



City of Caribou, Maine

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Caribou Planning Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, March 4, 2015 @ 5:30 pm City Council Chambers

In Attendance: Phil Cyr, Bob White, Grahm Freme, Philip McDonough III, Todd Pelletier and Matthew Hunter

Members Absent: Jim Cerrato

Others in Attendance: Austin Bless, Philip McDonough II and Denise Lausier

- I. Call Meeting to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.
- II. Minutes of February 4, 2015 Regular Meeting** – Phil McDonough III moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Matthew Hunter; Vote was unanimous.
- III. Old Business** –
 - A) Site Design Review Application – Facilities Inc. 7 Russ Street** – The Public Hearing was opened at 5:31 pm. Facilities Inc. has an office building at 7 Russ Street, the property is zoned C-2 and they would like to put an apartment in the western part of the building. There would be no change to the existing footprint of the building and no changes to the property the building sits on. Erick Bechtel from 24 Russ Street was present to speak in opposition to the project. Erick questioned why this was going before the Board since a single family dwelling is not allowed in the C-2 Zone. Erick questioned who Facilities Inc. is, who they intend to rent to and questioned if this is right for their neighborhood. Brian Ostlund was present from Facilities Inc. and he explained that they are a non-profit entity and they can only rent to other non-profits according to their by-laws and tax exempt status. They initially wanted to rent the space commercially, but that didn't work out, so they are looking at residential. They want to make better use of the building, there is about 1,600 square feet not being used. Erick Bechtel also questioned the clientele that they would be renting to and if it would be people with behavioral impairment. Eric has concern for his wife and his young children and their safety, he is more than a little concerned. Brian Ostlund commented that they envision renting to a family and it is possible that it could be clientele with mental illnesses. Matthew Hunter stated that the Planning Board's job is to look at this application and the accessory use in the Site Design process and that the Board cannot get into the behavior of the tenants, that is not their job. Philip McDonough III stated his concerns with the zoning aspect, that the future vision is to try to revitalize commercial zones and keep them commercial, if this is approved, it could open up for more in the future. Austin stated it is allowable at this time, but will not be in the future according to the new Comprehensive

Plan. Austin commented that under Section 13-700 apartments accessory to commercial use is allowable. Public Hearing was closed at 6:01. Todd Pelletier stated he will abstain from voting because he sits on the Board for Facilities, Inc. Philip McDonough II commented that others of the same nature have been turned down in the past and recommends in the re-write of the Zoning Ordinance to more clearly define the definitions of single family dwellings, multifamily dwellings, congregate housing etc. Bob White moved to not approve the Site Design Application, seconded by Philip McDonough III; 5 yes, 1 abstention (Todd Pelletier).

- B) Mobile Home Ordinance** – Austin Bless stated that this ordinance requires construction to be done according to state standards. It requires a list of mobile homes to be presented to the Assessor by April 15 of each year. This will be helpful in the assessing process and also help the City to keep track of the movement of trailers. Public Hearing was opened at 6:07 pm. With no public comment, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:08 pm. The Board discussed the reference of MUBEC throughout the document and wondered if they should use something more generic in case MUBEC is ever repealed. They decided to keep MUBEC in the document. Todd Pelletier moved to approve the ordinance and to send to the City Council for public hearing, seconded by Graham Freme; Vote was unanimous.

- C) Chapter 13 Re-write** – There was much Board discussion on the different zones and definitions of those zones. The Board discussed if there was a need for two industrial zones and two commercial zones. Their goal is to loosen up land to encourage development. Austin Bless commented that the Board could look at zone definitions from other communities. Board consensus was to discuss definitions before reworking the zoning map. The Board discussed residential in commercial zones. There was also discussion on concerns of the Board being able to say yes as exceptions come along. Austin Bless said the Board will also be looking at the Land Use Table with definitions. Philip McDonough II commented that the last re-write of the Land Use Table was around 2005-2007. He recommended to be careful not to change all of the little things but conform to the Comprehensive Plan and the big picture and work from there. Matthew Hunter addressed non-conforming structures and stated that the Land Use Table is restrictful and the Board's flexibility in decision making is hard with all those restrictions. Philip McDonough II brought up Contract Zoning where a contract is done for the use and the contract terminates when the use is done, this offers flexibility. Austin commented on the RC-2 Zone and that the dual usage would be better for the areas on Sweden Street and South Main Street where there are many mixed uses. No action needed from the Board at this time. Austin will get definitions from other communities to review at the next meeting. The Board will continue review of this section at the next meeting as well.

IV. New Business – None

- V. Other Business** – There was discussion on Jim Cerrato's absences. Austin Bless will mail a letter to Jim and check the ordinances as far as board member absences in meetings.

- A) Updates from the Manager** – The City Council approved the Nuisance Property Ordinance. The Independent Living project is not quite ready to move forward yet.

VI. Adjournment – Bob White moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 pm; seconded by Matthew Hunter; Vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. White", written in a cursive style.

Robert White
Planning Board Secretary