

TOWN OF AMHERST
Planning Board

May 17, 2023

APPROVED

In attendance at Amherst Town Hall: Arnie Rosenblatt – Chair, Bill Stoughton – Board of Selectmen Ex-Officio, Tracie Adams, Tom Quinn, Chris Yates, Cynthia Dokmo, Tim Kachmar (alternate), and Pam Coughlin (alternate)

Staff present: Nic Strong, Community Development Director; Kristan Patenaude, Recording Secretary (remote)

Arnie Rosenblatt called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. REGIONAL IMPACT:

a. CASE #: PZ17315-050923 – Melissa & Christopher Parker-Christou (Owners & Applicants); 55 Broadway, PIN #: 025-052-000 – Conditional Use Permit in WWCD. To lessen steep slopes adjacent to Baboosic Lake with the addition of retaining walls to repair the existing retaining wall. *Zoned Residential Rural*.

Chris Yates moved that there is no regional impact with regard to CASE #: PZ17315-050923 – Melissa & Christopher Parker-Christou; 55 Broadway. Seconded by Tom Quinn.

Motion carried unanimously 5-0-0.

b. CASE #: PZ17317-050923 – Brian Graziano & Victoria Atchley (Owners & Applicants); 2 Ralmar Road, PIN #: 006-035-002 – Conditional Use Permit for Accessory Apartment. To permit existing second story of detached garage as an Accessory Dwelling Unit in space currently used as an office. *Zoned Residential Rural*.

Tracie Adams moved that there is no regional impact with regard to CASE #: PZ17317-050923 – Brian Graziano & Victoria Atchley; 2 Ralmar Road. Seconded by Chris Yates.

Motion carried unanimously 5-0-0.

Tim Kachmar sat for Tom Silvia.

c. CASE #: PZ17318-050923 – Obadiah Dart (Owner & Applicant); 116 Spring Road, PIN #: 004-157-000 – Conditional Use Permit for Accessory Apartment. To retain the existing 1,080 square foot dwelling unit as an Accessory Apartment and construct a new primary single family dwelling unit on the lot. *Zoned Residential Rural*.

Chris Yates moved that there is no regional impact with regard to CASE #: PZ17318-050923 – Obadiah Dart; 116 Spring Road. Seconded by Tracie Adams. Motion carried unanimously 6-0-0.

d. CASE #: PZ17316-050923 – X Master, Inc. (Owner) & Jason Irish (Applicant); Overlook Drive Building B, Unit 5; PIN #: 001-023-006-B5 – Non-

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Residential Site Plan. Change of Use of Unit 5 from a professional office space to a wellness center. *Zoned Commercial*.

Chris Yates moved that there is no regional impact with regard to CASE #: PZ17316-050923 – X Master, Inc. & Jason Irish; Overlook Drive Building B, Unit 5. Seconded by Tom Quinn. Motion carried unanimously 6-0-0.

2 . Minutes: May 3, 2023

Tracie Adams moved to accept the meeting minutes of May 3, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Bill Stoughton. Motion carried 4-0-2 [T. Kachmar & C. Yates abstaining].

Planning Board Alternates

3. The Planning Board will conduct interviews for the two open Planning Board Alternate positions.

Arnie Rosenblatt explained that there are four applicants for one three-year position and one two-year position. Each applicant has been allotted 20 minutes to interview with the Board for these positions. The Board has received written materials from each applicant and each applicant is welcome to also make a presentation to the Board. The Board will then have an opportunity to ask questions of each applicant. Once the process is complete, the Board can decide whether to not to take action. Only full members of the Board will be participating in this process, not alternates.

The Board first interviewed Rob Clemens. Rob Clemens explained that he spent the last six years as Chair of the Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC), and just recently stepped down from that position. He is interested in what goes on at the Planning Board and has participated and observed meetings over the years from the ACC's perspective.

Chris Yates stated that he did not have any questions but thanked Rob Clemens for his willingness to serve.

Bill Stoughton stated that he cannot think of a better candidate to be an alternate on the Planning Board. He believes that Rob Clemens' application materials speak to his experience in environmental issues, in particular water related issues, and Rob Clemens is interested in following that up on the Planning Board. He stated that Rob Clemens has a skill set that the Board would very much benefit from. He stated that he has worked with Rob Clemens for several years and cannot think of a more even-handed, balanced temperament person to work with.

