

**Village of Webster  
Planning Board Workshop Minutes**

Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2016

Community Meeting Hall  
29 South Avenue  
Webster, NY 14580

Present: Peter Adams, Judy Gurnett, Kathy Bills, Atty. David Mayer, Building /Code Enforcement Officer Will Barham, Secretary Jo O'Neill

The public workshop came to order at 7:35 pm.

Motion to accept the 11/5/15 Meeting minutes was made by Kathy Bills, seconded by Judy Gurnett, all were in favor.

2/24/16 Workshop minutes were reviewed. No approval was needed.

**Sign Discussion:**

Sign Codes from several Villages are being looked at, along with definitions and the Intent/Purpose of the sign code. We have some legal questions to run by our Atty., David Mayer. Some pressing matters are inside signs and enforcement issues.

Quoting our sign code, 175-54b #6, "no exterior sign shall be flashing, revolving animated or otherwise in motion". In regards to interior signs, we may just want to remove the word "exterior" from this code and make it for all signs. The exception being the "traditional barber pole".

Our purpose for the sign code should be revised. Other Villages' intent/purpose are more encompassing and stricter. Could we rewrite ours in such a way that signs must be "compatible with the historic nature of the Village," or similar verbiage?

East Rochester's Purpose states:

**A.**

The purpose of this article is to promote and protect the public health, welfare and safety by regulating existing and proposed outdoor advertising signs and outdoor signs of all types. It is intended to protect property values, create a more attractive economic and business climate and enhance and protect the physical appearance of the community. It is further intended hereby to reduce sign or advertising distractions and obstructions, reduce hazards that may be caused by signs overhanging or projecting over public rights-of-way and enhance the appearance and attractiveness of the Village.

**B.**

This article is intended to promote attractive signs which clearly present the visual message in a manner that is compatible with its surroundings. The appearance, character and quality of a community are affected by the location, size, construction and

graphic design of its signs. Therefore, such signs should convey their messages clearly and simply to enhance their surroundings.

C.

It is further intended that the signs in each zoning district shall be coordinated with the architecture in such a manner that the overall appearance is harmonious in color, form and proportion. Signs in each district shall preferably be of the same size, shape, color, and aesthetic style.

We don't want to put an undue burden on the business owners, however should businesses wanting new signs or revisions to existing signs have to come before the Planning Board? As it is now, Will Barham is the one who approves all sign permits as long as they're not outside the existing code, requiring a variance.

Business Owners may have difficulty with that. The process to get a sign approved could take months, from the time they first come before the Planning Board until it's ultimately approved, especially if they need a variance of some sort.

Allowing a temporary sign is an option, but then the businesses end up having to pay for two signs, and don't want to open a new business with a "cheap" looking sign.

If businesses are given all of the guidelines and information upfront, things go much smoother. Administratively, if we work on the sign guidelines it would make a significant improvement to the entire process. Issues still can arise when dealing with corporate logos. Those logos may not fit our sign code. And, it's often a problem with business' second, third or additional sign, even if their original sign met our guidelines.

Also, the style of the sign should be appropriate to the style of the building, which could be included in part of the purpose (as in letter "C" of East Rochester's purpose).

We need to update our guidelines and include pictures/examples to make them "user friendly". There are also some things in our guidelines that need to be filled in or added: permitted sign area, showing a graphic of a façade with measurements,... If they are updated and approved by the Planning Board can we make it law?

Per Atty. David Mayer, we can recommend guidelines, but the Trustees have to enact it as part of the Zoning Law.

In preparation for the next meeting, we should all "do our homework", review the purpose, code (section 175-54) and guidelines, then work through our questions and concerns, and come up with some graphics for examples (monument sign, projection sign...). East Rochester's purpose seems to encompass what we're looking for. See what revisions might be needed for Webster, and go from there.

We will get the Zoning Board involved for the next meeting, looking to finalize things by the end of April, then present it to the Village Board in May for approval.

### **Air B&B Discussion:**

In some other cities, people have been splitting up houses and renting them out (almost like a boarding house). Our code doesn't prohibit people from renting their houses, therefore it's permitted. If we address it in our code, we could prevent it from happening. Pittsford prohibits it, but has a provision to block out dates for the PGA, so people can rent out their houses.

B&B's are allowed in the West End Business District and Neighborhood Business District in Webster. If someone rents to one person for an extended period of time it's not a problem, but when someone rents to a different person week after week it's an issue. It makes the neighbors upset, lowers their property value, and has the potential of loud parties and/or becoming a "zombie" property.

We want to be proactive, define what an Air B&B is, and write some code that prevents it from happening. Other definitions needing clarification are tenants, short term rental, boarding house, and long term lease.

What about:

- developments in the middle of residential areas? A builder could start a development, and offer the houses for rent before the development is fully completed.
- large companies (Xerox, U of R, IBM...) that purchase houses and rent them out when corporate people come into town? How do you deal with that?

Atty. David Mayer will look at what Pittsford does & their definitions, and check out the Finger Lakes area for any code regarding Air B&B's.

### **Other Topic:**

Can we address in the code requiring/allowing for a taller fence (higher than 6ft.) between commercial and residential areas? It was allowed behind the "Mac & Cheez" restaurant, and by the railroad tracks on Kittleberger.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next Planning Board Workshop is scheduled for 6pm on March 17, 2016, and will be a joint meeting with the Zoning Board.

Motion to adjourn made by Judy Gurnett, seconded by Kathy Bills. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jo O'Neill  
Deputy Clerk