

St. George Planning Board Meeting  
7PM at Town Office and via Zoom  
October 11, 2022  
Minutes

The Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Planning Board Members present were Chair Anne Cox, Anne Cogger, Richard Moskowitz, Michael B. Jordan, Jane Brown, Alison Briggs and Mary K. Hewlett. Also present were: CEO Terry Brackett, Chip Bauer and Sara Allenwood of Harbor Builders, Marcell Villiere, Keith Bradoc Gallant and Richard Bates.

Present via Zoom were Alexa and Jerry Cunningham, Loreen Meyer, Riley Pratt, Alex Rosenthal, and Joanna Waley-Cohen.

**Quorum**

A quorum was present.

**Conflict of Interest:**

There were no conflicts of interest.

**Adjustments to Agenda:**

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

**Public Comments:**

There were no public comments.

**Review of the Minutes:**

Cogger moved to approve the September 27, 2022 Planning Board meeting minutes as corrected, seconded by Hewlett. By a 5-0 vote, the minutes were approved.

**Building Permits**

**Change Big Thunder to an accessory structure within the Buffer Zone. 14 Vannah Rd.  
Map 103, Lot 14**

**Chip Bauer**

I am Chip Bauer of Harbor Builders. We delivered the updated document we talked about last time. I believe Riley is online and he can answer any questions or Alex and I can help. I'll be glad to do that.

Most of us know each other in here and Sara Allenwood is my project manager who will be running the project.

Chair Cox said that various portions under the “property information” section of the town’s application form did not contemplate a project in which an existing structure is to be altered and a new structure is to be built. With that in mind, she requested changes to the applicants’ responses under the headings “setbacks,” “number of dwelling units,” “number of stories,” “height of buildings,” and “number of bedrooms.” Mr. Pratt consented to those changes on behalf of the applicants, and Chair Cox endorsed them on the application.

### **Footprint of Existing Cottage**

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Brown, the Board found, by a unanimous vote, that the project will comply with section 12.C.1.a of the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and therefore the standard of no expansion has been met.

### **Use of Existing Cottage**

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Cogger, the Board found, by a unanimous vote, that the proposal does not constitute a change of use and therefore the standard has been met. Neither “use” nor “change of use” is defined in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, but the Board believes that converting the cottage from a dwelling to a place where the residents of a new dwelling on the same lot can relax and entertain does not alter the exclusively residential character of the property taken as a whole. And assuming for argument’s sake that the proposal could be characterized as a change of use, the Board finds that the project obviously meets the requirement of section 12.C.5 that “the new use will have no greater adverse impact on the St. George River or on the subject or adjacent properties and resources than the existing use.”

### **Clearing of Vegetation**

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Hewlett, the Board found, by a unanimous vote, that the project will comply with section 15.P of the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and that the standard has been met as the applicants propose to remove vegetation from a total of 7,310 square feet of the lot to accommodate the new residence and new septic field and the entire area to be cleared is located more than 75 feet from the river. In addition to the 7,310-square-foot area proposed to be cleared for the new residence and septic field, the application reflects that 2,620 square feet of the lot have been previously cleared, resulting in a total of 9,930 square feet of cleared area when the project is completed. This is within the 10,000-square-foot allowance provided by section 15.P.4.

### **Lot Coverage**

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Cogger, the Board, by a unanimous vote, that upon completion of the project, that the total area that will be covered by buildings, parking lots, and other non-vegetated surfaces will be approximately 5,820 square feet, or approximately 17 percent of the 34,414-square-foot area of the lot, and therefore the requirement of section 15.B.6 of the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance has been met.

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Brown, the Board, by a unanimous vote, accepted the application as complete.

On a motion by Jordan, seconded by Cogger, the Board, by a unanimous vote, approved the application.

**Marcell Valliere – Renovate Dwelling, add generator, propane tank and heat pumps  
68 Main St., Map 104 – Lot 040**

**Marcel Valliere**

My clients are Alexa and Jerry. I'm sure all of you know this lot thoroughly. It is so prominent in town. We are looking to renovate the building to keep the same number of dwellings that are currently in it but instead of side by side, we want to put one over the other. We want to extensively renovate one space currently and minimally change the second-floor level in order to not have the costs exceed the comforts for my clients. At a later date, if everything goes well, we can come back and put forth another application to renovate that space more holistically. On the second floor, we don't plan on redoing the windows or redoing all of the insulation on the interior but for the first-floor unit, we do want to strip it all the way back to the studs, install new windows, full insulation, and bring every bit of the building up to code. On the second floor everything would be built to code as well, but we would be renovating so it wouldn't require updating insulation at this time.

