

Present: Jan Finley, Steve Cannon, Denise Cassidy, Cynthia Morse, Greg Noyes, Jeanne Peacock,
Absent: Marilyn Mills.

Audience: Robert Scott CEO

Chair Jan Finley opened the meeting at 6:09

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

The minutes from March 24th were tabled because the secretary Cynthia forgot to bring them.

Jan is going to send us 3 - 4 links that Greg researched about information of levels of impact and home occupation from different cities.

Jan handed us each a copy of our petition to the city for a Zoning Ordinance Amendment for us to examine. The petition will first go to the Planning Board and then the City Council. She added a definition of a residential neighborhood to the petition. (defined as an area of up to two blocks radius from the applicant) Her purpose for adding this was to give some structure to concept of neighborhood. Discussion: Robert informed us that he sends letters to abutters and anyone else with 200 feet of an applicant. Denise wanted to know how far 200 feet was and if that was about the size of 2 blocks. Cynthia mentioned that a football field was 300 feet. Jeanne was concerned that this definition would present a problem that could be challenged. Cynthia felt that a neighborhood could be larger. We were concerned that a neighborhood could not be exactly defined and Greg pointed out that our intent is to define a reasonable area. Over all our concerns are for the impact of not only the house right next to the applicant but also the neighborhood surrounding it. This has to do with preservation of neighborhoods and keeping creep at a minimum. Things like vehicle traffic could have a big impact on neighborhoods. Greg mentioned that we are not obstructionist but we want to be proactive in protecting our neighborhoods. Jan also commented that we do not want to prevent business but we need to protect homes so that suddenly they are not in the middle of a business district.

We need to present to the Planning Board and City Council a written reason for our petition. Discussion: we included statements as: there is a need to maintain the character of the neighborhood, this is not designed to inhibit business, designed to control the negative impact that home occupations could have on neighborhoods. The city has made an effort to maintain downtown business by not allowing living quarters on ground floors, we need to continue this line of thinking by maintaining and preserving the character of our neighborhoods.

Reason for the change: The ZBA appreciates that the city has made an effort to maintain the character of downtown business. The ZAB would like to suggest that the city extend this same consideration to residential neighborhoods. We want to encourage business but maintain the distinctive characteristics of residential neighborhoods.

Motion: Greg moved and Steve 2nd that we adopt the above reason for change. – all in favor.

Motion: Cynthia moved and Greg 2nd that we define a neighborhood as an area of up to two blocks radius from the applicant. – all in favor except Jeanne who voted no.

Jan will check with the city attorney to see if the shall to may is legal.

Open Forum:

Jeanne wanted to know if we should remove neighborhood store from the list of special exemptions and we no longer should be allowed them. Robert Scott mentioned it has been abused. Denise mentioned that we should to consider Quoddy Village. "Neighborhood store" is antiquated. People now drive to the store instead of walking. We could change shall to may and then the planning board could adopt conditions for a neighborhood store. The neighborhood store less than 1000 ft. of retail space. Steve mention that the purpose of the neighborhood store is to stop by and pick up one or two items and so

vehicles are not park for long but there is a constant flow of cars. If someone opens one, the hours of operations and lighting should be considered. Should we define neighborhood store more? Steve stated we don't want to be too picky. Greg mentioned that we need to start looking at Eastport as not only attractive to people who live here now but also for those who will succeed us. There are places set aside for commercial areas. Jeanne mentioned that we have now have a large area set aside as a working waterfront. We are zoned well but we need to maintain the zoning work that was done before us. Greg stated that we have many architecturally significant buildings here and we must try to preserve this character of our town that attracts visitors and new residents. We tabled any action on this and Steve is going to research the neighborhoods stores and see how other towns handle this.

Jan encouraged us to attend the planning board meeting when our petition will be brought up. - May 13

New Business:

A public hearing needs to be scheduled for the attorney's office on 8 Broadway Street.

Discussion:

Monday May 19th is a possible date for the public hearing. Jeanne brought up that the applicants might be out of town. We discussed procedure that we can follow if the applicant cannot make it to the meeting. Robert Scott will contact the applicant to see if he can make the meeting. We scheduled the meeting for May 19.

Jan brought up that she was accused by some people in town of being against business and that our discussions about good neighbors is about her personal agenda of not wanting any neighborhood business. Jan stated that this was not the case and that she would recuse herself from anything that takes place directly in her neighborhood or anything that would construe a conflict of interest.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15.