Cynthia Dokmo stated that she did not have any questions but thanked Rob Clemens for his willingness to serve.

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Tom Quinn asked Rob Clemens how he sees his ACC skills being a benefit as an alternate to the Planning Board. Rob Clemens explained that many of his interactions on the ACC with the Planning Board revolved around water, such as wetlands, the Water Conservation District, and stormwater. Rob Clemens stated that he is looking to spend more time on water resources in Town, as he does not think the Town has its arms around water resources, surface groundwater, wetlands, etc., as much as it should. There are issues such as PFAS contamination, water supply during drought conditions, etc., and many of these are items the Planning Board grapples with on applications for developments. He stated that he believes he can contribute to these issues.

Tom Quinn asked if Rob Clemens is aware of any particular issues in the current ordinance, as written, that could be strengthened or improved in terms of environmental issues. Rob Clemens stated that he has not reviewed the ordinances in this way, but he previously did some work on the Stormwater Regulations a couple of years ago with Bill Stoughton. Rob Clemens stated that he would like to see the ordinances applied and enforced well. The Town is not doing as good a job as it could be on this. Enforcement of some of these items, such as wetland encroachments in proposed developments could be improved.

Rob Clemens noted that the ACC has spent a lot of time recently on acquiring open space in Town. He does not believe that the Town can afford to keep acquiring open space by purchasing it. There has to be a better deal cut with developers to provide more open space with proposed developments. There are provisions in the ordinances that could be strengthened to balance between development and open space.

Tracie Adams noted that Rob Clemens is a 17-year resident of Town and served on the ACC for ten years. She thanked him for this service to the Town in that way. She stated that she believes Rob Clemens' background in water resources information would be very valuable to the Planning Board. Tracie Adams noted that Rob Clemens' application mentioned being interested in the implementation of the Master Plan. She asked him to point out particular items of interest. Rob Clemens stated that, specific to water resources, it was called out in a survey of residents that protection of water resources in Town was one of the highest priority items. The ACC is interested in this topic and in following the results of the survey. There are implementation steps listed in the Master Plan, some of which the Planning Board can do, and some of which the ACC can do. The Town could improve its mapping of drinking water supplies, and protection of water quality regarding new water supplies for developments.

Arnie Rosenblatt also thanked Rob Clemens for his service to the Town.

Chris Yates asked if Rob Clemens would prefer the two- or three-year alternate seat. Rob Clemens stated that he would prefer the two-year seat but would leave the decision to the Board.

The Board next interviewed Jason Sorens. Jason Sorens stated that he has a longstanding interest in land use regulation and that is what he works on for his day job. He has a lot to learn about Board procedure, which can only be helped through experience, but he understands Amherst's

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zoning ordinances and statutes. He has read the ordinances and the OPD's handbook for Planning Board members. This position would be related to his core interests. He would evaluate applications diligently and apply the law. He has an interest in conservation and has worked with private land conservancies. Issues relating to water and preserving unfragmented areas from disturbance relative to the Town's ordinances and protecting them is part of the Planning Board's job.

Tracie Adams asked how long Jason Sorens has lived in Town. Jason Sorens stated that he moved here three years ago. Tracie Adams asked about ways to satisfactorily manage development in the Town's industrial areas. Jason Sorens explained that this could be part of a subcommittee of the Board. The neighbors have concerns about what might be built in this area and the proposed ordinance changes were largely rejected at this year's Town Meeting. There is an opportunity to find a win/win solution, including managing the pollution, traffic, and noise development, while allowing for meaningful industrial development on those parcels. The current ordinances cap residential development in industrial zones given the amount of commercial development built, but some residential development in these areas could allow net fiscal impact which would be positive.

Tracie Adams asked how Jason Sorens would describe his decision-making process. Jason Sorens stated that he would read the application and consider the elements in terms of the ordinance requirements. He would consider questions for the applicant to address during a hearing on items where more information was needed because they were not clear or not represented accurately. This would be a methodical, and as-objective-as-possible decision-making process. He stated that he believes Board members should exercise as little discretion as possible, though this is sometimes possible through the ordinances. Making the process clear, fair, and objective for applicants is important.