**Brown**

Will the second floor still be a rental unit?

**Marcel Valliere**

Yes, it'll be a single unit with two bedrooms and right now there's a single bathroom on that floor. We would like to add a half bathroom laundry combination to that space along with a kitchen because currently both kitchens are on the first floor so we are moving things around some. I tried to illustrate that in a way that would be as easily understood as possible, but I might be able to explain it if there's any questions. The shaded areas on page 3.2 show the spaces that we don't plan on touching for the renovation which is substantial on the upstairs. The only places that we are renovating are removal of a bathroom which is now going to be included in the living room space. We're moving that bathroom to where it's labeled half bathroom, where it has the washer and dryer. That's sharing the wet wall between the kitchen area so that we can keep all the plumbing and really minimize the renovation of this whole space by doing it in that one central location. The second bathroom on that floor is in its existing location. The other major change on this floor is regarding the two stairways coming up to the second floor because there are two separate units; both stairways are old and steep. We plan on removing one of them completely and keeping one stairway, that's accessing that unit. It's the wider of the two stairways. It's this balance of taking a large space and make it a better space that is more code compliant without breaking the bank. Compartmentalizing the scope into phases is the best way for us to do that. By moving the forced radiator heat to the heat pumps on this level on the first-floor level, using heat pumps as well along with a gas fireplace, we are able to heat the whole space without having mechanical equipment underneath the building here. This building currently falls in the floodplain zone, so we are trying to be forward thinking with the goal of making this a floodplain compliant building at some point as we move forward with each

little step. By removing all the mechanical from underneath that lower basement space and moving it upstairs, it allows us to have that opportunity as we move forward, which could possibly change insurance requirements for my clients and make the space better. Like I said, we are not trying to tackle the whole project at once. We want to move in a phased approach that makes it manageable for Alexa and Jerry.

The building currently has a third floor that is very rough and unused with attic access only. It's going to remain just as it is except we are cutting through one doorway so that you can access both sides of the upstairs as there is only one stairway now that leads to the third floor. You'll notice that in the plan we are showing, on the water side, where the existing decks are, there's an unheated, existing storage room that connects to what used to be a little outhouse latrine set up for the school many years ago. That space currently has very low ceiling heights and is unfinished. There is a lot of raw space in there. We want to tackle that space at another date when we have more time to put together a better presentation that shows how we're going to use it. So, in this scope of work, all that remains exactly as it is. We're not changing any footprint. We're not changing any floor area. We're not changing the shape of the building from the outside and the volume of space is the same. We will come back to you at a later point, probably next spring, with some ideas of how we would keep the same shape of deck but maybe remove some of that building section to allow for a little bit more deck, making it more compliant by moving the structure further away from the water. We aren't prepared to move forward in that direction at this time. We'd like to phase our way in, in tactical small bits at a time. This was a manageable scope for what we had in mind for this winter's renovation.

**Hewlett**

So, this is truly phase one.

**Marcel Valliere**

I think that's a fair assumption. I think this is an absolutely amazing piece of property and many of you have probably been there in the yard and been to the openings of the gallery. It has a lot of history and an amazing view of the water. To keep the space as it is now which is two dwelling units and maintain that use in a way that enjoys more of that view and access, with the intent of eventually bringing some of that living space back, is going to be a real win for everybody. The site is so nonconforming; there's almost no way to relocate or move things. The city has a right of way through the front end that basically touches the building and the steps and then there are the setbacks off the water. The fact that they were able to get a new septic system a few years ago that's fully compliant and that we're looking to make most of the spaces is exactly what the state in the ordinance is all about. Good steps forward.

**Chair Cox**

It looks like there are only three things that are changing your footprint at all, the generator, the heat pump and the propane tank, all on the exterior.

**Marcel Valliere**

The heat pumps are wall hung external units, so they won't be sitting on the ground. The only things touching the ground would be the generator and the propane tank.

**Chair Cox**

I think it is within tolerable limits.

**Hewlett**

What is the physical address? As an EMT I pay a lot of attention to numbers.

