APPROVED

TOWN OF PELHAM ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING February 29, 2016

The Chairman David Hennessey called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm.

The Vice Chair Svetlana Paliy called roll:

PRESENT: David Hennessey, Svetlana Paliy, Bill Kearney (via telephone for Case

#ZO2016-00002 only), Peter McNamara, Alternate Lance Ouellette, Alternate Darlene Culbert, Planning Director (former Zoning

Administrator for cases being heard) Jeff Gowan.

Also Present: Zoning Administrator Jennifer Hovey (recently promoted

to the position)

ABSENT: Chris LaFrance, Alternate Pauline Guay, Alternate Kevin O'Sullivan

Mr. Ouellette and Ms. Culbert were appointed to vote.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

HEARINGS

Case #ZO2016-00002

Map 30 Lot 11-111

RODRIGUES, Joseph - 124 Westshore Drive - Seeking an Appeal from the Zoning Administrator rendered on January 6, 2016 for the issuance of a building permit renewal #2014-00502-1-RN at 124 Westshore Drive concerning Pelham's Zoning Ordinance Article XIII, Section 307-80 questioning Board of Health Chapter 295-4. New Hampshire Statutes RSA 485-A:38 and the error on review of building permit (applicant submitted misinformation).

Mr. Ouellette stated he had done business with Mr. Rodrigues in the past. He had reviewed the case information and past meeting minutes and he wanted to know if the Board had any objection to him remaining seated. Mr. Hennessey replied a recusal was the member's decision. He asked Mr. Ouellette if he recused himself on the first hearing. Mr. Ouellette answered yes; he recused himself because he was the contractor. He felt the matter in front of the Board was completely different. Mr. Hennessey reiterated it was up to Mr. Ouellette whether or not to recuse himself. Mr. Ouellette recused himself and sat in the audience.

With the Board having four seated members, Mr. Hennessey informed they would contact Bill Kearney via telephone to have a full five-member Board. He telephoned Mr. Kearney. Mr. Hennessey confirmed that Mr. Kearney could hear the proceeding and that the public could hear Mr. Kearney by placing a microphone over the telephone.

Mr. Joseph Rodrigues came forward to discuss his request for appeal. He was protesting the issuance of a building permit to the owner of 124 Westshore Drive (previously known as 13 Westshore Drive – the Town renumbered for E911). He voiced concern about the vulnerability of the Little Island Pond water quality. He was seeking reassurance from the Town, working with the Department of Environmental

Services ('DES') to verify that 124 Westshore Drive would not compromise water quality. He stated he had uncovered many 'red flags' that made him skeptical and hoped once evidence was presented the Board would create a verification plan. He reviewed the application for building permit (received November 3, 2014 by the Planning Department), noting item #8 relative to the property or structure being located in a Wetland Conservation District ('WCD') was left blank.

Mr. Hennessey pointed out that #14 relative to if the proposed work was within 250ft. of Beaver Brook, Little Island, Gumpas, Long or Harris Ponds was marked 'Yes'. The applicant correctly identified that the property was located within 250ft. of one of the Town's great ponds. Mr. Rodrigues noted that the October 17, 2013 hearing notice stated: "The current residential building is nine (9) feet over the WCD buffer/setbacks to Little Island Pond." He questioned where the septic would be located if the house was in the WCD. He went back to #14 of the application for building permit which indicates if a 'Yes' answer is provided for work being done within 250ft of the ponds, a DES Shoreline application approval or written exemption from DES must be provided. The permit indicates no approval was sought by DES through a note that reads No approval needed per NHDES. Mr. Rodrigues told the Board nothing was in the file. He further indicated he met with the DES Compliance Supervisor and was assured that DES never gives verbal approvals. He then referred to a DES information sheet titled 'Got Permits?' that informs prior to building a residential dwelling or expanding living space an applicant needs approvals for septic system construction and septic system operation. He said a new rule was put into operation during 2015 was RSA 485-A:38 and read aloud a portion of which. He noted there was no septic system design on file with the Town and the applicant proposed to increase the number of bathrooms. Mr. Rodrigues referenced a lot-line adjustment plan dated August 21, 2013 and questioned the location and integrity of the septic system. He reiterated he wanted assurances from the Town. Mr. Hennessey responded by saying the Board doesn't give assurances. He said the matter in front of the Board was an appeal of an Administrative Decision to issue a building permit. Mr. Rodrigues understood. He commented that approximately 90% of the information he presented to the Board was contained in the Planning Department files. He was confused why someone didn't see that the information didn't look right. Mr. Hennessey told Mr. Rodrigues he could speak with the Town Administrator of concerns.

Mr. Gowan spoke to the request for appeal. He wanted it to be understood that part of the application was reference to the fact that the owner (Richard Hanlon) had gone in front of the Zoning Board and received a variance to allow an expansion of a structure (not an expansion of the building footprint) with no additional bedrooms. He noted septic loading had no relation to the number of bathrooms in a structure; it was the number of bedrooms.

Mr. Hennessey confirmed Mr. Kearney was still connected via telephone and able to hear the proceedings. Mr. Kearney answered yes via telephone.

Mr. Gowan believed there was ample testimony during the Zoning meetings. He said during those hearings the question was raised as to whether the structure would be seasonal or year-round. The response was that the structure was seasonal and would remain so. The applicant understood there was a different process for the structure to become year-round. Mr. Gowan told the Board that based on the Zoning Board's decision, a building permit was signed-off. He noted that Mr. Hanlon didn't actively engage in construction right away, but came in within the one-year time period to seek a renewal.

Mr. Gowan stated the Planning Department didn't take the installation of septic systems or water quality of the pond lightly. He told the Board he didn't enforce State or Federal Regulations when they aren't ensconced within the Town's Regulations. The authority of septics and the Shoreline Protection Act was entirely with the DES.

Property owner Richard Hanlon and his counsel Attorney Sumner Kalman came forward. Attorney Kalman told the Board he had been engaged to ensure Mr. Hanlon's interests were preserved. He

understood the subject of the appeal was in relation to the basis of issuing the building permit through the Zoning Board issuing a variance (dated November 14, 2013). He stated there had been no appeal from Mr. Rodrigues or anyone else, of that Variance granted by the Zoning Board. He noted the permit itself was issued January 2, 2015. Per Zoning Ordinance, Section 307-85 indicates an appeal of such must be submitted in writing within 30-days from issuance. There were no appeals. Attorney Kalman said the trigger for the current proceeding was that Mr. Hanlon had been ill and not able to do the construction as he planned to in January, 2015. He recognized the permit would expire, so he came to the Town and requested a renewal of the permit.

Attorney Kalman didn't feel the Zoning Board had jurisdiction over the case because Mr. Rodrigues didn't bring his appeal in a timely fashion. Mr. Hennessey confirmed it was Attorney Kalman's opinion that the original permit was extended (renewed) and did not constitute a de novo (brand new) approval; it was a continuance without interruption. Attorney Kalman stated it was a timely request for renewal and the renewal was granted in a normal course; there was no gap in the permit, it continued with the renewal. He said the appeal seemed to be challenging the decision to issue the permit; however the timeframe for appeal had come and gone. In analyzing the submission, he believed the first question was if the Board of Adjustment had jurisdiction over the appeal. Based on the Zoning Ordinance, it was Attorney Kalman's opinion that the appeal timeframe had ended February 2, 2015 and the Board did not have jurisdiction.

Attorney Kalman told the Board that Mr. Hanlon had assistance from the Planning Department in filling out the building permit. From a legal standpoint, he felt the issues brought up by Mr. Rodrigues were erroneous. He explained the Statute Mr. Hanlon referred to (485-A:38) was in relation to a structure that's occupied on a full-time basis. He stated the addition was not an expansion in a building being used on a full-time basis. The property is seasonal and adheres to the restrictive requirements for such. Attorney Kalman didn't feel Mr. Gowan made an error. With regard to septic and septic load, the State looks to the number of bedrooms, not bathrooms. The 'load' is not significant when a structure is not occupied on a full-time basis. Attorney Kalman further pointed out that there was no change in the building's footprint or have construction within the WCD area. The expansion would be on the second floor. Section #8 was not filled out on the application for building permit because there was no construction within the WCD.

Aside from Attorney Kalman's opinion that the Board didn't have jurisdiction, he didn't feel Mr. Gowan made an error. Rather, he felt that Mr. Gowan had thoroughly analyzed and reviewed the information and variance. He said there was nothing that represented any erroneous behavior. He requested that the Board dismiss the appeal.

Mr. Gowan informed the Board that Mr. Hanlon had a State approved septic system on the property. He said the septic system was located on the street side of the property. Mr. Hennessey stated the Board was familiar with the property since had conducted a site walk at the time they were considering the variance.

Ms. Paliy informed the Board that she believed parties in the case were former Happy Trees customers (her family's business). Mr. Hennessey asked if she felt she had conflict. Ms. Paliy replied it was many years ago. Mr. Hennessey didn't see any conflict. There were no objections to Ms. Paliy remaining seated. Mr. Hennessey commented (as he had during the initial variance hearing) that his wife's cousin owned property two doors down from the parties. He didn't feel there was an issue. There were no objection to Mr. Hennessey remaining seated.

Mr. McNamara understood Attorney Kalman's argument that Mr. Rodrigues was precluded from appealing renewal because he didn't appeal the initial building permit. Attorney Kalman replied he didn't believe the Board had jurisdiction to hear the appeal. In following the Zoning Ordinance an appeal is to be submitted within thirty days. Mr. McNamara said his only problem was that Mr. Gowan issued a renewal of the building permit. By Attorney Kalman's reasoning, he said Mr. Rodrigues would have no

recourse if he wished to appeal the renewal. Attorney Kalman said if there was substantive basis for the renewal being erroneous he would have a basis for appeal within thirty days on the decision that was made. He saw no evidence of there being anything erroneous in the renewal. He said it would be a different story if there was a gap in the permit with a reapplication for such.

Mr. Hennessey asked Mr. Gowan if there was any substantive change on the permit during the renewal process. Mr. Gowan replied there was no change whatsoever. He noted that the department's computer system raises a flag when a permit is about to expire so they can notify the applicant. Mr. Hanlon stated he didn't receive a call or a letter; he came in on his own to extend the permit. From Mr. Gowan's response, Mr. Hennessey understood there had been a simple renewal.

Mr. Lance Ouellette, 13 Gaston Road questioned if the permit had expired prior to it being renewed. He wanted to know if Mr. Rodrigues had recourse to file an appeal if the permit actually expired. Mr. Hennessey said testimony indicated that the permit was renewed on the same basis it had been applied for. Mr. Gowan stated the renewal was sought before the permit expired. Mr. Ouellette understood that the Planning Office required a current septic system on file that met the Town and State requirements. From what he heard, the Planning Office didn't have a septic system on file when the permit was issued and subsequently found one.

Ms. Deborah Ruffiange, 136 Westshore Drive was concerned about the footage between the septic system and the pond. Mr. Hennessey explained that the Board had to first address Attorney Kalman's point regarding the Board's jurisdiction. He indicated during testimony in the variance hearing, the Board was told that the work being done was not in the WCD setback.

Mr. Rodrigues believed the building permit expired. He said the initial permit was issued on January 2nd, and the renewal was issued a year later on January 6th. He noted the question about receiving a DES permit or exemption remained unanswered. He wanted to know why there was a question on the Town's application if it was a State issue. In reference to the RSA, Mr. Rodrigues said he was referencing an expansion, not the status of the structure (being seasonal or year-round).

Mr. Hennessey stated the Board had to address the question of if the Board had jurisdiction.

Mr. McNamara was troubled with possibly precluding Mr. Rodrigues' ability to appeal the renewal. He confirmed there was nothing different in the renewal from the original permit. He recalled during the variance hearing the expansion of the building itself was not a point on contention, it was the placement of the gazebo so close to the edge of water. Mr. Hennessey felt the matter in front of the Board was whether they had jurisdiction.

Mr. McNamara asked Mr. Gowan if the initial building permit approval lapsed. It was Mr. Gowan's recollection that the permit had not lapsed. Mr. Hanlon told the Board that he went into the Planning Department at the end of December to request an extension, prior to the expiration of the permit in January. He said Town office staff telephoned and informed the permit was ready and could be picked up after the holidays. Attorney Kalman called attention to the form filled out and commented if the application was something other than a typical renewal a different form would have been used.