Tom Quinn noted that Jason Sorens' application mentions an important issue being balancing tax base growth versus environmental stewardship and small-town character. He asked where Jason Sorens fell on that spectrum. Jason Sorens stated that his view is that the kind of growth expected in Town is likely appropriate for Amherst. The growth over the last 20 years has been approximately 500 new residences per decade or 50 per year on average. The draft Master Plan analysis expects this to continue under the current ordinances. This seems appropriate for the Town, especially based on the lack of sewer infrastructure in Town. It is not wise to further restrict growth based on the housing challenges seen across this and other towns. Affordable housing is difficult to find in Town, with not many houses selling under \$500,000. Jason Sorens stated that friends and the parents of his children's friends have had difficulty remaining in Town. Also, without some tax base growth, there could be significant increases in property tax burden, which could impact property values.

Tom Quinn noted that Jason Sorens' application mentions that he is the principal investigator of the NH Zoning Atlas. He asked what towns Jason Sorens would hold as models for zoning. Jason Sorens stated that many towns are doing different things, but circumstances are different from town to town. Many people speak of Dover as a potential model, but that is a very different place

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from Amherst, so this would not be immediately comparable. Regarding similar towns to Amherst, Bedford has interesting ideas in their Performance Zone using specialized zoning incentives. Towns such as Sunapee have found ways to balance tax growth while maintaining affordability in areas of the town. There is no one town that he would consider a perfect model.

Cynthia Dokmo noted that Bedford has a large commercial district. It is placed away from residences. Amherst mainly has the Bon Terrain area for commercial and industrial growth. She asked how this can be dealt with. Jason Sorens stated that Amherst's lack of infrastructure constrains what can be done. It may be worth investigating small scale commercial areas scattered in various parts of town. Many people are willing to accept a lower tax base and higher tax burden in exchange for purely residential neighborhoods. The Board should be guided by the views of the Town on this item.

Cynthia Dokmo asked what Jason Sorens would do to promote affordable housing. Jason Sorens stated that there are some myths regarding the fiscal impact of affordable housing. Research shows that smaller dwelling units are net fiscally positive, as they are usually used by young couples or the older population. The Town has a Planned Residential Development (PRD) ordinance which could be amended to allow the Board more discretion and incentives depending on what is proposed. The Town is not currently seeing many PRD applications for affordable housing developments, and this is a missed opportunity. These could also help incentivize open space conservation land. Multi family dwelling units and smaller units are allowed through PRDs, so this is an opportunity to allow for mixed dwelling unit types without sacrificing environmental impacts. PRDs cluster dwelling units and allow for open space to remain. Cynthia Dokmo asked how denser housing would be encouraged. Jason Sorens stated that the Board could allow slightly higher density incentives, up to the Board's discretion, depending on what a project brings to the table.

Bill Stoughton asked if Jason Sorens has an upper limit on the density he would consider in Amherst. For example, if a 2-acre zoning lot proposed 300% normal zoning, would that be appropriate? Jason Sorens stated that, if that was proposed through a PRD application, 300% would be quite high, as the current ordinances allow a maximum of 125%. The current maximum may be too low and why the Board is not seeing more of these types of applications. It is difficult to say 300% would be supported, but he would consider up to 200%. This would not be automatic but considered by the Board to receive other benefits.

Bill Stoughton stated that he is struggling to vote for Jason Sorens because he previously ran for a seat on the Board based on certain ideas. Someone spent a lot of money on the campaign, but the voters said no by approximately a vote of 2:1. He has concerns with nullifying the word of the voters by now voting to place Jason Sorens on the Board. Jason Sorens stated that he was running for a full three-year position on the Board at that time. He heard from quite a few residents who stated that they would support him as an alternate, though not necessarily as a full Board member. Also, there were many concerns regarding his political affiliations which have nothing to do with his ideas for land use in Amherst. His position on some of the zoning amendments were closer to the majority view.

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Chris Yates asked Jason Sorens, if he would consider a PRD with up to 200% increased density, would he also require that developer to mandate community septic and community water. Jason Sorens stated that he believes items of this type would have to be brought to the table by the developer in order for the Board to consider significant density bonuses. Chris Yates stated that, in his years on the Board, the issue he has seen is with developers trying to shoehorn a large number of units onto a property at market rate, with those units then selling for large sums. This was seen with the Pendleton Farms development. He would prefer to see smaller homes on smaller parcels, but this is not being proposed to the Board. Jason Sorens stated that the Board could slightly ameliorate the problem, knowing that it cannot be fully solved as this is a regional issue, by allowing for a diversity of housing types within a PRD. This will include some larger, more expensive units, but density bonuses could be afforded for smaller units to be included. The Board may see more applications of this type if it has more discretion in the ordinance and allows this as a consideration.

Chris Yates asked Jason Sorens how he would change the ordinances to incentivize developers to come in with this type of application. Jason Sorens stated that he has mainly worked on PRDs and the industrial zone ideas. There is another benefit for PRDs that could be offered, but the Town would need to consider State law. In other states, towns offer an expedited approval process, allowing for subdivision and conditional use permits to be approved at the same time. A large part of costs for developers includes delays in obtaining approvals. Chris Yates stated that this would require applicants to come in with all associated materials at the same time. Jason Sorens agreed.

Arnie Rosenblatt thanked Jason Sorens for his time. He asked if Jason Sorens would prefer the two- or three-year alternate position. Jason Sorens stated that he applied for the two-year position but would be happy with whatever the Board sees fit to choose.

The Board next interviewed Tim Kachmar. Tim Kachmar stated that he has been an alternate on the Board for the past year and has been asked to sit on the Board for a few hearings. He has enjoyed working with all of the Board members and would like to continue his service to the Town. He was previously on the Zoning Board of Adjustment but decided it would be more impactful and enjoyable to him to serve on the Planning Board. He works with federal and government regulations on a daily basis and believes he has done a good job interpreting regulations and ordinances so far for the Board.

Chris Yates stated that he has enjoyed working with Tim Kachmar on the Master Plan Steering Committee. He asked Tim Kachmar if he would prefer the two- or three-year alternate position. Tim Kachmar stated that it would be at the discretion of the Board, but he would prefer the three-year seat.

Bill Stoughton stated that several months ago a resident wrote a letter to the Board complaining about statements made by Tim Kachmar in the past. He asked Tim Kachmar if he would like to address this. Tim Kachmar stated that he previously submitted a written response to both the

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Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. The letter included a different interpretation than what he actually said. Tim Kachmar stated that he expressed his opinion and facts at that meeting and made his statement to remind the Board of positions residents have taken in the past. He said what he wanted to say during that meeting.

Bill Stoughton stated that he struggles with seating Jason Sorens on the Board because he ran and lost; Tim Kachmar also ran for a position and lost. He tries to listen to the voters. While Jason Sorens ran on specific ideas and was not voted in, Tim Kachmar did not say much during his campaign and still was not voted in and had the fewest number of votes. Tim Kachmar noted that he was last on the list of candidates, and this may have been a factor. Tim Kachmar stated that he has been involved in Town events and has had good interactions with people at meetings in the past. He has been active in Town regarding zoning regulations and warrant articles. There is an interpretation in Town as to what his views are, but his views align similarly to some of the results seen in the Master Plan survey. He has the same views that a majority of people in Town have.

Cynthia Dokmo addressed Tim Kachmar's reaction letter to the resident's letter of concern. In the letter, Tim Kachmar stated that he sought an attorney to potentially seek a restraining order against the resident and potentially sue the resident for slander. She stated that she has been in the public eye for a long time and these types of items need to be shrugged off. Her concern is that Tim Kachmar reacted in that way. Tim Kachmar stated that he felt threatened and reacted appropriately.

Tom Quinn thanked Tim Kachmar for his service to the Town.

Tracie Adams asked Tim Kachmar how long he has lived in Town. Tim Kachmar stated that he has lived in Town since 2011. Tracie Adams noted that Tim Kachmar worked well on the Master Plan Steering Committee. She stated that he was the only applicant to submit a written statement of interest to the Board.

