

ROCKY HILL PLANNING BOARD
Minutes of the April 14, 2009 Meeting

Present: R. Ayrey, M. Blasch, C. Cann, T. Corlis, L. Goldman, D. Kluchinski, C. Pihokken,
G. White, E. Zimmerman

Absent: T. Bremner, R. Whitlock

Also present: V. Kimson and K. Philip

Statement Of Adequate Notice

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, place and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Municipal bulletin board and filed with the Municipal Clerk. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Open Public Comment Period: The meeting was opened to the public. Being that there was no one who wished to address the board, the open public portion of the meeting was closed.

Approval of Minutes

a) March 10, 2009 – Motion made by L. Goldman and C. Cann seconded the motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 10, 2009. The vote was 9-0 in favor of those eligible to vote. Motion carried.

Chairman's Comments and Correspondence:

No comments were provided.

Open Public Comment Period:

Tom Bremner, 17 Crescent Avenue, stated that large rebates are available to homeowners for home renovation projects and he recommended that this information be distributed to residents of the borough. C. Pihokken asked that Mr. Bremner provide L. Goldman with the information for inclusion on the website although this is not a function of the planning board.

Susan Bristol, 104 Washington Street, asked when the master plan would be revised. V. Kimson responded that this must be done every six years and a reexamination was done recently. She is unsure of the date of approval and recommended that Ms. Bristol get this information from the clerk's office.

Being that no one else wished to address the board, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Applications:

- a) **Ralph Terragosa**
Historic Preservation Plan
11 Montgomery; Block 4, Lot 5

Ralph Terragosa, applicant, stated that proof of notice was sent in to the borough and a copy was handed to V. Kimson. Mr. Terragosa was sworn in and stated that the application is to extend the existing dormer on his home. He referred to photographs that were submitted with this application and stated that the new dormers will extend an additional foot on each end, the proposal allows them to construct an additional bathroom upstairs. He advised that the exterior

siding will match the existing siding and that the corner board and windows will also match the existing. The shingles on the dormer will be the same as the shingles on the roof. Chairman Pihokken recommended that the applicant add a note to the drawing that the entire roof will be replaced. With this notation, the homeowners have approval for this improvement if this is done within the year.

Mr. Terragosa stated that the plans depict the windows to be 6 over 6, but the plans should read that the windows are 6 over 1 therefore they must be corrected. The windows will match the existing windows and the exterior casings will match the existing. He stated that the contractor was advised that everything must be matched with existing and in keeping with the historic district so this is what he is anticipating.

The meeting was opened to the public. Being that no one wished to address the board, motion was made and seconded to close the meeting to the public.

Mr. Terragosa stated that there was one person on the list he could not mail the notice to so he hand delivered the notice. V. Kimson asked that Mr. Terragosa note this on the documentation.

Motion was made by L. Goldman and R. Ayrey seconded the motion to approve the plan with the following changes:

1. That the entire roof be replaced with equivalent shingles.
2. That the plan show the replacement windows as 6 over 1.
3. That the new exterior window casings match the existing window casings.

The vote was 9-0 in favor. Motion carried.

For: Ayrey, Blasch, Cann, Corlis, Goldman, Kluchinski, Pihokken, White, Zimmerman

Against: None

Abstain: None

L. Goldman stepped down from the following application. T. Bremner joined the meeting.

b) Donato

Informal Discussion – modifications to approved plan

Washington Street; Block 9, Lot 2

Joseph Donato, applicant, stated that the zoning officer asked him to come before the board to discuss changes to the approved plan. He stated that the zoning officer did not ask that property owners within 200 feet be notified of this meeting, V. Kimson advised that proper notification is needed when an amended plan is reviewed so this discussion would be an informal discussion. Mr. Donato stated that they will come back for formal board approval on the amended plan. V. Kimson stated that the Zoning Officer and Borough Engineer permitted some of the changes in the field but there were other changes made to the plan that were not approved.

Mr. Donato stated that some changes were done in the field so everything would be in accordance with code, some changes were made because details were missed on the plans and some changes were done because of financial hardship. Chairman Pihokken referred to the list of noticeable changes to the plan that was prepared by G. White, a copy of the list was handed out to the board.

Mr. Donato explained that due to a change in the layout of the house, the grading and slope of the garage area was changed. It is pushed forward on the property. There was no public water or sewer so they needed to provide their own wet tap to the driveway. The transom windows were eliminated because Mr. Calafati, the borough's historic preservation consultant, felt that they were not well integrated. Item #17 - the window was removed because they already had front windows and this area would be used for storage. #21 was created because of #17. Items #9, #10, #11, #17 and #21 were approved by R. Whitlock. Item #8, the arch above the front door was eliminated due to framing requirements. To support this, the building inspector wanted collar ties so a peak was created. G. White stated that the improvement could have been done without changing the design. Item #18, a window vent was added due to code requirements.

Mr. Donato stated that the fish scallop siding choice for the dormers was being challenged. The siding change was not identified at the meeting so the board did not request a review of the materials. Mr. Donato explained that the two-inch exterior casing around the windows was overlooked so this will be done to get the same visual affect, it will match the rest of the trim on the house, but it will not have a header so there will be a gap. M. Blasch stated that this approach will result in an insect problem because of the gaps and the gaps will be viewed from the street. G. White stated that this would decrease the look of the house. C. Cann stated that the applicant eliminated all of the historic detail on the house and this is a concern because this is not the plan that was approved by this board. D. Kluchinski stated that windows were removed so the visual has been entirely changed and the bulk of the building appears more massive.

Chairman Pihokken stated that changes were made to the design to mitigate the issues that had been raised but what ended up being built was different than what was approved. He stated that there may be other design approaches that could have been considered. V. Kimson asked Mr. Donato to renote and return next month with a set of plans on how the house appears at this time. The reasons given for making some of the changes to the plan were because of structural comments from the professionals, the boards purpose is to make sure that the accurate plans are on file in the office. G. White stated that it would be helpful if the board members receive larger prints of the plans showing the way the house appears now and the final design of the house.

Betsy Haynes, 201 Washington Street, stated that she has concerns about water runoff. She believes that the water is supposed to run in to the detention basin but this is not happening. Mr. Donato stated that this will be done by the excavator, the County and State Police must approve the time and date that the traffic pattern will be altered. E. Zimmerman stated that the information had been provided to the municipality and one lane of the roadway will be closed, the entire road will never be shut down. Mr. Donato stated that he is hoping that this will be done within the next 30 days and the neighbors will be noticed. V. Kimson stated that the borough will also post this information on the website when known.

L. Goldman returned to the meeting and T. Bremner stepped down.

Other Business:

Bruce Blomgren, owner Rocky Hill Inn, addressed the board and questioned the status of his application. V. Kimson advised that the board took action at the last meeting denying the application without prejudice since the application was withdrawn as per correspondence received by Mr. Blomgren. She advised that Mr. Blomgren should apply for a certificate of

appropriateness and speak with William Tanner, Borough Engineer, about the process. He asked that the violation date be extended because there was some miscommunication between himself and the zoning officer. Board members felt that the zoning officer must be in favor of this request.

Old Business:

a) Historic District County Grant

Chairman Pihokken stated that M. Blasch made a presentation before Council about designing the historic guidelines in connection with the County grant, it was determined that due to taxes and cost increases and because there is the issue of matching funds, it was felt that this project may not be a high enough priority at this time. E. Zimmerman stated that Council discussion was lengthy and practical in terms of the budget. Chairman Pihokken stated that the subcommittee is considering ways to get the word out to the residents in the historic district about the subcommittee acting as an advisory group when a homeowner is considering improvements to their home. E. Zimmerman stated that there is a need to provide information for residents in the historic district and there are guidelines available so preparing the historic guidelines is a good thing to do but there are other avenues to consider to insure this information is available to the residents. L. Goldman stated that borough monies were never appropriated to match this grant.

E. Zimmerman stated that Council felt that given the resources available on the internet perhaps we could include the tax maps on the website, this could be one way to get the word out and this way we would not have to put in all that money. Given the situation that the borough is in financially, Council advised that they would endorse a decision by the Planning Board to return the grant money. He stated that there is a need to provide information for residents in the historic district and there are certain guidelines readily available so this outreach may be better than preparing the guideline. L. Goldman recommended an annual newsletter or reminder be sent to residents. G. White stated that Montgomery Township spent \$80,000 on their document so perhaps there is a proactive way, other than the design guidelines, to get the information to the people. E. Zimmerman stated that perhaps we can do something on a smaller scale or postpone this to another year.

The meeting was opened to the public.

Susan Bristol, 104 Washington Street, stated that the intention of the design guidelines were motivated by the way that they would help the community because they are visual and graphic and illustrate the criteria in the historic preservation ordinance. The prior Planning Board's motivation was to provide information to the residents and the guidelines were supposed to be attached to the ordinance. The guidelines would be handed to a person when they come in to the office to apply for improvements to their home.

Tom Bremner, 17 Crescent Avenue, stated that more information should be available for residents and documentation with architectural detailed images would be beneficial. He stated that the historic ordinance without imaging is subjective.

Chairman Pihokken stated that if we can do something with less money this is something we can consider but there are concerns that there may be ramifications from the county if we do not return the money.

Board discussion took place.

M. Blasch stated that this must be part of the historic preservation ordinance and the money is not available in the budget at this time. V. Kimson stated that attorney time would be needed to merge the guidelines in to the ordinance so these charges must also be taken into respect. A majority of the Board expressed the opinion that this project was not a priority and the money should be returned. Motion was made by R. Ayrey and M. Blasch seconded the motion to return the grant money to the County. The vote was 8-1 in favor. Motion carried.

For: Ayrey, Blasch, Cann, Corlis, Goldman, Kluchinski, Pihokken, White

Against: None

Abstain: Zimmerman

Motion was made by L. Goldman and G. White seconded to motion to go into closed session. T. Bremner recused himself from litigation matters and left the meeting. Motion was carried in a voice vote of 9-0 in favor.

Being that there were no other matters before the board, motion was made by R. Whitlock and E. Zimmerman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m. Motion carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry A. Philip
Recording Secretary