

FRANCONIA PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 14, 2015

Members Present:

Mary Grote, Thad Presby, Dick Reinhold, Lydia Cumbee, Brian Williams, Keith Batchelder, Eric Meth & Mark Hesler

Others Present: Cornelia Lorentzen, Robert Montagno, Rebecca Brown

A regular meeting of the Franconia Planning Board was held on Tuesday, Jul 14, 2015 at the Franconia Town Hall. Thad Presby called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

After a motion by Lydia and a second by Brian, the minutes of the June 23rd meeting were approved unanimously.

ZBA

Paul Foss – he had a concern about Cluster Housing etc. We may want to contact him. Mary can talk to Karen Foss.

Master Plan

What should Franconia be? Should it be a tourist destination? What should Franconia focus on for growth? What do we have to do to attract tourists? We want to have them envision what we want for Franconia? How do we envision Franconia's Main Street? Get some concepts into one or two bullets. We will make changes to the letter and Herbie will send it out for approval by the members.

Informal Discussion for the Cannon Mountain View – Cornelia Lorentzen

To begin with the big picture she wasn't planning to buy the property. It came up for auction so there it was. She is trying to play catch up on getting the whole thing together. She has a concept which occurred to her after speaking with Sandy Olney. Sandy had complained about the lack of universal design for handicap hotel rooms. Most handicapped rooms you have to book a year in advance. It should be discreet and low impact upon the environment. Cornelia's long range goals for the property are to run the motel's 23 rooms, the restaurant and develop the historic building that is there. It was built in 1864 big Victorian, little Victorian, and big house barn on 4 acres.

The immediate plan would be to open the front strip of 16 rooms ASAP. They are practically move-in ready except for a new furnace and a couple of details. The pub & restaurant which will, eventually include, music, weddings, functions and special events. I need to open that ASAP and it requires very little work. Joe Petersen said it has all the bells and whistles but was very dirty. It is close to being able to open. Immediately turn big Victorian into office spaces. There are 11

potential spaces for rent beyond the restaurant in that main building. She needs to secure the barn which is a mess. What kind of occupants would be there? Who would go in there as tenants Lawyers or Accountants? No offices that would require queuing. She would like a little respect to get a couple of tenants that are losing their property. Rebecca Brown of Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust and another tenant of the Rock's Estate want to rent. There would be some traffic in and out. You wouldn't want to have a Dr.'s office there. She is open to whatever the town wants her to do.

If you are going to convert the building you will need a building permit. For what you are doing you want to get the restaurant up and running and have done some renovating. 100 cubic yards of trash has been removed. If there are specific plumbing or wiring you have to get a building permit for doing anything. If there is a question about that ask the Select Board. Change of use for offices needs a site plan review. We are happy that you will be doing something with this property which will be for the good of the town.

Does your universal design implicate a big change? Is it ADA compliant?

She wants to renovate the backside of the motel to be ADA compliant which is 35% of the rooms and create a substantial niche market. She would like to make it more renewable energy with solar. In the restaurant she would like to completely renovate the kitchen and cannot do that until she can make some money on it. She wants to get the offices completed and make them tenant ready. There is a need for an assembly permit. There is 3,571 SF in my building that I cannot use. The Planning Board is good except with the office stuff. It depends on what is going to be there. A bookkeeper would be okay but an issue becomes where would they park? If you had a different kind of office like a physician with 20 people in and out that would not work. We have to tell you that we are happy with what you are doing. The Restaurant would have to be sprinkled for 1100SF. Allan Clark, the Building Inspector, works for the State. The project has to be compliant with the State. We will give you a Site Plan Review Application and checklist and you can see what is required.

Cornelia has plans according to appropriate dimensions. It doesn't have to be drawn by a professional. We recommended that she may want to get someone who has done this process before. She needs to follow the process. This is a small town. It would show the property lines and it has to have a seal.

What about letting the tenants use the motel rooms? For a motel room there is no criteria when you rent a motel room. Can she make two or three rooms into offices? What is the difference to whom you rent it out and what is 9% room and meals tax on a motel room. She should look and see what the criteria is for a motel room. You can consider the public safety and welfare for the state only affects inns and public accommodations. If office space upstairs you have to be compliant. You have steep staircases. Thad said that if it is change of use a site plan review is required. It would be easy to do a site plan review. The process will have to be done so she could run the motel and restaurant. It would take a month to do a formal review. We are not the enforcers of the rule. The planning board doesn't enforce we review. State Statute is with the Department of Revenue.

What is she going to do with 3500 SF that she cannot use? Why can she not use it? It is attached to the restaurant. The barn that looks like it is falling down. Anything contiguous with the restaurant you need a 2 hour firewall. You can put up two 5/8" sheet rock with caulk and tape

If I cannot do this tell me what to do? We are happy to offer guidance. It is not the Planning Boards job to give you an economical solution. You are doing the right thing. In order to do this you have to jump thru hoops. "Do you want me to pull the building down?" Cornelia asked. She can run the restaurant and figure it out. When you come to us because of rules and regulations you have to decide whether you will pursue this or not. Allan Clark went in to the property and he said he couldn't do anything. His hands are constrained by State Code.

Cornelia gets that we have laws and rules and she is willing to do that. Would you be willing to come to us with a site plan review? Hand drawn plans with dimensions can be used. We have to see parking, buildings on site plan, extensive site. That is not trying to over complicate. He needs bearings and distances. We are not changing the building. We are just looking at change of use please look at the checklist. We are all for you continuing doing the great work you are doing as making a contribution to Franconia and with the change of use we are happy to help. You don't have to have professional drawings. It would be helpful if you knew someone who has done it before. If it is not done according to the rules everyone gets into trouble. Hand drawing has to be accurate.

Keith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mark. The Planning Board meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM, all voting unanimously to do so. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28th.

Respectfully submitted,

Herbie Bartlett
Planning Board Secretary