



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, December 08, 2015

Recognizing the presence of a quorum Chairman Brian Massey called the meeting to order at 7:00PM with George Murray, Mark Key and Pamela Ferrara in attendance. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner and Cindy Key, Associate member were also present. [1 vacancy of the Planning Board]

The following members of the public were in attendance: William Mello, Robert Knapik and Travis Brown (Andrews Survey & Engineering)

I. CITIZENS FORUM

None

II. FORM A (81P) PLAN

2239–2249 PROVIDENCE ROAD -REVIEW/DECISION

Robert Knapik, on behalf of the Owner/Applicant reviewed ANR plan entitled “Approval Not Required Plan 2239 and 2249 Providence Road Northbridge, MA” dated November 04, 2015 for subject property identified as Assessors Map 22A Parcel(s) 191 & 190. Mr. Knapik reviewed with the Board property history, two structures situated on one lot existing prior to zoning.

Mr. Knapik reviewed access, noting common curb-cut and shared driveway off Providence Road. Mr. Murray inquired about a possible access easement.

Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to grant an ANR endorsement for the application to divide property as shown on plan into two (2) lots.

In making its decision the Planning Board requested additional information concerning the shared access from Providence Road be included and noted on the ANR plan prior to endorsement.

III. WHITINSVILLE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL –CONT. PUBLIC MEETING

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

Travis Brown (Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc.) on behalf of the Applicant/Engineer provided the Planning Board with an update on the plan revisions, noting all comments received from JH Engineering Group, LLC have been addressed with the exception of the comment specific to handicap spaces. Mr. Brown explained final building design plans (building elevations, etc.) will be reviewed with the Building Inspector which will include a review of the handicap parking spaces.

Mr. Murray clarified that the Planning Board’s site plan review (at this time) does not include the building or the location of required handicap parking spaces. Having no additional questions or comments the Planning Board reviewed draft conditions prepared by Community Planning & Development.

46 *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to approve with*
47 *conditions site development plan for the construction of 214 parking spaces for the planned ±31,500 square-*
48 *foot Fine Arts & Athletics Center.*

49
50 In making its determination the Board noted subsequent review/approval may be required prior to the
51 issuance of a building permit for the proposed building and associated handicap parking spaces pursuant to
52 Section 173-49.1 H(2).

53
54 Based on its findings the Planning Board waived the Development Impact Assessment –Section 173-49.1 E(2)
55 of the Zoning Bylaw. As provided for in Section 173-49.1 E(3) the Planning Board may waive any
56 requirements if it believes that the requirement is not necessary based upon the size and scope of the
57 project.

58
59 **IV. SUBDIVISION RULES & REGULATIONS -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING**
60 **MGL CH 41 81Q (Amendments)**
61

62 Mr. Massey asked the Town Planner to review with the Board the summary brief he prepared. Mr.
63 Bechtholdt reminded the Planning Board of the initial purpose and intent of considering amendments to the
64 Subdivision Rules & Regulations: (1) address commonly waived provisions; (2) incorporate by reference town
65 guidance documents; (3) update outdated provisions (removal of fire alarm call boxes); and (4)
66 accommodate known concerns raised by the Department of Public Works and others (maintenance, etc.).

67
68 Mr. Bechtholdt noted at the last meeting (cont. public hearing) the Board discussed the options to relocate
69 street trees. Mr. Bechtholdt recommended that the Planning Board allow for the street trees to be located
70 behind the sidewalk a minimum of 4-feet (within the right-of-way) suggesting this would help alleviate
71 concerns of the DPW concerning long-term maintenance, survival and protecting the sidewalk and roadway
72 from root growth and other impacts. Locating the street trees within the ROW would allow the town the
73 authority to make sure homeowners do not remove the public trees that may be located along their
74 frontage.

75
76 Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Planning Board consider reducing the size of the landscape island as a good
77 compromise understanding that Board members are not in full support in eliminating the island cul-de-sacs.
78 Mr. Bechtholdt also suggested the Board look to modify the travel lane within the cul-de-sac accordingly and
79 allow for sloped-granite curbing. The Planning Board reviewed cul-de-sac standards from other towns
80 (Sutton and Shrewsbury). The Board then reviewed pavement width, roadway right-of-way and diameter of
81 a cul-de-sac.

82
83 Chairman Massey noted the Board has had a lot of discussion and he would like to see the Board address the
84 amendments taking one or two of them off the table and up for vote tonight. Mr. Bechtholdt reminded
85 Board members that the public hearing remains open and will need to remain open until the Board
86 concludes all of its review. Mr. Bechtholdt offered that the Board may seek a vote on their positions at this
87 time however would need to formally vote once the hearing is closed.

