



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, October 13, 2015

Recognizing the presence of a quorum Chairman Brian Massey called the meeting to order at 7:00PM with George Murray, Pamela Ferrara and Mark Key in attendance; R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner was also present. Cindy Key, Associate member was absent. (One vacancy of the Planning Board)

The following members of the public were in attendance: Jim Berkowitz; Eric Bazzett; Bill Renaud; Joseph Marinella (J&F Marinella Dev); Joyce Augustus; & Kenneth Konicki

I. CITIZENS FORUM

None

II. FORM A

None

III. MAIN STREET Assessors Map 2 Parcel(s) 36, 37 & 45 -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

Special Permit [§173-47 B.2 -Planned Business Development]

Site Plan [§173-49.1 –Site plan review by Planning Board]

Mr. Massey advised the Applicant/Engineer of the absence of Cindy Key, Associate member suggesting the Board may continue (table) without discussion the special permit application and focus tonight's review on the site plan.

Eric Bazzett of Heritage Design Group and Bill Renaud, on behalf of the Owner/Applicant met with the Planning Board to review the site plan. Mr. Bazzett reviewed with the Board his response letter dated October 13, 2015 addressing comments included in JH Engineer Group's letter dated August 20, 2015. Mr. Bazzett then reviewed with the Planning Board his letter dated October 13, 2015 addressing comments noted in the Community Planning & Development memorandum dated July 7/July 15, 2015. Mr. Bechtholdt asked about the status of the traffic study; Mr. Bazzett indicated that they will provide a completed study once the driveway locations are reviewed.

Mr. Bazzett and Mr. Renaud reviewed with the Planning Board illustration of turning movements in and out of the site and proposed site plan changes altering the number and the size of the planned curb cuts on Main Street. Mr. Bazzett reviewed with the Planning Board 2 different site plans showing modified curb cuts (60-feet and 75-feet) for the westerly side of the property and eliminating one of two curb cuts originally planned for the easterly side of the site (right-turn only).

Mr. Bazzett explained that the Safety Committee had asked them to consider placing the diesel pumps on the westerly side, however due to internal circulation conflicts was not able to accommodate. Mr. Key felt the circulation proposed made sense based upon similar facilities he visited.

Mr. Murray suggested to relocate the existing pedestrian crosswalk to the easterly side of the intersection (Main/Lake Street) to minimize vehicle-pedestrian conflict and terminate the sidewalk (south-side of Main Street) at the easterly curb-cut (driveway); not extending along the frontage of the subject property (sidewalk currently terminates at Water Street); Board members agreed.

Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Applicant/Engineer consult with DPW concerning the proposed curb-cuts (road opening permit) as to how they want to have the curbing extend along the frontage and whether or not they (DPW Director/Highway Superintendent) want the existing utility pole incorporated into the curbing or remain out in the shoulder of the roadway. Mr. Murray suggested it may be difficult to incorporate the pole without shifting the curb line or relocating the pole.

Mr. Murray asked if the westerly driveway could shift further away and increase the width to promote optimal turning movements of larger trucks entering and existing the site (turning radius). Mr. Bazzett agreed to revise the plan to pull the westerly curb cut and increase its width to improve circulation, protect the existing utility pole and to enhance sightlines. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that a revised stormwater report and drainage calculations would need to be provided for review as the change may include additional impervious coverage. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the landscaped area between the two driveways may be increased to accommodate the shifting of the westerly curb-cut; Mr. Bazzett agreed.

The Planning Board agreed shifting and widening the westerly entrance/exit would improve overall circulation and minimize conflict with the existing utility pole on Main Street. Mr. Bazzett indicated he was fine with widening the opening and was pleased that the Board was willing to allow them to increase the width; suggesting the wider the better.

Mr. Murray inquired about the proposed gate; Mr. Bazzett will check with neighboring Core-Mark on possible arrangements (lockable access). Mr. Bazzett reviewed with the Board discussion with the Safety Committee resulting in maintaining the access to/from Water Street; Mr. Bazzett noted the site development would not prohibit utilization of the remaining portion of Water Street (fire safety, deeded access, etc.). Mr. Murray noted DPW also felt it made sense to keep it open for plowing, etc.

Having no additional questions at this time the Planning Board looked to continue its review.

