches wide by 34 inches high with the condition that it be placed diagonally as shown on the plan submitted, distance from the street to be at the discretion of the Building Inspector. The motion was seconded by Board Member Sharron Ampagoomian, the vote being 5-0 in favor.

Board Member Tom Hansson will write the decision.

Other Business

Copies of the New Open Meeting Law were distributed to those member/associate members present. For those members/associate members not present, a copy will be mailed to them.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Diane Woupio and seconded by Sharron Ampagoomian to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous.

Attested by,

Brenda M. Ouillette
Administrative Asst.

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS. (Approved on September 9, 2010)