Tracie Adams asked Tim Kachmar if there are any particular priority items from the Master Plan that he is interested in pursuing. Tim Kachmar stated that he would like to see that there is actual follow up to some of the implementation items in the Master Plan. He would like to see committees/boards in Town that were assigned some tasks to move them forward.

Tracie Adams asked Tim Kachmar to describe his decision-making process. Tim Kachmar stated that, in reviewing an application, he tries to envision the area or drive around and look at the property. He considers the proposal and how it would impact the area. He stated that he believes the existing zoning in Town is good and that the Town's rural character is important. He stated that he believes there is plenty of open space when a person builds a house on a 2-acre or 5-acre lot. Just because open space is not accessible to the public does not mean it is not there for the environment and animals. He does not like to see too many waivers granted to developers. He does not like to see developers shoehorn units onto every piece of a property. If a lot is not buildable, it cannot be built on. He reviews wetland boundaries and encroachments, especially as

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the Board has heard concerns from many homeowners about their existing wells and the associated aquifers.

Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he has interacted with Tim Kachmar over the past year on the Board and does not have any questions.

While waiting for the next applicant to arrive, Cynthia Dokmo stated that she, Tracie Adams, and Tom Quinn have been working on suggestions regarding the Findings of Fact. The hope is to bring the document to the Board within the next couple of weeks.

The Board next interviewed Jamie Ramsay. Jamie Ramsay stated that the Planning Board and other groups in Town are directly to the benefit of the Town. These do not feed into a national or regional missive. NH Planning & Land Use and Amherst's Zoning Ordinance, which is proprietary to the Town of Amherst, are documents that are often used by the Board. Jamie Ramsay stated that he feels strongly about protection of water in Town and large-scale developments in this area. By directive of the State of New Hampshire, any water runoff from a large development is to be processed for recharge of the aquifer by that development. This water is not to be filtered off but treated onsite. The Town has an obligation to the entire region regarding contamination of the aquifer. He stated that he also feels strongly that the Zoning Ordinance should be followed lockstep whenever possible. There is some latitude in this, but items such as scenic setbacks, are there for a reason. This is to keep Amherst looking like Amherst, instead of offering it to look like elsewhere. This is a rural Town and should stay that way. There is some room for development in Town. The Board has to decide if development offers will benefit Amherst or contain ideas that are drawn in from elsewhere. There is a lot of wisdom and energy on this Board. The Board is, fortunately, elected by Amherst's citizens, and the Board has an obligation to those citizens. The Board needs to be careful and not invite ideas in from the outside that do not represent Amherst. The Town can grow intelligently through the capable Board. He would love to serve on the Board, as he has similarly done for 20+ years on other boards in Town. He brings experience from this and from having grown up in Town. There are few places left in the nation like Amherst.

Tracie Adams thanked Jamie Ramsay for his service to the Town. She noted that he is currently a full member of the ZBA. Jamie Ramsay stated that he is the Secretary/Treasurer for the ZBA.

Tracie Adams asked Jamie Ramsay to enumerate what he thinks the Planning Board should accomplish over the next year. Jamie Ramsay stated that his answer included to better define zoning ordinances and objectives. The Zoning Ordinance could change but this is not necessary.

Tracie Adams asked Jamie Ramsay to describe his decision-making process. Jamie Ramsay stated that he would first figure out the end game, ask questions, and filter the information. The Board usually holds a good question and answer session with applicants, and applicants should feel as though they are on the hot seat.

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Tracie Adams asked Jamie Ramsay if he has any items of implementation from the Master Plan that he is interested in. Jamie Ramsay stated that he has never considered the Master Plan, other than as a document developed by the citizens of Amherst. It is a vital document. Board members represent the citizens who elect them, and they have an obligation to them.

Tom Quinn asked how long Jamie Ramsay has sat on the ZBA. Jamie Ramsay stated that this has been approximately 20 years or more. Jamie Ramsay stated that his real interest previously was the Historic District Commission (HDC), which he served on up until last year. The HDC is in good hands.