**Marcel Valliere**

Over the door, it says 76 and 78. The survey from Gartley and Dorsky referred to it as 78 Main St. I believe the town calls it 76/78 so we've got many different scenarios here and I don't know the right answer for you.

**Jordan**

Just to make it more confusing Google Maps shows the left half of the Granite Gallery as 68 and the right half of Granite Gallery at 78 which is not what the signs on the front door show.

**Marcel Valliere**

I chose to go with what was shown on the building because I figured that how the community knew it. I figured that the mail was going to those locations because of the numbers on the building. I'm happy to change the application.

**Chair Cox**

Let's stick with the 76 and 78 and just put it in parenthesis 68.

**Hewlett**

Maybe we can add phase one to the original application.

**Chair Cox**

I see on your note that there are presently four bedrooms. The number of bedrooms proposed is three but is the septic system still going to be designed for four?

**Marcel Valliere**

It's currently a four-bedroom septic, and we're just removing one bedroom in the entire building.

**Chair Cox**

Okay, is there anything else that we need to add? Do we have enough information?

On a motion by Brown, seconded by Hewlett, the Board found by unanimous vote, the application accepted as complete.

**Chair Cox**

You're going to be bringing the building up to code, which is a good thing, and particularly the stairs. The additional square footage of the generator, heat pump and propane are 57 square feet which does not

increase the lot coverage beyond tolerable limits. The additions are parallel to the resource; they're not encroaching on the resource. Are there any other issues that we need to be aware of?

**Hewlett**

I don't see a parking schematic.

**Marcel Valliere**

We were not changing the number of dwellings, nor the number of spots so I didn't give you any more information because nothing was changing. We were actually removing bedrooms so less people would be staying in it. I would be happy to give you an addendum to this that would show designated parking spots, but there really are only two spots currently. In the photo on the first page, you can see one car and the second spot would be beside that. Those are the most comfortable spots there. As you've probably seen at openings and other gallery events that happen in the area, it's pretty standard for people to park along the side of the road, even though it is within the setback in the city and along the road.

**Brackett**

The two spots that they use now are the only two spots they have.

On a motion by Hewlett, seconded by Jordan, by unanimous vote, the Board approved the application for the Phase One of construction.

**Chair Cox**

The next thing on the agenda is the permit review for the findings of facts for the Happy Clam/Outback and there's no one here.

**Jordan**

I recuse myself.

**Brackett**

If there is nobody here representing the application, then we probably shouldn't be doing it.

**Hewlett**

Were they notified?

**Brackett**

I believe I sent the regular notice.

**Chair Cox**

Well, I guess we shouldn't do it.

**Hewlett**

I think they are closed for the season.

**Chair Cox**

I'm seeing this as a reporting from Terry but there may be some questions that we need to ask them about whether or not the all the conditions have been met. I believe, unless anybody else has any more wisdom on this; we can't discuss an application without the applicant.

**Moskowitz**

Should we carry this to the next meeting?

**Chair Cox**

Yes, let's carry it to the next meeting.

**Brackett**

I'll make sure that Bill gets notified on this next meeting date.

**Chair Cox**

Do we have anybody here from the American Legion?

**Brackett**

I checked in with Ray but was not able to reach him either, so we don't have anyone here.

**Jordan**

They have already started work on it.

**Brackett**

I was told when they turned the application in that they were going to get started. They are only doing siding and it seems asinine to have to go to the Planning Board for that.

**Chair Cox**

I totally agree. I think that if we ever get our new ordinance going, we will be able to say that projects like that don't require Planning Board approval.

**Jordan**

Why don't we just approve the application?

**Chair Cox**

They're replacing the existing siding with new vinyl siding. We know exactly what's going on because it is visible, exterior work. The application has no mention of windows.

**Cogger**

I would say considering the costs, we should pass this.

**Hewlett**

Construction costs are skyrocketing right now.

On a motion by Cogger, seconded by Brown, the Board determined, by unanimous vote, that the application was complete.

On a motion by Cogger, seconded by Jordan, as the plan is limited to replacing the existing siding with new vinyl siding, it meets all of the twenty performance standards in section V.5 of the Site Plan Review Ordinance, and by unanimous vote, the application was approved.

On a motion from Cogger, seconded by Brown, and by unanimous vote, the Planning Board meeting was adjourned at 7:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Taylor  
Recording Secretary  
Town of St. George, Maine