



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, January 11, 2011



Janet Dolber, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Barbara Gaudette, Richard Griggs and Kevin Curtin were in attendance. Edward Palmer was absent. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner was also present.

The following members of the public were also in attendance: Cindy Key (Clubhouse Lane), Bill Mason (Clubhouse Lane), Roy Uthoff (Clubhouse Lane), Judi Uthoff (Clubhouse Lane), Sue Green (Clubhouse Lane), Linda DeHaan (Clubhouse Lane), Pat Schmitt (Clubhouse Lane), Marilyn McIlvaine (Clubhouse Lane), and Craig Holmberg (Providence Road).

Prior to seeking input during Citizens Forum, Janet Dolber advised the public that as a result of the absence of Edward Palmer of the Planning Board, the public hearing scheduled for Shining Rock Golf Community will be continued without discussion. Ms. Dolber explained that the Planning Board will formally act on this continuance later in the evening as they go through the agenda items but wanted to inform public in advance.

I. CITIZENS FORUM

Marilyn McIlvaine (Clubhouse Lane) expressed concerns of snow removal at intersections of Clubhouse Lane, noting that snow may be drifting from the clubhouse parking area. Sue Green (Clubhouse) shared concerns of the banks (Norwood Cooperative) plowing practices. