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**MINUTES OF THE NEW CASTLE PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, October 25th, 2023 – 7:00 p.m. (Town Hall)**

Public Hearing for Applicant William Lomas, 54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37, for a Conditional Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) above an approved garage. Zoning Ordinance 6.6.5.

Members Present: Darcy Horgan, Chair; Lorne Jones; Iain Moodie; Kate Murray.

Members Absent: Anne Crotty; Rich Landry; Bill Stewart.

Others Present: Jim Cerny; Gwen and William Lomas.

Chair Horgan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Noting a quorum, Chair Horgan indicated that the voting members are herself, Mr. Jones, Ms. Murray, and Mr. Moodie.

1. Public Hearing for Applicant William Lomas, 54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37, for a Conditional Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) above an approved garage. Zoning Ordinance 6.6.

Mr. Moodie has recused himself from this hearing, as he is a direct abutter to the applicant. Mr. Lomas confirmed he is comfortable proceeding with three of five voting members present for the hearing. Mr. Lomas was present with his wife, Gwen, who is the project architect. He explained that they want an ADU for the ability to age in place. They also have a large family and would like to have space for relatives to stay when visiting. Mr. Lomas stated that the required four parking spots are designated on the plan, with two to the right side of the single-bay garage and one to the left. The applicants will be removing a considerable portion of the existing driveway, which is currently U-shaped. The driveway will be reduced so it will have one entrance with a K-like turnaround.

Ms. Murray asked what is currently there where the ADU will be located. Mr. Lomas responded that there is a shed, which will be removed. Ms. Murray asked about the turnaround space and how that will work getting in and out of the garage. Mr. Lomas clarified that it will be a single bay garage. Ms. Lomas acknowledged that it will be tight, and the turnaround is more of a K-shape than a T-shape. Mr. Lomas noted that the garage will be 23 feet from the road. They are trying to keep the ash tree alive, but that is limiting the space available for vehicles to turn around.

Chair Horgan opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

Jim Cerny, 44 Portsmouth Avenue, thinks the plan is great and is consistent with having ADUs in New Castle. Iain Moodie, 62 Portsmouth Avenue, asked about the parking space to the side of the garage. The spot is right against the oak tree, and he is concerned that it is going to damage

the root system and ultimately kill the tree. The Lomas' stated that they share Mr. Moodie's desire to keep the oak tree intact. Mr. Lomas noted that the driveway will be wash gravel and not asphalt. Mr. Moodie asked who approved the garage. Chair Horgan confirmed that the applicants received the required variances from the ZBA, and received Planning Board approval as well. Hearing no further comments from the public, Chair Horgan closed the public hearing at 7:14 p.m. and opened discussion back up to the Board.

Chair Horgan believed all criteria are met. She pointed out that the ADU will be approximately 570 square feet, which is well within what is allowed. Mr. Jones added that there are no rules that prohibit a resident from having a tight driveway.

Ms. Murray motioned to approve the application for applicant William Lomas, 54 Portsmouth Avenue, Tax Map 11, Lot 37, for a Conditional Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit above an approved garage as presented in the plans dated September 14, 2023. Approval is based on the Applicant having met all criteria for a Conditional Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit as stipulated in the New Castle Zoning Ordinance Section 6.6.5. Mr. Jones seconded. Motion carried unanimously by a vote of three to zero.

2. Approve minutes to the September 27, 2023 meeting of the Planning Board.

Mr. Moodie moved to approve the minutes as written for the Planning Board meeting on September 27, 2023. Ms. Murray seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Continued discussion on Zoning Ordinance definitions on building area and impervious surfaces.

Mr. Moodie stated that ground coverage with driveways will be discussed at the Conservation Commission meeting on November 14. He wants any required parking spaces to be counted toward ground coverage. This would change the definition of lot coverage in the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Moodie shared that he has met with Town Building Inspector Russ Bookholz, and they are working on the building area definition. They are running into challenges because every alternative could result in architecture that is not visually pleasing. Chair Horgan emphasized that the goal is to prevent lots appearing "stuffed" with structures and overbuilt. Chair Horgan stated that at the next Planning Board meeting, she would like to further discuss building area. Mr. Moodie confirmed that he will continue to work with Mr. Bookholz on this definition.

Mr. Jones noted that he used to live in a town in MA, where there was a house review board that looked at the relation between square footage and cubic footage. The board shared similar concerns about buildable area and lot coverage.

Planning Board members discussed expanding the Historic District. Ms. Murray felt that there is will to expand the Historic District, but the areas would need to be specified.

4. Old Business.

None.

5. New Business.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

6. Adjourn.

There being no further business, Mr. Moodie moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion carried, unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meghan Rumph
Recording Secretary