Minutes of 10 November 2021 Clifton Planning Board Meeting

(Revision 1)

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:02 p.m. in the town office building. Present were Chairperson Bruce Jellison, Vice Chairperson David Cogdell and members Vern Campbell and Julie LaVertue. Also present were the Town of Clifton Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) Rick Leavitt and Paul Fuller representing the Silver Maple Wind Project. The meeting was not broadcast or recorded via Zoom. (Note: this meeting had been delayed a week to allow the CEO to complete two construction permit application packages for the Planning Board’s review.)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Upon a motion by Vern/Julie and a 4/0 vote, the minutes of the 6 October 2021 Planning Board meeting were approved.

Paul Fuller reported that the Penobscot County Registry of Deeds had only been able to accept/record the area ownership map and not the topographic and satellite maps that the Board had signed at the last meeting (see previous minutes for this ongoing issue). According to a 22 October 2021 letter to the Board from Michael Carey, SWEB’s Development Manager and Mr. Fuller, the reason for the two maps not being accepted by the Registry of Deeds was due to their color scheme and the level of greyscale. Following a brief discussion and a motion by Bruce/Vern, the Board voted unanimously that SWEB had complied with the requirements of the Clifton Land Use Ordinance (CLUO) with the single map now being on file. The CEO mentioned that this same issue had surfaced in other towns as well. It was noted that this issue may need to be addressed when the Board updates the CLUO for town approval.

The Board reviewed and discussed with the CEO a permit application and related documentation to reconstruct and relocate a shoreline residential structure at 34 Thompson Court in Clifton. The property owners had earlier demolished the old structure, which had caved-in, with the CEO’s permission. Following a discussion with the CEO that included his responses to a number of questions, the Board, following a motion by David/Vern and unanimous vote, approved the permit application. (NOTE: The Board believed that it would have been beneficial to have photographs of the old structure before its demolition given the new structures proximity to the shoreline. Although a poor-quality photograph of the old structure was included in the application, it was hard to make out details. Although it should be noted that the Clifton Land Use Ordinance (CLUO) contains no requirement to submit “before” photographs in such cases, the CEO said that he would include “before” photographs in the permit applications when/if available.

The Board also reviewed and discussed with the CEO a permit application package to construct an addition to a pre-existing shoreline residential structure at 53 Campbell Lane in Clifton. Following discussions with the CEO, the Board, acting upon a motion by Julie/David and unanimous vote, approved the permit application.

The CEO and the Board then discussed proposed changes to the CLUO which the Board may recommend once the Comprehensive Plan is completed. While many of the needed changes had been noted over the past several years, many were of a relatively minor nature. The CEO recommended that the Board consider creating two ordinances, one pertaining to shoreland zoning and the other for inland areas. As explained by the CEO, one reason for the recommendation is that the State of Maine has created new shoreline guidelines that must be incorporated into a town’s land use ordinance when an update occurs. Among other reasons, it was felt that having separate ordinances would make periodic updates easier to incorporate into the CLUO. There was also discussion on the need for the town to have a recreational marijuana ordinance. The Board will take these matters under consideration.

Upon a motion by David/Julie and unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:53 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Board Vice Chairperson David Cogdell.