Tom Quinn asked how Jamie Ramsay's experience on the ZBA would be helpful to this position. Jamie Ramsay stated that he always learns something new at ZBA meetings. The ZBA is well respected in the State. This experience has helped him be more of a clinical thinker and move outside his own opinion. The ordinances are proprietary, and he is able to dismiss his own opinions from this. Tom Quinn asked if being on the ZBA would make for a quick transition onto the Planning Board. Jamie Ramsay stated that this definitely would.

Tom Quinn noted that Jamie Ramsay was a homebuilder in the past and asked how this, and current work experience, would help with this position. Jamie Ramsay stated that he can quickly identify what is being offered to the Town from the applications. He can then decide if it is right or wrong for the Town. He has seen many buildings in Town that do not work. Anything built in a development has an obligation to what is being preserved in the Town center. There is room for high density, such as the Gowing Woods development, but it is offensive to see some of the more recent developments. Amherst is not everywhere else.

Cynthia Dokmo asked if Jamie Ramsay was born here. Jamie Ramsay stated that he was. He does not begrudge the changes he has seen in Town, due to how closely it is located to Boston.

Cynthia Dokmo asked Jamie Ramsay what he would do if a proposed development met all zoning requirements, but half the Town opposes it. Jamie Ramsay stated that he would try to sway the development toward something that would be attractive aesthetically to Amherst, in rigid application to State RSAs and Amherst's Zoning Ordinance. If there is wiggle room within the Zoning Ordinance, the Board can interject its preferences without this becoming a problem legally. It is the obligation of the Board to do so as a collective decision.

Cynthia Dokmo noted that, in the 1990s, the Board wrestled with having some type of an architectural review or architectural standards for developments but did not pursue this as it was not recommended by Town Counsel. She noted that there used to be a requirement along Route 101 that all buildings be built Colonial style, but this did not occur. She asked how Jamie Ramsay would ensure that developments fit in with the Town and how this issue could be forced with a developer. Jamie Ramsay stated that he is unsure how to do this but noted that the tastes in architecture change. All it takes is one feature on the face of any building to distinguish it. Designs that are compatible with what surrounds it are important. The Town is not trying to

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create Colonial Williamsburg. He stated that almost no developer out there cares. The Town of Amherst is cannon fodder and needs to protect itself against these developers.

Cynthia Dokmo asked Jamie Ramsay if he supports promoting more affordable housing in Town. Jamie Ramsay stated that he does, but he does not know how to make this happen with the current cost of construction.

Bill Stoughton asked if Jamie Ramsay plans to stay on the ZBA if named an alternate on the Planning Board. Jamie Ramsay stated that he does. Bill Stoughton asked what Jamie Ramsay will do if an applicant ends up in front of both boards. Jamie Ramsay stated that he has a strong ability to know when he needs to recuse himself. Recusal is an option for the person considering it. If he feels that he will contaminate the vote, he will recuse himself. Bill Stoughton asked if the recusal would happen at the Planning Board or ZBA stage. Jamie Ramsay stated that this could happen at either stage.

Bill Stoughton asked Jamie Ramsay his thoughts on allowing a developer increased density of housing in exchange for open space. Jamie Ramsay stated that Gowing Woods, like other PRDs, has open space and has higher density than other developments. This is acceptable, as long as allowed by the ordinance. The property should not be clearcut, with swampland and rocks left. This is where the Planning Board can fight back and give the developer certain items to work with. Developers need to give things that work for the Town and not for the greater region. Amherst is a unique part of the region.

Chris Yates asked Jamie Ramsay if there is any area the Board should review and make changes to in the current ordinances. Jamie Ramsay stated that there is not. This is a dynamic document and process that is always in flux. He has not seen things in Amherst that are knee jerk reactions. Items present themselves organically and are reacted to as such. Chris Yates asked if Jamie Ramsay feels that the Board should look ahead to potential changes in order to be proactive. Jamie Ramsay stated that he is open to discussion on potential changes. There is enough collective wisdom to have these discussions.

