

**Parsonsfield Planning Board Meeting  
Tuesday, November 21, 2017  
Minutes (Draft)**

**Planning Board Members in Attendance:**

JP Espinosa  
William Ryan (acting chair)  
Nate Stacey  
Richard Sullivan

**CEO David Bower in Attendance**

**Also in attendance:**

Jeff Wright, Alice Espinosa, Carolyn Chute, Michael Chute, Stephen Anderson, Gerard Clifford, Mark Fisher

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Acting Chairman Ryan called the meeting to order at 7:05.

**October Minutes Reviewed and Approved**

The board reviewed the minutes from the October 17, 2017 meeting. CEO Bower had two corrections. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the revised minutes and was seconded by Mr. Espinosa. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Site Plan Review: Mark Fisher, 450 North Road, Map R-5, Lot 30**

**Application for Composting Operation**

**Discussion**

During the October meeting, Chairman Nance agreed to send a letter to Mr. Fisher asking for some additional information on his operation. Mr. Fisher had not received a letter from Chairman Nance requesting the information, so he hadn't sent anything. Mr. Espinosa went through the list verbally with Mr. Fisher:

**1. Hours of Operation Open to the Public**

**Mr. Fisher:** To start, it would be open to the public by appointment. Probably in the spring the hours would be 10-3 or 10-4, with 9-5 being the longest hours.

**2. Hours for Incoming and Outgoing Vehicles**

**Mr. Fisher:** He will try to operate during daylight hours. Some things are beyond their control, but he will try to keep it during the daylight. (His previous business was in Alaska, and they have a different culture there. He will do everything he can to accommodate preferences of the local culture.) As for drop off hours, the private parties are typically people with pickups and trailers who would go through a gate. For the most part, they would be a few trusted people allowed to drop off, and Mr. Fisher would try to accommodate their schedules.

**3. Provide Studies about the composting system**

**Mr. Fisher:** There are university studies on this particular system citing the superiority of the product and some information on odor control. He will email the studies to the Planning Board for review.

**4. Size of Operation**

The State of Maine does not require a permit for composting up to 10,000 cubic yards.

**Mr. Espinosa:** It's hard for any business to know how large it's going to get. However, as a condition of approval, would Mr. Fisher come back to the Planning Board when production exceeds 4,000 cubic yards? This would allow some time for the town members to get a sense of the business and if it's working for the community.

**Mr. Fisher:** Does the town have the authority to restrict the size of agriculture?

**Mr. Espinosa:** The retail business is where this comes in.

**Mr. Fisher:** A farm is not a retail business. He can sell cattle and hay and that would be agricultural. Maine considers agricultural composting as the same.

#### **Discussion:**

##### **Type of compost**

Mr. Fisher: They are not doing sewage sludge. The law is not quite clear, but if he is composting food waste, he can sell 30%, but 70% must go back to the land.

##### **Agricultural vs. Commercial Operation**

**Mr. Fisher:** He is looking to start agricultural and transition to commercial. He's fine with the 4,000 cubic yard limit should he choose to go commercial. If it's agricultural, he can compost all he wants. If he starts taking in leaves and food waste, then he would have to apply 70% back to the land and could sell the remaining 30%. The wood chips used would be just enough to bulk up the manure.

In the conditions, Mr. Fisher would like to clearly acknowledge the agricultural exemptions.

**Mr. Sullivan:** Has concerns about traffic

**Mr. Ryan:** The Board has the most oversight if Mr. Fisher has a commercial permit.

##### **Odor Concerns**

The Board expressed concern about the odors. Although smell generally is considered to be subjective, it can be measured. As an example, Sanford has hired olfactory specialists.

##### **Workshop on December 5**

Since the town is new to this type of operation, the board decided to hold workshop on December 5 at 6:30 p.m. before voting to approve. During the workshop they will consider conditions for approval, including:

1. No fish, no sludge
2. Discuss Types 1B and 1C
3. Procedural way to address smell
4. Periodic check ins as the operation grows

#### **Town Marijuana Ordinance**

Mr. Espinosa reported on the workshop held earlier in the day to discuss how to handle the marijuana issue. The Selectmen are comfortable for the Planning Board to hold a Public Hearing (Informational Hearing?) The Selectmen offered to place a moratorium up until 6 months past what the state has.

##### **Informational Hearing on Tuesday, January 16 at 6:00**

Mr. Espinosa would like to provide an example of what is going to be voted on. He hopes to present a simply stated and clearly mapped out example for the meeting. The text will be taken from the State definitions, and the maps will be broken down into zones. The documents will be available online. Documents have to be available by January 5. Everything needs to be ready for the December meeting.

#### **Other Business**

##### **Videotaping Planning Board Meetings**

Mr. Espinosa is interested videotaping the Planning Board meetings to be posted online.

Mr. Ryan moved to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Stacey. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40.

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Approved

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Date