

# BARRE TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

The Town of Barre Planning Commission held its regular meeting and a public hearing on **Wednesday, March 18, 2015** beginning at **7:00 p.m.** at the **Municipal Building**, Lower Websterville, to consider the following:

## **Members Present:**

Cedric Sanborn                      Charlie Thygesen  
George Clain                        Chris Violette

## **Members Absent:**

Claire Duke                        John Hameline                      Ken Yearman

## **Others Present:**

Rev. John Milanese

## **Staff Present:**

Heidi Bennett – Board Clerk

### 1) **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

None

### 2) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

*Minutes will be approved on April 15, 2015*

### 3) **WARNED PUBLIC HEARINGS (7:05 p.m.)**

## **AGENDA ITEM: ONE (1)**

**Request by Rev. John Milanese for the allowed use determination to move his existing driveway to the north side of his dwelling and add an additional curb-cut creating a looped driveway for property located at 16 Countryside Circle; Parcel ID 009/114.29; Zoned: HDR; AU-15000001**

Enclosures: Written request and two drawings submitted by the applicant

Consultant:

Date: 3-13-15

### **STAFF REPORT/REVIEW COMMENTS FROM CHRIS VIOLETTE, PLANNING OFFICER**

This is a warned public hearing for the purpose of reviewing the applicant's desire to have more than one curb-cut accessing his property on Countryside Circle. Every lot (for the most part) is entitled to one access to a Town road. Beyond one access, the Planning Commission is the entity authorized to grant additional

ones. Harry, Barre Town's Engineer, is the staff person designated by the Select Board to issue curb-cut permits. Harry has reviewed this request and provided thoughts and guidance.

The location of the subject lots is in a high density residential zone with medium sized lots in a residential development. The applicant currently has access to the Town road by way of an easement granted to him by the Town of Barre. The actual access is a strip of land left as part of the development for potential future connection to Lague Drive. The strip of land is also used by one other dwelling for access.

The applicant would like to eliminate using the current access and create two new curb-cuts to access what would be a newly constructed garage attached to the existing house. The curb-cuts would enable a looped driveway. The applicant has numerous reasons for wanting to relocate his driveway. One reason is the cost of maintaining the existing driveway and not receiving compensation from the other user for the maintenance. Another reason is it would make access to the oil fill pipe more convenient.

Harry is providing guidance with regard to this request. Things like curb-cut separation as it relates to the second curb-cut and curb-cuts of others and how those curb-cuts could potentially cause conflict or confusion for the traveling public are things to consider. I'll let Harry offer his opinion but I will add that this is a lightly traveled road with a 25MPH speed limit.

The only other thing I will add is that if this request is granted, the applicant should relinquish his right to use the Town strip of land and block of the existing curb-cut. If not, there would technically be three curb-cuts to this parcel and that is not what is being asked for.

**STAFF REPORT /REVIEW COMMENTS FROM HARRY HINRICHSEN**  
**TOWN ENGINEER**

I have reviewed the request as submitted from Reverend Milanese for a change of driveway location and a second curb cut off Countryside Circle.

This request comes as a result of Reverend Milanese's plan to reconfigure his garage and driveway arrangement. He currently uses a shared driveway off Countryside Circle that lies within a strip of Town owned land situated off the southwest corner of the Town maintained road. The neighbors across the way share that access but according to Rev. Milanese don't share in the cost of maintenance particularly when it comes to winter plowing.

The Milanese residence has both propane and fuel oil tanks located near the front corners of the house. The new driveway would provide for better access to these two points. The new driveway would also allow for better winter egress from the home as well as it is difficult to clear the snow from the walkway.

This lot has over 107 feet of frontage on Countryside Circle. I do not have a safety issue or any other design concern or reason for denying this request.

One issue does exist with regards to the current access. There is an official easement between Rev. Milanese and the Town for use of the strip of land as a primary access. This easement would no longer be needed if the double curb cut driveway arrangement is approved directly off Countryside Drive.

**The current easement across the Town owned parcel should be rescinded and officially recorded as such in the Clerk' Land Records if this request is approved.**

I would recommend this request receive favorable review.

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS & CONDITIONS:**

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

CV gave a summary of this agenda item with key point that the existing curb-cut be eliminated. This request is for two curb-cuts and that if the existing one is allowed to remain there would be three curb-cuts.

CV stated that he needs to hear testimony from Rev. Milanese before he can make a recommendation.

Sanborn asked about the next land owner who would want to use the garage; CV stated the easement will have to be turned back over to the town and the existing driveway to the garage torn up and reseeded.

Rev. Milanese stated that a looped driveway is much safer for him so that he doesn't have to back out. He lost vision in his right eye and is not safe for him to back out onto the road.

Clain isn't in favor of a looped driveway, but is agreeable to adding another driveway.

CV stated that he doesn't have an issue with the looped driveway, but doesn't want to set a precedent. Either the looped driveway is approved and the original driveway goes away or one additional curb-cut is added and the original stays.

**On a motion by Clain to allow a second single curb-cut for the new garage. However, the applicant wants to design the driveway internally in order to pick up egress to the front and access to the oil fill is up to him. No alterations to the original driveway is necessary, seconded by Violette and approved unanimously after discussion.**

### **DISCUSSION:**

Thyssen stated that the looped driveway is much safer and there is already one in the neighborhood.

Sanborn and Clain indicated that they're not in favor of creating a looped driveway as it sets a precedent.

The Planning Commission offered an alternative of keeping the original driveway and adding a second in the front to access the oil fill. Applicant was agreeable.

### **MOTION PASSED**

#### **4) ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT(S):**

CV handed out a list of potential updates that need to take place.

#### **5) OTHER:**

#### **6) CORRESPONDENTS:**

#### **7) ROUND TABLE:**

#### **8) ADJOURN!**

*On a motion by Thygesen, seconded by Sanborn, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting of March 18, 2015 at 7:51 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi Bennett

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Cedric Sanborn, Chair

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John Hameline

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Charlie Thygesen Sr.

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Ken Yearman

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Chris Violette

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Claire Duke

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George Clain

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