Arnie Rosenblatt asked Jamie Ramsay if he sees any intrinsic tension in serving on both the ZBA and Planning Board. Jamie Ramsay stated that he does not. If he thought it was a problem, he would not have applied. He is a clinical thinker and knows where the line is. Arnie Rosenblatt asked where the line is. Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the Board occasionally acts on applications that may eventually seek a variance. Also, there are instances when applicants have already received a variance and then come before the Planning Board, and instances where Planning Board decisions can be appealed to the ZBA. He asked if it is truly easy to identify applications that will be sent to the ZBA. Jamie Ramsay stated that he would hear an application and then decide. It can be dangerous to have something referred to the ZBA from the Planning Board because a variance is needed. The variance needs to be carefully adjudicated by the ZBA, although no case is precedent setting. The ZBA heard a peculiar case last night that it sent to Town Counsel for consideration. The two boards are not competing against each other but need

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to work to be helpful to the residents of Amherst. There is a fine line. Arnie Rosenblatt acknowledged that there can be tension between the two groups.

Bill Stoughton asked if the ZBA has alternate members at the moment. Jamie Ramsay stated that there is one currently. Bill Stoughton stated that he does not want to put the ZBA at a disadvantage and he is hesitant to create this situation. He also respects Jamie Ramsay's experience on the ZBA and does not want him to have to recuse from items before the ZBA. Jamie Ramsay stated that, if he had to recuse, his vote would be well served by the alternate member. Bill Stoughton noted that Jamie Ramsay is an elected official and, if he had to recuse himself, that would require an appointed official to act in his stead.

Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he would like a Board member to make a motion regarding a certain applicant, after discussion is complete. The Board can then make a motion for a second applicant. The Board discussed the applicants.

Tom Quinn stated that the Board is lucky it has four candidates for these positions. He stated that he considered who can step in most immediately and participate in meetings quickly. He believes this would be the two applicants who were previously on the ZBA and Planning Board, Tim Kachmar and Jamie Ramsay.

Bill Stoughton stated that he believes Rob Clemens will bring a lot to the Board and will make a motion to this effect. He commended Jason Sorens for running on ideas but cannot get past the fact that the public voted against him for these ideas. He is reluctant to vote for him for this reason. He stated that he hopes Jason Sorens will continue to participate in Board meetings as a member of the public. Bill Stoughton stated that he is concerned with putting the ZBA down a person by voting Jamie Ramsay onto the Planning Board. He stated that the voters elected Jamie Ramsay to be on the ZBA and he believes Jamie Ramsay's experience is best served there. Bill Stoughton echoed Cynthia Dokmo's concerns regarding Tim Kachmar. He stated that Board members need to let comments roll off. He stated that he hopes Tim Kachmar can do that in the future.

Bill Stoughton moved to appoint Rob Clemens as an alternate to the Planning Board for a three-year term. Seconded by Cynthia Dokmo.

Motion carried unanimously 6-0-0. [Arnie Rosenblatt voted on this item.]

Cynthia Dokmo stated that she is not as concerned about the tension between the Planning Board and ZBA. She stated that either applicant that was on the ZBA or Planning Board could hit the ground running. She noted that Jamie Ramsay grew up in Town and this could be an asset.

Arnie Rosenblatt agreed that Jamie Ramsay could hit the ground running and has valuable experience, but the tension between the Planning Board and ZBA is an issue.

Arnie Rosenblatt stated that it is easy to chastise others. He stated that Tim Kachmar was intemperate in his response letter and the comments made during the Board meeting were not

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wise and unfortunate. However, he has reacted intemperately to comments made to him in the past as well. He stated that his experiences on the Board with Tim Kachmar have been good, though he might not always agree with him. While he agrees with the concerns, he is not prepared to use those to serve as a reason to veto him as an applicant.

Tom Quinn moved to appoint Tim Kachmar as an alternate to the Planning Board for a two-year term. Seconded by Chris Yates.

Motion carried unanimously 4-0-1 [C. Dokmo abstaining].

Arnie Rosenblatt stated that Jason Sorens' responses to questions asked of him this evening were well reasoned, thoughtful, interesting, and provided topics of discussion. He stated that Jamie Ramsay would have added value to the Planning Board, but he is glad Jamie Ramsay will continue to add value to the ZBA.

4. Any other business that may come before the Board.

Cynthia Dokmo moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31pm. Seconded by Bill Stoughton.

Motion carried unanimously 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude

Minutes approved: June 7, 2023