

Town of Jefferson
Board of Adjustment

Minutes
July 9, 2020

Chairman Kim Perry opened the meeting at 7: 30 p.m.

Members present: Chairman Kim Perry; Biff Wyman, Rodney Houghton, alternate; Tom Walker, Jason Call

Members absent: Cricket Ingerson

Others present: Charlene Wheeler, Board secretary; Glenn Colburn, Mark Labore

In the absence of a regular member, Rodney Houghton was designated a voting member for this meeting.

Hearing of Appeal – Colburn

Chairman Perry opened the public hearing for case # 192-2020. Michael Fraser of 172 Thayer Road, Monson, MA is applying for a Variance in compliance with Article IV, Section 2 of the Land Use Ordinance. The applicant proposes to construct a 10' x 16' addition to an existing camp on Map 9, Lot 38 at 161 Ingerson Road. This would bring the resulting structure closer to the lot line than the 50 feet allowable in the Land Use Ordinance. Mr. Colburn described the existing camp to be 16' x 20' and the 10' x 16' addition is planned as a sunroom. The camp itself is 1-1/2 stories high with a sleeping loft. The addition would be only one story high. There are two small outbuildings on the property, a shed and an old outhouse. A spring behind the camp which crosses a neighbor's boundary to his lot supplies water. He said the camp is higher up on the lot from the road and not easily seen plus there are trees and vegetation which makes it hard to see from the next lot to which it would be closest. Mr. Labore stated he had no objection to the addition, the trees created a sufficient buffer and he couldn't really see the camp.

The Board secretary reported she had received a phone call from another abutter Fred Lovejoy who asked questions about the proposal but voiced no objection to it.

There being no other comments or questions Chairman Perry closed the public portion of the hearing.

Deliberations began.

The proposed use would not diminish surrounding property values. The lot will be improved. There are two thick natural tree buffers shielding the view from neighbors to the east. The structure will be sufficiently upslope so as not to interfere with neighboring views. The addition will maintain the camp character.

Granting the variance will not harm the public interest. The town would receive an increase in tax revenue without an impact on services.

Denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship. The current camp was built before the current Land Use Ordinance was originally ratified and is on a grandfathered lot which is narrower than 200 feet.

Granting the variance would do substantial justice because the addition will be small and not intrusive to neighbors yet add a 3-season room to enjoy the woods and wildlife.

The use is not contrary to the spirit of the ordinance because the size of the lot and the location of the buildings would still maintain privacy and significant distance between them and their neighbors.

Biff Wyman made the motion to grant the variance requested, seconded by Rodney Monahan. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous. Mr. Colburn thanked the Board and he and Mr. Labore left the meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the November 17, 2019 meeting were read. Jason Call made the motion the minutes be approved as read, seconded by Tom Walker. The vote to accept the motion was unanimous.

Other Business

Jason Call said camping with recreational vehicles on property other than designated campgrounds has become noticeable in the town and the Planning Board and Select Board are looking at this issue. It isn't fair to those such as Mike and Jennifer Kenison who are trying to establish a campground as a business following all the rules which amounts to an expensive project, especially dealing with required necessary permits, surveys, etc.

The Planning Board has been presented with the results of the Master Plan survey by June Garneau of Mapping and Planning Solutions. This was done with a power point presentation of 97 slides and a written compilation of all written comments made by responders to the survey. The Planning Board would like to get this information out to the public, certainly on the town's website, but also in-person meetings for the public to attend as well. A large public presentation had to be cancelled at the end of March because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the citizen are happy living in the town of Jefferson and wanted to see its rural character and environments preserved, while improving infrastructure to allow for better communication services such as cell phones and internet. There was also concern about roads and safety, one place being on Route 2 by Santa's Village.

Board members discussed Kricket Ingerson's membership on the Board as she has not attended a meeting for a number of years. She will be contacted to ask if she wants to continue serving as a regular member.

Biff Wyman made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tom Walker. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Charlene Wheeler
Secretary to the Board