88
89 Mr. Murray voiced his support in locating the trees along the backside of the sidewalk within the right-of-
90 way; a minimum of 4-feet back from the sidewalk. Mr. Murray felt locating the trees at the back of sidewalk

91 was a good compromise where they address DPW's concerns and will remain the town responsibility. Mr.
92 Key explained that the town cannot maintain the trees now. Mr. Murray reminded Mr. Key that the DPW
93 Director wanted the street trees on private property, suggesting locating them on the back of sidewalk
94 within the right-of-way was a good compromise. Mr. Murray added if homeowners were to cut them down
95 they would be responsible because they would be located within the right-of-way.

96
97 Mr. Key suggested the Planning Board has spent a lot of time considering amendments to the Subdivision
98 Rules & Regulations and questioned if the expectation is to please the DPW he respectfully disagreed
99 implying that would not happen. Mr. Massey indicated another reason to locate the street trees away from
100 the roadway was to improve their survival. Mr. Massey noted that he spoke with the Highway
101 Superintendent who explained to him that the roadway chemicals (salt, etc.) used today to melt the ice and
102 snow will negatively impact the trees, especially new ones. Mr. Massey supports locating the street trees
103 away from the roadway.

104
105 *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Board voted (3-1 [Key opposed]) their intent to*
106 *locate the required street trees to be placed within the right-of-way a minimum of 4-feet behind the sidewalk*
107 *and equal distance along the non-sidewalk side.*

108
109 Mr. Bechtholdt offered that the Board may want to incorporate a diagram illustrating the pavement width,
110 grass strip, sidewalk width and minimum distance for street trees. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested he would look
111 to provide the Board with a sample prior to the Board concluding its public hearing and formally voting on
112 the subdivision amendments.

113
114 Mr. Bechtholdt asked the Board about the width of the grass strip and confirmed with them that they were
115 in agreement to increase the right-of-way width from 40-feet to 50-feet for minor streets and to eliminate
116 footnote 4.

117
118 Mr. Massey suggested reducing the grass strip from 4-feet to 3-feet. Mr. Bechtholdt cautioned the Board
119 about reducing the width and explained in instances where vertical granite may be waived there needs to be
120 a minimum separation between the roadway and sidewalk. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Board maintain
121 the width of the grass strip; Mr. Murray agreed. Mr. Murray also noted there may be situation where
122 underground utilities may occupy the grass strip area.

123
124 Mr. Massey reviewed pavement width (24-feet), grass strip width (4-feet), sidewalk width (5-feet), and
125 minimum width of tree strip (4-feet). Mr. Massey asked for instances where the roadway width (pavement)
126 may be wider. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that Leonardo Estates may have a wider pavement width at the
127 entrance; he would look to confirm exact width. Mr. Murray suggested allowing for the roadway to flare its
128 opening to ease the corner.

129
130 Mr. Massey asked the Town Planner if the Board needed to take a vote to increase the roadway width from
131 40 to 50-feet. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested that he would track proposed changes for the Planning Board and
132 will prepare draft motions for consideration once the public hearing was concluded.

The Planning Board will look at cul-de-sac standards at its next hearing; Mrs. Key suggested looking at Andover's regulations. Mr. Murray suggested looking at the cul-de-sac in Hemlock Estates as an example; the size appears to be adequate.

Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to continue the public hearing to Tuesday, February 09, 2016 (7:05PM –Town Hall)

OLD / NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes –September 22, 2015 & November 14, 2015

Table –no discussion.

Open Space & Recreation Plan and Housing Production Plan –Status

Planning Board noted receipt of Contract Agreement between the Town and Beals + Thomas, Inc. for the preparation of the Open Space & Recreation Plan and a Contract Agreement between the Town and Karen Sunnarborg Consulting for the preparation of a Housing Production Plan. Mr. Bechtholdt will provide Board members with a copy of the scope of work and Request for Proposals distributed. William Mello, member of the Open Space & Recreation Plan Updated Committee (Ad-Hoc) noted a lot of good work was done by the town and was happy to hear about efforts to complete the plan. Mr. Bechtholdt informed Mr. Mello that he will send out a notification to all the committee members once a date is formalized with the consultant.

Shining Rock Golf Community –Shining Rock Drive & Fairway Drive

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board that the Planning office is in receipt of a request from the Developer (Shining Rock Developers LLC) to table consideration of Fairway Drive release; subsequent arrangements will be made for a future agenda. Mr. Bechtholdt noted a final bond release is typically sought once the roadway has been formally accepted; the Planning office will coordinate with the developer a bond reduction. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he contacted DPW to review Fairway Drive in conjunction with the request. He noted that other than mentioning that the roadway looks good the DPW Director asked that a stop bar (stop line) be added. Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Board that the stop bar has since been installed. JH Engineering Group has prepared an updated construction estimate which is in line for a reduction but not a final release at this time. *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and second (Key) the Board voted to table action concerning Fairway Drive until such time the Developer contacts the Planning Board.*

Hemlock Estates –Hemlock Street & Fir Hill Lane

Planning Board reviewed JH Engineering report dated November 30, 2015, noting a reduction as it relates to the installation/inspection of the subdrains (from \$20,300.00 to \$4,900.00). Mr. Bechtholdt explained in turn a letter was provided to the Treasurer's office for the necessary reduction, noting J&F Marinella should receive the funds within the next week. Mr. Bechtholdt also informed the Board that according to J&F Marinella Andrews Survey & Engineering is preparing the necessary as-built plans for pond #2 after which JH Engineering will review and inspect for another bond reduction (\$25,000.00). *Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (4-0) bond reduction for Hemlock Estates subject to JH Engineering review and confirmation of same as it relates to Pond #2.* Mr. Murray asked if JH Engineering can combine the Phases (1-3) and list the station numbers in subsequent reports and construction estimates.

