

**TOWN OF CHATHAM PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 11, 2011
Final Copy**

Members Present:

Donna Staron, Deputy Chair
Dorothy Mackerer
Tony Ooms
Aven Kerr
Bill Bulick
John Hanna
Marilyn Cohen, Chair
Paul McCreary, Eng.

Members Absent:

None

Public Present:

Paul Veillette
Steven Anderson

The January 11, 2011 Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Marilyn Cohen. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Cohen stated that when the Town Hall is closed for weather - related issues the Planning Board Meeting will be cancelled. She also added that if the storm was presenting problems during a day in which the Board was to meet, the members would be notified by 4:00 PM.

Bill Bulick moved and Deputy Chairman Staron seconded to approve minutes from the August 10, 2010 meeting. This carried.

New Concord Community Center
Site Plan Review
Informational

This project is currently being considered for a special use permit and parking variance. Paul Veillette and Steve Anderson are representing The Society of New Concord. Paul Veillette stated that, out of the 60-80 members of the Society, probably 30-40 of these would be actively using the facility. Mr. Veillette added that there is one parking spot per 4 people. Mr. Veillette pointed out that New Concord is a very small community and asked the Board to consider this a "real-life" situation when it comes to looking at the legal requirements of the Board. Mr. Veillette submitted written responses from 36 people that Dr. Karpinsky had solicited. There were also 9 written responses, all positive, from immediate neighbors in regard to parking either near or on the neighbors' property. A 2/10 KM, (appx. 500 ft.), standard was used for a radius of definition of a close neighbor from the site.

Chairman Cohen reiterated that the concern is the overflow parking for larger events that may occur 2-3 times a year. Mr. Veillette said that in the past,

people parked on neighbors' lawns. He then submitted testimonials of neighbors adding that the "support was impressive".

Dorothy Mackerer pointed out that when the building was a church people parked on the side of the road. She asked if there was a way to run a shuttle bus from an alternate parking area. Mr. Veillette said yes. He also mentioned that his wife owns a house on the corner within walking distance of the Center and has offered her property as additional space for parking if needed. Mr. Anderson has also made a similar offer.

Paul McCreary stated that the proposed parking, as shown on the blueprint, is not standard and it will be difficult to exit without pulling back out onto the highway.

John Hanna requested that something be put on the record pertaining to an easement. He asked whether or not "strangers" would be able to use the facility for such things as weddings thereby creating an overcrowded situation which would ultimately result in a return "problem" to the Planning Board. Mr. Anderson replied stating that the Society is trying to sustain the building as a "public" building. Chairman Cohen reminded the Board that the Society is a non-profit organization.

Aven Kerr asked if the Society would have something that would limit the functions to a certain number of people because of the parking limitations.

John Hanna noted that the Planning Board has to justify its decisions and asked if it wouldn't be easier if parking could be complimented by neighbors allowing people to park on their property. Mr. Veillette stated that the Society would utilize the number of spaces at the facility with neighbors agreeing to have the overflow parking on their property within walking distance of the Center.

Mr. Hanna added if there was a large event, arrangements should then be made to have people park in safe places off-site and bring attendees to that event.

Chairman Cohen pointed out that there will be no changes to the building other than repairs.

When asked where the well is located, Mr. Anderson pointed out the different wells. The well being used by the Society is located on the Church property.

Chairman Cohen noted that the Center is not currently handicapped accessible.

John Hanna wanted a more clear definition as to what the nature of the use is to be. He suggested including wording such as "various community events" and adding something about arrangements for off-site parking when the on-site parking gets filled. Mr. Hanna would like to see this statement regarding the parking solution on the site plan. Mr. Hanna would also like the Town Attorney,

Tal Rappleyea to review this. Mr. Anderson said he will include language for the solution to overflow parking and shuttling people back and forth. Aven Kerr expressed concern about marking the 8 parking places since they are not up to code. Mr. McCreary pointed out that the marks on the gravel at the Center would not last after a weather event anyway, so that this was a non-issue.

The Planning Board is in favor of the project and its use and will relay this to the ZBA. The site plan review was set for a Public Hearing next month.

Aven Kerr moved and Dorothy Mackerer seconded the motion to close the meeting. The meeting ended at 8:10 PM.

Marilyn Cohen, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Wessot, Clerk