Mr. Hennessey asked the Board to vote on whether they felt they had jurisdiction.

A vote in the affirmative indicates an agreement that the Board did NOT have jurisdiction. (in other words - Yes, the Board has no jurisdiction, or No, the Board has jurisdiction)

VOICE VOTE: The Board does not have jurisdiction.

ROLL CALL: Unanimous vote in the affirmative that the Board did Not have jurisdiction.

Mr. Hennessey stated that the appeal would not be acted on. The Board did not have jurisdiction.

The Board ended the telephone call with Mr. Kearney.

Mr. Ouellette returned to the Board.

Case #ZO2016-00001

Map 22 Lot 8-130

KIRKPATRICK, Francis III & Cynthia - 52 Windham Road - Seeking an Appeal from the Decision of Zoning Administrator rendered on December 2, 2015 stating that the 52 Windham Road application (original and revised) complies with Pelham's Zoning Ordinance Article V, Section 307-18 Table 3 and Article VI uses within the MUZD and prohibited uses of multiple detached dwelling structures per lot.

Frank and Cynthia Kirkpatrick came forward to speak to their request for appeal of the Decision of Zoning Administrator. Ms. Kirkpatrick explained to the Board that they owned and lived at their residence since 2007, which was located within the Mixed Use Zoning District ('MUZD') and next to a mixed use development currently in front of the Planning Board. They were seeking an appeal of the Zoning Administrator rendered on December 2, 2015, which stated that the 52 Windham Road application (original and revised) complied with the Pelham Zoning Ordinance Article V, Section 307-18 Table 3 and Article VI uses within the MUZD and prohibited uses of multiple detached dwelling structures per lot. The letter attached to the Decision stated that the process of the Administrative Decision would help inform and improve the way future applications are interpreted and handled. Ms. Kirkpatrick noted the 52 Windham Road project was the first within the MUZD. She described the original project submission that consisted of a 1500SF retail building with fifteen residential townhouse units build within six detached dwelling structures; the revised plan (submitted November 2, 2015) depicted a 2000SF retail building with fourteen townhouse units built within five detached dwelling structures. In attending the Planning Board meeting, she said it had become clear that board members questioned and disagreed with whether the project complied with the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Kirkpatrick stated that the basis for their appeal was that the Administrative Decision didn't address the concerns and issues that arose from the November 2nd Planning Board meeting. She said the discussions questioned the definition of 'structures' per lot. The Decision defined 'buildings' and 'dwellings' but did not address the question surrounding the word 'structures'. The second reason for the appeal was Mr. Gowan's position stated that the project (original and revised) complied with Pelham's Zoning Ordinance Article V, Sections 307-18, Table 3 Uses within the MUZD and Article V-I Mixed-use Zoning Overlay District. She said the (original and revised) plans contained multiple buildings per lot. Ms. Kirkpatrick said if passed, 52 Windham Road would consist of a 2000SF retail structure and 5-6 detached dwelling structures consisting of approximately 14-15 townhouses. She believed a single townhouse structure containing multi-family residences adjacent to, or attached residential structure would comply with the current Table 3. The project calls for retail buildings adjacent to multiple dwelling structures that are detached from one another and should be prohibited from the project, and future projects that may be submitted in the MUZD.

Mr. McNamara was confused given the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Kirkpatrick testified during the Planning Board meeting that the height of the building was their primary concern. Ms. Kirkpatrick replied at the time of the last Planning Board meeting they had already submitted their appeal. She said the concern at the last meeting was about the proposed building height. Mr. McNamara wanted them to realize if their appeal was successful, the applicant may submit a plan with a huge building (as long and wide as possible) 40ft. in height. Ms. Kirkpatrick replied the Planning Board would have to approve a project that

fit within a traditional downtown area. She noted a huge building containing a number of townhouses wouldn't fit.

Mr. Kirkpatrick stated they wrestled with the decision to submit the appeal. He said the reason they came forward was for the betterment of the MUZD and for future projects. Ms. Kirkpatrick understood a vote would be taken to amend the Table because there was clearly concern for how it was interpreted. She noted the 52 Windham Road project was grandfathered, so they were trying to work with it.

Mr. Hennessey said he had been involved with the subcommittee that drafted the Ordinance and it wasn't until they were through that they realized there were multiple interpretations. He apologized for that situation. Mr. McNamara stated the Board was interpreting the wording, not anyone's intent.

Mr. Ouellette questioned if there was a current Planning Board application. Mr. McNamara replied it was still pending. Mr. Ouellette understood Mr. Hennessey was involved with the subcommittee that drafted the Ordinance and Mr. McNamara was the chair of the Planning Department. He questioned if there was any conflict. Mr. Hennessey answered no; the Board was only dealing with the interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Kirkpatrick spoke of the Planning Board process. He felt the Administrative Decision came down to wipe the slate clean because there was conflict within the Planning Board about the definition of words. He hoped the process would provide clarification going forward. Mr. McNamara noted that the issue didn't come up until the Planning Board's second or third meeting of the case. Mr. Hennessey reiterated the Zoning Board was not addressing the Planning Board's decision; they were making a decision regarding the interpretation of the Ordinance. Mr. Gowan spoke about what was allowed within the Ordinance, and how/why the Decision was drafted. He stated he went through the language and confirmed what he felt was overwhelming evidence of allowed uses; the Planning Board has chosen to remove the column list of disallowed uses and remove that ambiguity. He pointed out that the MUZD was new zoning and density was left entirely to the Planning Board for determination. He said there were still questions for the Planning Board; however, in terms of the application of the words in Zoning, he felt it was compliant. He said the discussion was on a narrow point in the Zoning. It was only about whether or not the units had to all be attached, or if they could be physically separate.

Mr. Kirkpatrick told the Board their point was to go specifically to the language of the Administrative Decision. He said the MUZD was a recent Ordinance from 2014 that clearly stated 'multiple detached dwelling structures'. He felt the depiction of the project clearly showed six detached buildings.

Ms. Kirkpatrick noted Mike Sherman, who was a Planning Board member and subcommittee member, stated during the Planning Board meeting that the Ordinance read how it was meant to be read. The subcommittee didn't want multiple structures on a property. Given this, she believed there was a reason for the subcommittee including a prohibited column. Mr. Kirkpatrick felt anyone looking at the plans would clearly see multiple detached dwelling structures.

Mr. Hennessey opened discussion to public input.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Mike Sherman, Old Bridge Street stated he was an alternate Planning Board member and was the only Planning Board member who resided in the MUZD. He also helped craft the MUZD language. He was unhappy with what he saw and how things were turning out. He felt the words in the Ordinance were parsed to fit what they (the Board) wanted them to be. With respect, he believed there was a conflict with Mr. McNamara sitting in on the Zoning Board's hearing. He said the Planning Board held a vote to uphold Mr. Gowan's Administrative Decision, with this he questioned how Mr. McNamara could then

vote regarding an appeal of the Decision he was in favor of upholding. He suggested Mr. McNamara should recuse himself. Mr. Hennessey stated the request was valid; however, per the Regulations, the only person to decide whether or not to recuse themselves is the member.

Mr. Sherman questioned what buildings were currently on the property. Mr. McNamara wanted to know how that pertained to the case being heard by the Zoning Board. Mr. Sherman replied it dealt with the meaning of the written determination. He said currently there were two buildings; a house and a detached garage. The proposal in front of the Planning Board was for a commercial building and five townhouse buildings, which constituted multiple detached building. He said common sense review of how the ordinance was drafted was clear there were to be no multiple detached buildings.

Mr. Tim Doherty, 29 Wood Road stated he was an alternate Planning Board member and Chair of the subcommittee that wrote the MUZD Ordinance and Chair of the subcommittee tasked with 're-looking' at the Ordinance. He heard Mr. Sherman reference the word 'building'. He called attention to Table 3 of the Ordinance which didn't include the word 'building', and instead referenced the word 'structure' (specifically 'dwelling structure'). He displayed the page within the Ordinance containing Table 3 and spoke about the allowed uses column that listed items that could cross over into the prohibited uses column. Mr. Doherty referenced the sentence in the Administrative Decision that read '...the reference to Multiple detached dwelling structures per lot under Table 3 Prohibited Uses does not apply because the proposed uses are plainly allowed in the Allowed Uses column'. He reiterated there were a lot of 'allowed uses' that could also be considered 'prohibited uses', it was for this reason he believed the Decision was wrong. Mr. Doherty used the Highland Apartments as an example of buildings being attached at the corners creating one massive structure. He said the structure was the entirety, the buildings contained the individual units. He noted the descriptive words weren't interchangeable. In taking the strict words under the prohibitive uses column, it reads detached dwelling structures per lot; the Decision indicates Mr. Gowan interpreted the words 'dwelling' and 'building' to have the same meaning. Mr. Doherty said if 'dwelling' and 'building' had the same meaning, a lot couldn't have things like a gazebo, a bus stop building or detached garage, which was never the intent of Zoning. He also spoke about 'use' and noted a building was not the use, a dwelling was the use. He believed the Ordinance was clear and the Administrative Decision was not. Further he said the words 'building' and 'dwelling' were not interchangeable.

Mr. Hennessey left public input open, but brought the discussion back to the Board.

From the explanations the Board heard, Mr. McNamara said it was evidence that the wording of the Ordinance was at its best ambiguous. This was one reason why the Planning Board voted to remove the Prohibitive Uses column. He said if they were to impose an ambiguous interpretation, they would be on shaky legal ground.

Ms. Paliy questioned if the issue had previously come in front of the Board. Mr. Hennessey answered no, Ms. Paliy questioned if the proposal went along with the look of the Town and what had been approved in the past. Mr. Gowan replied the Town had never had an MUZD application. He said it was alleged that the Administrative Decision was tailored to fit the project (at 52 Windham Road). To the contrary, he said the project was tailored to fit the Zoning. He said Mr. Doherty's point reinforced the reason why the Planning Board voted to remove the prohibited uses column. Mr. Gowan stated the Planning Board had wide authority within the MUZD. He noted a dwelling structure was always a building, although a building was not always a dwelling structure. He didn't base his Decision on his recollection of what they put out for zoning, but rather how to interpret the words on their face. He said Zoning didn't define dwelling unit; the word 'building' was the closest it came, therefore he made reference to such in his Decision. He said he found nothing within the International Building Code that conflicted with that simple comparison.

Mr. Ouellette understood the Board was hearing a request for an appeal of Administrative Decision. He felt the wording in Zoning "multiple detached dwelling structures per lot" was clear and when comparing to the plan, there were multiple detached dwelling structures per lot. He saw that the word 'building' was not contained within Table 3 and felt there was a simple error in the language of the Decision. In considering all the testimony, Mr. Ouellette believed it was clear based on the words that the Board should uphold the appeal. The Board briefly spoke about the language in Table 3 and agreed it was ambiguous.

Mr. Hennessey stated he would reluctantly vote to overturn the Decision. He acknowledged the Ordinance was poorly written and took partial blame for such. He felt the prohibited use column should remain and disagreed with its removal. He said it was particularly important in this case and had never thought townhouses were anything but attached row houses (with separate entrances). He thought they had further illuminated that concept by including 'multiple detached dwelling units' in the prohibited uses. He apologized for his part in the language. Mr. McNamara pointed out that people had different understandings of what the language meant. He said the problem was that the words in the Ordinance and the Table were ambiguous as presented. He felt the Planning Board's hands would be tied by denying the Administrative Decision. Mr. Ouellette pointed out Zoning clearly stated 'multiple detached dwelling structures per lot' in the prohibited uses column.

Mr. Hennessey stated the Board would be making a difficult decision, there was no ill will toward anyone.

A vote in the affirmative meant the Board would overturn the Administrative Decision. A vote in opposition would uphold the Administrative Decision.

VOICE VOTE: The Board will overturn the Administrative Decision.

ROLL CALL: Voting in the affirmative (to overturn the Administrative Decision) were:

Mr. Hennessey, Ms. Paliy and Mr. Ouellette.

Voting in opposition (to deny the appeal) were: Mr. McNamara and Ms. Culbert.

Mr. Hennessey stated the Administrative Decision was overturned by a 3-2 vote.

MINUTES REVIEW

January 11, 2016:

MOTION: (McNamara/Paliy) To approve the January 11, 2016 meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (McNamara/Paliy) To adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: (5-0-0) The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted, Charity A. Landry Recording Secretary