Upon motion duly made (M. Key) and seconded (Murray) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to continue the Site Plan review to Tuesday, November 10, 2015 (7:05PM). Upon separate motion duly made (M. Key) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board also voted (4-0) to continue without discussion the Special Permit review to Tuesday, November 10, 2015 (7:05PM) as a result of the absence of the Planning Board's Associate Member.

In taking such action the Planning Board believes the Associate Member, Cindy Key will remain available to participate in the continued review(s) and will be allowed to act (vote) on the special permit application.

IV. SUBDIVISION RULES & REGULATIONS -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

MGL CH 41 81Q (Amendments)

Mr. Massey suggested the Planning Board look to discuss one or two items and come to consensus on a few of the amendments tonight and then look to formalize things moving forward. Mr. Massey suggested reviewing the width of the right-of-way, placement of street trees, the width of the grass strip and the need or desire to keep the landscape island within cul-de-sacs.

Mr. Massey noted if the right-of-way was increased from 40 to 50-feet the R.O.W. could accommodate a wider grass strip and sidewalk. Mr. Massey suggested the Board may want to increase the grass strip to 5-feet and provide for an additional 3-feet within the right-of-way for the placement of trees along the edge of the R.O.W. Mr. Massey reviewed with the Board placement of street trees at the edge of the right-of-way verses increasing the grass strip where the strip could accommodate street trees. Mr. Key questioned the need to increase the sidewalk from 4-feet to 5-feet; Mr. Murray indicated ADA requires 36-inches (3-feet).

Mr. Key voiced his support of increasing the width of the grass strip to accommodate the street trees verses the option of leaving it up to the property owners. Mr. Murray would prefer planting the trees outside of the right-of-way where the trees are more likely to be maintained by the homeowners and not too close to the roadway and sidewalks. Mr. Murray would like the homeowners to assume the responsibility of maintaining the trees. Mr. Murray explained if the trees are too close to the road they will not survive, suggesting Board members look at the trees along Providence Road in Rockdale as an example.

Mr. Massey and Mr. Key expressed concerns with instances where a homeowner decides to remove the street trees; the town would not have any authority to replace it if planted on private property. Mr. Bechtholdt recommended the Board members drive through a recent completed subdivision development in Sutton (located off Douglas Road) where the street trees are planted along the backside of the right-of-way and not within the grass strip. Mr. Murray agreed that Board should review before making a decision.

Mr. Massey noted that he drove through the subdivision suggesting placement of trees along the backside may be a good compromise addressing the concerns of DPW where trees, over time compromise the integrity of sidewalks and roadways or die as a result of road salts, etc. Mr. Massey agreed with Mr. Murray that Board members visit the subdivision in Sutton. Mr. Massey noted in talking with the DPW Director he did express his concerns with street trees being planted within the grass strip where over time will compromise the integrity of the sidewalks. Mr. Murray did not want the town to be responsible for the street trees; should be the responsibility of the homeowners.

Mr. Massey asked the Board about their thoughts specific to island cul-de-sacs; Mr. Key was not in favor of eliminating the island; felt the landscaped island should remain however the size may be reduced and allowed for sloped-granite curbing. Mr. Bechtholdt noted the Board has historically waived the requirements for island cul-de-sacs reducing the size and allowing for sloped-granite curbing.

Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he is looking into incorporating LIDs (Low Impact Development) in the subdivision regulations; not a lot of existing examples (Bellingham, MA). Mr. Bechtholdt also pointed out

that the state is pushing what they term “Complete Streets” which includes provisions for (requires) sidewalks, bike lanes, etc. for roadway design.

Mr. Massey looked to the Board for a continuance of the public hearing.

Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (M. Key) the Planning Board voted (4-0) TO CONTINUE the public hearing to Tuesday, November 10, 2015 (7:25PM).

OLD / NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes –June 09, 2015; June 23, 2015; July 28, 2015 & August 25, 2015

Upon motion duly made (M. Key) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to approve the meeting minutes of July 28, 2015 as amended. The Planning Board tabled action for the June and August 2015 meeting minutes.

2015 Fall Annual Town Meeting -Tuesday, October 27, 2015 (7:00 PM)

Point of information –no discussion.

Planning Board Reports (Article #8 & Article #9) –Fall Annual Town Meeting

Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he would put together the Planning Board reports and recommendations; the Board will review the draft reports at its next meeting and identify who will present the articles on behalf of the Planning Board.

Planning Board Zoning Workshop –Tuesday, November 10, 2015 (6:00-7PM)

Planning Board reviewed draft notice and briefly discussion an outline, to include a summary brief on economic development strategies & opportunities, Table of Use Regulations; Land Use Terms & Definitions; Zoning District; Mixed Use Zoning; etc. Mr. Bechtholdt wanted to gain an understanding of the Board’s expectation, etc. the Board will review and discuss at its next meeting.

Whitinsville Christian School (Site Plan) –Vote to engage services consultant review

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (M. Key) voted (4-0) to engage the services of JH Engineering Group, LLC of Worcester, MA to perform consulting services on its behalf for the above noted site development proposal. The purpose of JH Engineering Group, LLC services shall be to provide the Board with an independent assessment/review of the Whitinsville Christian School site plan review application; Chapter 173 [Site plan review]; traffic assessment; stormwater management & erosion controls pursuant to state/local bylaw regulations. As the awarded consultant, JH Engineering Group, LLC shall provide written report(s) to the Planning Board and may be required to make oral presentation(s) at public meetings held by the Board.

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update –Scheduling of next meeting

Tabled –no discussion.

Hemlock Estates –Status/Update (Performance surety/Lot release)

Tabled –no discussion.

Camelot –Status/Update (Performance surety/Lot release)

Joseph Marinella (J&F Marinella Dev Corp.) explained that he has since paved the entire frontage of Lot #31 Joseph Circle (& installed utilities) and would like to have the lot released from the Covenant. Mr. Marinella indicated that he met on site with the Board's consulting engineering (JH Engineering Group), who prepared the new bond amount for the Camelot subdivision. Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned in addition to satisfying the bond amount the Developer shall provide the Planning office with a check in the amount of \$4,100 for the Review & Inspection account, noting a request for such funds had been made numerous times. Mr. Bechtholdt explained to the Board that JH Engineering Group has been out to the site to inspect the recent paving, noting JH Engineering is awaiting receipt of the Sieve Analysis, however did not indicate a concern with the recent work completed. The Board reviewed JH Engineering report(s) with construction estimates prepared December 08, 2014 for Phase IA (\$143,215.25) and October 12, 2015 for Phase IB (\$273,424.00). Mr. Bechtholdt noted that the town (Planning Board) is currently holding a bond in the amount of \$331,861.25; Mr. Bechtholdt explained the performance bond held includes remaining work associated with Phase IA [Rebecca Road Station 0+00 – 16+01] and Phase IB which at the time included Rebecca Road Station 16+01 to Station 19+00 & Joseph Circle Station 0+00 to Station 5+00; Mr. Marinella would like to modify Phase IB by adding the additional portion of Joseph Circle to include Rebecca Road Joseph Circle through Station 11+14, to do so additional funds will need to be provided. Mr. Marinella indicated that he had provided additional funds since the Board last established the amount: Mr. Marinella believed the bond account was over \$400K, noting he recalled submitting two separate checks: one for \$70,000 and another for \$20,000. Mr. Bechtholdt in referencing the subdivision tracking folder noted the last bond established by the Planning Board, according to the records was the \$331K amount; Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he would check with the Planning Secretary and have her double-check with the Accounting office the current balance held, noting it would be easy to check because it is all cash held with the town. The new bond amount, as determined by JH Engineering Group for Phase IA and Phase IB is \$416,639.25. Mr. Murray asked if a reduction was in order; Mr. Bechtholdt stated no, additional funds would be required. Mr. Marinella suggested the additional sum of \$13,000.00 would need to be posted. Mr. Marinella believes he has done additional work to bring the number down but is not looking for a reduction at this time. *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (M. Key) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to establish a (new) performance guaranty for Phase 1A & Phase 1B (as revised) for the Camelot subdivision in the amount of \$416,639.25 as determined by JH Engineering Group, LLC, the Planning Board's consulting engineer. Upon separate motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to release Lot #31 from the Covenant subject to the Developer satisfying and posting the necessary performance bond as determined and voted by the Planning Board and receipt of the requested \$4,100.00 funds for Review & Inspection.*