Subdivision/Site Developments –Updates

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board of JH Engineering Group reports for Hemlock Estates (Phase 3), Carpenter Estates and Shining Rock Golf Community (Fairway Drive). Mr. Bechtholdt encouraged members to drive by the various subdivisions to get a firsthand view of the progress and status. Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board of the Board of Selectmen vote to accept Deane Way (December 07, 2015).

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: December 8, 2015 Agenda; January 12, 2015 Draft Agenda; 2239-47 (&2249) Providence Road Checklist for Approval Not Required Plan; Assessor's Map 22-A; Plan of Providence Road in Plan Book 476, Plan 96 recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Worcester, MA; Draft Certificate of Approval for Whitinsville Christian School Fine Arts & Athletic Center; Letter dated November 24, 2015 to Town Planner with a cc: to Conservation Commission from JH Engineering regarding Whitinsville Christian School Site Plan Peer Review; Letter dated November 16, 2015 to Planning Office from Andrews Survey & Engineering regarding Whitinsville Christian School Peer Review Comment Responses; Memo dated November 4, 2015 to Planning Board from DPW Sewer regarding Whitinsville Christian School Parking Area & Fine Arts & Athletic Complex; Memo dated October 28, 2015 to Planning Board from Conservation Commission regarding Whitinsville Christian School Site Plan Review; Letter dated October 19, 2015 to Town Planner from Building Inspector regarding Whitinsville Christian School; Email dated October 30, 2015 to Town Planner, Whitinsville Water Company, Planning Administrative Assistant, Fire Chief, Building Inspector, DPW Director, DPW Highway Superintendent, Board of Health Administrator, DPW Sewer Superintendent with a cc: to Andrews Engineering and Planning Board Chair regarding Whitinsville Christian School Parking Area and Fire Arts & Athletic Complex; Technical Review Meeting Document dated October 28, 2015 for Whitinsville Christian School prepared by the Town Planner with a cc: to Board of Health, Building Inspector, Conservation Commission, DPW Highway, Fire Department, Whitinsville Water Company, JH Engineering, and the Applicant / Engineer; Memo dated October 30, 2015 to Planning Board & Andrews Engineering from Town Planner regarding Whitinsville Christian School Site Plan Review; Site Plan Review Checklist dated October 27, 2015 for Whitinsville Christian School; Subdivision Rules and Regulations Proposed Amendments; Chapter 222 – Subdivision Rules and Regulations pages 1 – 5 and pages 68 – 70; Agreement by and between Town of Northbridge and Beals & Thomas, Inc. for consulting services for the Open Space & Recreation Plan; Agreement by and between Town of Northbridge and Karen Sunnarborg, Consultant for consulting services for the Housing Production Plan; Email dated November 26, 2015 to Town Planner from Shining Rock Developers, LLC concerning request to release Lenders Agreement for Fairway Drive; Email dated December 2, 2015 to Town Planner from DPW Director concerning Fairway Drive; Letter dated November 24, 2015 to Town Planner from JH Engineering concerning Fairway Drive Construction Observation Report; Letter dated November 30, 2015 to Town Planner from JH Engineering regarding Hemlock Estates Phase 3 Engineer's Construction Estimate; 2016 Spring Annual Town Meeting Timelines; 2016 Planning Board Meeting Dates Schedule.

Other

Travis Brown (Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc.) informed the Planning Board that the approved site development plan for Sutton Solar, LLC (approved April 2014) had not been presented to the Sutton Planning Board or the Northridge Planning Boards for endorsement. Mr. Brown noted that the Sutton Planning Board endorsed the site plan at its meeting last evening. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Board have its consulting engineer (JH ENG Group) review the plans prepared for endorsement before the Planning Board signs the

plan; Planning Board members agreed. Planning Board reviewed 2016 Spring Annual Town Meeting timelines prepared by the Town Manager's Office (warrant to close March 04, 2016). Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Planning Board host a follow-up zoning workshop; Board members scheduled public workshop for Tuesday, February 23, 2016 (6PM –Town Hall). Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that the vacancy will be re-advertised (posted) with a set date as to when interested residents may submit their talent bank forms to the Office of the Town Manager. Mr. Bechtholdt reminded members of the CMRPC sponsored Planning Board Workshop scheduled for Thursday, December 10, 2015 at the Holden Fire Station.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Thursday, December 08, 2015 at or about 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk