

Building/Property Maintenance Committee

Minutes for May 17, 2016



COMMITTEE MEMBER	PRESENT	ABSENT
Mike Fowler, DPW - Chairperson	X	
Robert Mackey, CE Dir/Vice Chair	X	
Ed Garone, Derry Police	X	
Scott Jackson, Derry Fire Dept.	X	
Robert Wentworth, Building Insp		X
Dawn Enwright, Tax Collector	X	
James Morgan, Councilor Liaison	X	
George Sioras, Town Planner	X	
Joseph Toohey, Resident	X	
Serge Michaud – Resident	X	
Ernest St.Pierre - Resident		X
Kerry Harrison, Tax Collector Alt.		
Vern Thomas, Police Dept Alternate		
Dave Hoffman, Fire Dept Alternate		

A monthly meeting of the Building & Property Maintenance Committee was held Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at the Derry Municipal Building Center. Meeting was called to order at 9:04 am.

Mike Fowler had everyone introduce themselves to the committee.

Approval of Minutes

Scott Jackson made a motion to accept the April 19, 2016 minutes as amended.

Seconded by George Sioras

Motion PASSED (7–0)

OLD BUSINESS

213 Island Pond Rd – Ernest St.Pierre sent an email to the Committee to update everyone with the property located at 213 Island Pond Road, Mr. Riemer residence, Joe and I stopped by to visit with Mr. Riemer and found he was not around, we did leave a note telling him who we were and asked that he call to discuss a visit with him. He did call and I spoke to him in length about his location in general discussion. He is not living in the trailer but did report he has a dwelling in the rear. I explained to him we would love to meet up and just introduce ourselves as Veterans concerned for him. He was receptive to this offer.

Bob Mackey stated that the Code Enforcement Office needed to continue with the next step which was presenting a Resolution to the Town Council.

James Morgan felt we should give Ernie and Joe a month to see if they can resolve something with Mr. Riemer.

Dawn Enwright stated that Mr. Riemer has been using his retirement funds to pay the taxes.

Ed Garone stated that the Town has waited 16 years to resolve this, what is a few more months. Hopefully, he can get some help from the VA.

James Morgan asked if that property was zoned for a modular home or mobile home.

Dawn Enwright stated that she has a few that are up for Deeding and maybe one would be adequate to move.

Mike Fowler stated that the mobile homes in the past have been too old and the Town just tore them down. We would have to look at the condition.

Serge Michaud questioned if Pinkerton had been contacted to see if they could build a home for Mr. Riemer.

Joe Toohey felt the mobile home was a good idea and maybe the Pinkerton kids could rehab the trailer.

General consensus was to hold off till the next Committee meeting before moving forward on sending the Resolution to the Town Council.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Workshop – Sign Ordinance

James Morgan stated that the Derry Residents would like to see the downtown revised. The signs and awnings that are in disrepair removed. We need to have some power to get thing done. Looking at the Sign Ordinance – interactive signs are allowed – do we really want that type of sign downtown? It would not be something that he would prefer to see. He is hoping to get at least one developer to make repairs on their property in hopes that the others will follow his example.

Bob Mackey stated that the Sign Ordinance was revised about 3-4 years ago. The Code Enforcement Office has not issued any internal laminated sign permit since that time. The ones that are currently downtown we felt would be removed over time. Cumberland Farms gas pumps signs would be an example of an interactive sign.

George Sioras stated that the downtown area has been evolving over time.

James Morgan felt that the abandoned signs needed to be removed.

Bob Mackey stated that there was a section in the ordinance that deals with abandoned signs, however the companies only remove the sign panels and leave the sign frame, which in some cases looks worse than leaving the sign in place.

James Morgan questioned what other Towns and Cities such as Portsmouth and Manchester doing with regards to abandoned signs. He was sure that this was not an isolated concern.

Mike Fowler asked that the Committee would ultimately like to see for the downtown area. Keene, Claremont, Bristol, and Milford would be similar small Towns.

Joe Toohey felt the “Welcome to Derry” sign next to an abandoned building would not make people want to come to Derry.

Ed Garone felt that Derry needs to have a draw to entice people to come to the Downtown area, whether it be an attraction, restaurant or shopping.

James Morgan added that there were 33,000 residents in Derry and they are not coming to the Downtown for dinner. The Downtown needs to have a look or theme, and the Town needs to keep it that way. Zoning needs to come up with a plan to stop the bedroom family community theme.

George Sioras felt that the Town needed to keep the pressure on landlords to maintain their property even once their tenants move out.

James Morgan asked if the committee preferred signs on the buildings or coming off the buildings.

Scott Jackson stated that sometimes there is not a choice which way the sign is presented.

Mike Fowler wanted to know how the Committee felt about the “Bring Derry Together” Facebook Page. For example there is a business on Crystal Ave that paints their building Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness month and then repaints it gold. Do we want to get involved in those types of things? How much do we want to control the Downtown look?

Joe Toohey felt if the Town got involved with those types of things it would provoke more business and homeowners to do things of that nature. You don’t want a Building 19 look for Derry.

James Morgan didn’t feel the Town needed to have something as refined as a Color Ordinance.

George Sioras felt it was a tough call. In Concord, they have some empty buildings also, but if you really have look at the individual buildings to notice. Derry is a blue collar-middle class community.

Serge Michaud thought we could issue a temporary permit for abandon buildings. We would need to regulate it. Has the Town Council stated what they would like to see for the Downtown area?

James Morgan works with the Downtown and Economic Committee’s and we have not seen anything clearly defined. He was aware of one business in another Town that puts up a hot air balloon for Balloon Month and people come from all over to see which balloon is on the roof of this business.

George Sioras stated that the Committee needed to remember that the downtown area in Derry is only 4 blocks long.

James Morgan asked if the Town has thought about adding benches.

Mike Fowler stated that there were benches downtown however people were sleeping on them overnight, so they were removed.

Ed Garone felt the Town had spent a considerable amount of money to improve the downtown area, with decorative lighting, trees, and parking. When the Town has had control of the outcome it has been beneficial.

George Sioras added that sometimes things happen quickly. We approached owners to have them contact the Town when they were ready to sell their property. We need to force a few landlords to upgrade their store fronts. There is only one block that is in desperate need of repair.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mike Fowler made a motion to adjourn at 10:00 am.
Seconded by Serge Michaud

Next meeting is 3rd Tuesday of Month – June 16, 2016 @ 9:00 am – Room 207

Respectfully,
Sharon Jensen, Recording Clerk