279 Douglas Road (& adjacent to) –Minor Modification request

James Berkowitz reviewed with the Planning Board site plan entitled "Retaining Wall Location Plan" and letter dated October 06, 2015 from Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc. concerning a minor modification (request) for site plan approval. The Board reviewed Section 173-49.1 H of the Zoning Bylaw. Mr. Berkowitz explained that the location of the retaining wall, previously sited on the approved site plan, had to be relocated due to the presence of ledge. Mr. Berkowitz indicated that the Building Inspector directed him to appear before the Planning Board for approval before he would sign the Building Permit. Mr. Bechtholdt asked that a letter from the Engineer be provided certifying that revised location of the retaining wall will not impact the drainage of the site. Mr. Bechtholdt also asked if the new location would impact the overall traffic circulation; Mr. Berkowitz indicated that the site circulation will be improved

(more useable land –bigger radius to maneuver). *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to consider and grant site plan minor modification pursuant to §173-49.1 H of the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw for the alteration of site approval allowing for the relocation of retaining wall and concrete pad as shown on plan entitled “Retaining Wall Location Plan” prepared by Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc. dated July 17, 2015 subject to receipt of certification from Engineer verifying the location will not impact or alter the overall drainage associated with the site.* The Planning Board noted approval shall be considered and permitted for both properties.

Carpenter Estates –Construction Change request

Planning Board tabled action requesting that the Applicant/Engineer attend the next meeting to present and review the proposed field changes with the Board before voting on the matter.

Leonardo Estates –Status/Update

Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he requested a communication from the Sewer Superintendent updating the Planning Board on the status of the sewer line installation. In email received (10/06/2015) Mr. Kuras noted that the offsite work pipe and manholes have been tested and laterals are stubbed at the property line all passed; he received a call that the developer will start pipe installation within the project. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he did not like the informality of an email and would prefer a correspondence on official letterhead.

Farnum Circle –Status/Update

Joyce Augustus and Kenneth Konicki of 14 Farnum Circle met with the Planning Board to provide them with an update noting they are still looking to and are hopeful to find a general contractor and electrician to perform the scope of work for the underground utilities, etc. Ms. Augustus asked if the Board was willing to table action on this matter until the Spring (2016) at which time she hopes to have someone committed to complete the work first thing at the start of the next construction season. Ms. Augustus noted she is still working with Charter and Verizon to formalize and coordinate responsibilities of relocating their individual services; Mr. Bechtholdt offered to assist Ms. Augustus in the event she required someone to represent the town (so they know they know she is working with the town). Mr. Konicki noted they have an electrician who had expressed an interested, looking to coordinate work with an excavator to perform the necessary work. Mr. Massey agreed it may be easier to get someone to commit 4 to 5 months out there may be a bigger pool to select from rather than say need to complete the work within the next few months.. Mr. Murray agrees suggesting they continue to seek out contractors and when they do find someone qualified and willing to do the work that they sign a commitment letter certifying when they will start the work (May 01, 2016) and will hold the price. The Planning Board agreed to table its discussion until such time Ms. Augustus contacts the Planning Board with contractors willing to do the scope of work (scenario 1).

Green Meadow Court –Status/Update

(Placeholder) No discussion -had hoped to finalize Farnum Circle first.

Mixed Use Bylaw –Outline/Review

Tabled –no discussion.

