

LITCHFIELD ZONING BOARD
TOWN OF LITCHFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
NOVEMBER 11, 2009

ZBA Members Attending (Indent if Absent):

Richard Riley, Chairman

Laura Gandia, Vice Chairman

John Regan

Albert Guilbeault

Tom Cooney, Clerk

Gregory Lepine (alternate)

John Devereaux (alternate)

Eric Cushing (alternate)

John Brunelle (alternate)

I. Call to Order

- Richard Riley calls the meeting to order at 7:08 pm. Meeting was published at Town Hall.
- Laura Gandia takes attendance.

II. Acceptance of New Applications

There are no new applications.

III. Hearings

There are no new hearings.

IV. Communications and Miscellaneous Business.

- **Review and Approval of Minutes for October 14, 2009.**

John Regan makes a motion to approve the Minutes for October 14, 2009.

Laura Gandia seconds the motion.

The Board votes in favor of the motion 4-0-1

Mr. Cooney abstains from voting, as he was not present for the meeting.

- **Discussion about increasing ZBA application fees.**

In preparation for this evening's discussion, past records had been researched by Mr. Riley and Mrs. Dabrowski for the costs of publication of hearing notices in the Hudson/Litchfield News and the Nashua Telegraph, the postage costs for mailing abutter notices, as well as administrative costs for document preparation and minutes of ZBA meetings.

The publication costs for the last three years were as follows:

2007 - \$82.47 (average per ad)

- 2008 - \$91.36 (average per ad)
- 2009 - \$161.98 (average per ad)

The cumulative average cost for publication of hearing notices was \$110.00. It was noted that publishing costs for the Nashua Telegraph were higher than those of the Hudson/Litchfield News, however, there were times when publishing in the Telegraph was the only option, due to the availability of publication dates with the HLN.

The costs for mailing abutter notices via certified mail are currently being paid for by the applicant. Those costs vary based on the number of abutters and the postage rates at the time of mailing. Other postage costs would be under administrative fees for sending the notice of decision to the applicant.

The Board then turned their attention to the administrative costs of applications, from the original application and the actual hearing to the final notice of decision. In reviewing the salary of the Recording Secretary, the Board proposed a new rate of \$20.00/hour to bring the salary more in line with the rates of other Boards. The costs were broken down as follows:

Recording of Meetings - Avg. 1.5 hrs.	\$ 30.00
Cost to prepare hearing notice	7.00
Cost of publishing hearing notice	110.00
Administrative Costs	40.00
Transcription of minutes (3 hr. min.)	60.00
Preparation of Notice of Decision - ½ hr.	<u>10.00</u>
 Average cost for case preparation	 \$257.00

There was a proposal to increase the application fees to cover all costs associated with hearing a case. Further discussion lead to considering the possibility of the Town shouldering some portion of the costs. A second proposal was made which split the administrative costs 50/50 between the Town and the Applicant. Mrs. Gandia took an action item to research what surrounding towns were charging for ZBA fees and report back to the Board. A decision was made to table this discussion until next month’s meeting.

• Discussion about scheduling a follow-up meeting with Ethics Formation Committee.

The Board briefly discussed the previous meeting with the Ethics Formation Committee. There were still a number of questions that remain unanswered after the previous meeting however the Board members agreed that scheduling another meeting at this time was not necessary. Mr. Riley indicated he would continue to pass on information from the Formation Committee as it was made available to him. Mr. Riley also reminded the Board that the Formation Committee has a location on the town web site and members were encouraged to regularly visit the site and view the information being posted there.

• Discussion about scheduling annual meeting with other Boards (Planning, Conservation Committee, other?)

It had been proposed that the Zoning Board hold an annual meeting with other Boards, especially the Planning Board, Conservation Committee and Code Enforcement Officer. There could be a sharing of information on what their objectives would be in the coming year, and how the Boards could work together in the future.

- **Any other business.**

Mr. Cooney informed the Board that he would be resigning from the Board due to his work interfering with his ability to attend meetings. He expressed a desire to be switched to an Alternate until his situation changed.

There was no other business to come before the Board.

Mr. Guilbeault MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.

Mr. Regan Seconds the Motion.

The Board votes in favor of the motion 5-0-0.

The Zoning Board Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret J. Dabrowski