

Town of Provincetown

Meeting of the WATER & SEWER BOARD

Monday, December 20, 2004

Grace Gouveia Building, 26 Alden Street, Provincetown

Members present: Jonathan Sinaiko, Chair; Anne Lord; Sacha Richter

Members absent: John Ciluzzi (unexcused)

Other attendees:

DPW Staff David Guertin, Dana Faris; Environmental Partners Group Staff Wayne Perry; Health Agent Jane Evans; members of the public and press.

Call to Order

Mr. Sinaiko called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

Request to Reconsider Sewer Connection for Provincetown Art Association and Museum (PAAM)

Prior to taking input from either the applicant or the public on this agenda item, the members made public disclosure of their affiliation with PAAM as follows: Mr. Sinaiko stated that he “believed” he was a member of PAAM because he receives the newsletter. Ms. Lord stated that she is currently a member of PAAM. Mr. Richter stated that, although he was formerly a member of PAAM, he has no current affiliation with the organization. All three members stated that they have no financial interest in PAAM.

Mr. Sinaiko then recognized Christine McCarthy as the authorized representative of the applicant. Ms. McCarthy spoke about the role of PAAM in the community as a cultural institution. Because there have been comments in the press and otherwise criticizing PAAM for its dilatory request to connect to the sewer, Ms. McCarthy stated for the record that she was not in Provincetown at the time of the original period for requesting sewer connections. She also said that, based on the outcry from the community about the elm tree, PAAM has brought in outside consultants to advise it on a strategy for saving the tree. Because there has been discussion about making PAAM’s restrooms available to the public, Ms. McCarthy said that it has been policy in the past to make the restrooms available and commented that on one day this past July 96 people came in to use the said restrooms.

Ms. Lord asked whether PAAM had exhausted all other possibilities for saving the tree. The Health Agent stated that she felt it would be possible to do this by reducing the size of the leaching field. Ms. McCarthy stated that the engineers who have been retained by PAAM are of the opinion that reducing the size of the leach field would not permit saving the tree. She also stated that to reduce the leaching field would require PAAM to go through the Commonwealth and that this process would “take a year.”

Ms. McCarthy stated that, when the renovations are completed, there will be a new shadow box near the relocated front entrance, which will be to the left of the historic building. She also stated that, in the interest of resolving the current impasse, PAAM is willing to place in the shadow box some language in 36-point type to the effect that “PAAM is handicap accessible and the restrooms are open to the public during gallery hours.” Ms. Lord expressed concern that owing to the new shadow box being farther from the street, a sign in 36-point type would not be legible from the street. Ms. Sinaiko expressed a desire that the proposed wording for the shadow box be fewer words and larger type. After some discussion, there was consensus that 72-point type (i.e., one inch high) would be adequate. Mr. Sinaiko then moved to grant PAAM a sewer hook-up subject to working out the details of a sewer connection agreement, which agreement will specify that restrooms are available to the public during gallery hours and that the shadow box contain appropriate language to that effect in one-inch high lettering. Mr. Richter seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 3-0.

Other Business

Ms. Rushmore stated that she felt that water rates were too high and asked when there would be a public hearing at which she could raise this concern. Mr. Sinaiko advised her that, when the last rate increase was adopted, the Board made a commitment not to raise rates for two years and that, therefore, there would be no rate hearing this year. Ms.

Rushmore also asked the Board to reduce the 14% interest rate on unpaid water bills and was informed that because this rate is set by state law in MGL c. 59, it is outside the Board's purview.

Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the board, Mr. Richter moved, seconded by Mr. Sinaiko, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 3-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sacha Richter, Clerk