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: October 13, 2015 Agenda; October 20, 2015 and November 10, 2015 DRAFT Agendas; Email dated October 8, 2015 to Town Planner and Bill the Engineer with a cc: to Planning Board Chair and Heritage Design Group (HDG) from Eric Bazzett of HDG regarding Main Street Commercial site plan; Main Street Commercial plans; Letter dated August 20, 2015 to Town Planner with cc: to Conservation Commission from JH Engineering regarding Main Street Commercial Peer Review; Memo dated July 7, 2015 / July 15, 2015 to Planning Board and Heritage Design Group from Town Planner concerning Main Street Commercial Special Permit and Site Plan Review; Memo dated July 15, 2015 to Planning Board from Town Planner regarding Main Street Commercial Site Visit Observations; Subdivision Rules & Regulations Proposed Amendments; Chapter 222 – Subdivision Rules and Regulations Section 222-9 Definitive Plan pages 1-5; Standard Road Cross Section; Typical Cross Section; Hierarchy of Streets; Marginal Access Streets; Bellingham LID Cross-Section; Integrating LID Into Local Codes Guidebook Cover Page; Draft Minutes of June 9, 2015; Draft Minutes of June 23, 2015; Draft Minutes of July 28, 2015; Draft Minutes of August 25, 2015; FATM Warrant Articles; Memo dated September 30, 2015 to Town Clerk with a cc: to the Town Planner from Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager regarding Fall Annual Town Meeting Article 9 Street Acceptance of Deane Way; 2015 FATM Highland Street – Article 8 Parcel / Structure Data Layer(s); Draft Planning Board Notice of Public Workshop to discuss Zoning and Economic Development Strategies and Opportunities; Public Meeting Notice for Whitinsville Society of Christian Instruction for a Site Plan Review for a planned 31,500 square foot Fine Arts Center and athletic field, including 214 parking spaces and other associated site improvements; Letter dated October 6, 2015 to the Planning Board from Andrews Survey & Engineering concerning a minor modification to the Site Plan of property adjacent to 270 Douglas Road; Douglas Road Retaining Wall Location Plan; Chapter 173 Zoning page 72; Email dated October 7, 2015 to Town Planner with a cc: to Quarry Hill Construction and Andrews Engineering from Andrews Engineering regarding Carpenter Estates; Carpenter Estates plans; Email dated October 6, 2015 to JH Engineering with a cc: to Planning Board Admin. Asst., Planning Board Chair, DPW Director, DPW Highway Superintendent and Casa Builders from Town Planner concerning Fairway Drive Extension; Email dated October 6, 2015 to Town Planner from DPW Sewer Superintendent concerning Leonardo Estates Sewer; Memo dated September 24, 2015 to Town Manager from Conservation Commission Admin. Asst. regarding Forest Cutting Plans (Providence Road and Church Street); Memo dated September 24, 2015 to Dept. of Conservation and Recreation from Conservation Commission Admin. Asst. concerning 3 Forest Cutting Plans (Providence Road and Church St); 2015 Planning Board Meeting Schedule; Douglas Road Retaining Wall Location Plan.

Other

Mr. Bechtholdt explained that J&F Marinella Dev will submit an ANR plan for Lot #26, the corner lot (Rebecca Road/Joseph Circle) within the Camelot subdivision; the intent of the plan will be to parcel out the drainage basin from the house lot. Shining Rock Golf Community is nearing completion; will look toward street acceptance next year (remaining portion of Shining Rock Drive and Fairway Drive). Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board on the forest cutting activities referencing Conservation Commission memorandums dated September 24, 2015 to the Town Manger and Guy LaChance of DCR –Department of Conservation & Recreation overseeing and permitting the Forest Cutting Plan(s). Mr. Bechtholdt noted some of the calls received by Conservation from residents suggested they heard that the owners are clearing the land for 700 housing units; Mr. Bechtholdt explained that he is not aware of any proposals for housing or otherwise for the subject parcels. Planning Board noted receipt of Board of Selectmen's vote to layout Deane Way. Mr. Key asked about the gate installed at the end of Fairway Drive; Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he had not

viewed it however indicated the gate was installed to stop vehicles from accessing the golf course via the cart path; Mr. Key thought the gate looked horrible (out of place & detracts from the look of the project) Mr. Key did not believe that cars would be able to physically access the cart path at that location given the distance and grading; Mr. Bechtholdt will look at. Mr. Key explained the he attended the Freight Rail meeting (10/8), noting CMRPC has done what appears to be some good studies to identify properties that some of the towns along the railroad may be able to use, however did not see a lot in it for Northbridge and Mr. Key asked CMRPC the question which came first, the opportunity to secure grant money or the need to perform a study (did not get a real response at the meeting), seemed indignant that we were not “all in” on the “big railroad project” Mr. Key noted that he stated that he don’t know if it has play or not in Northbridge. Mr. Key did not hear how any of the communities other than Worcester and perhaps the railroad (P&W and CSX) would benefit. Mr. Bechtholdt shared his concerns if you open the door for rail there are a number of exemption that may supersede local bylaws (may preempt zoning); transfer station with traffic, noise, etc. Mr. Massey noted the concerns and problems with Upton/Grafton Rail. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that CMRPC had planned to attend a meeting earlier this year but was canceled due to the February blizzard.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at or about 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk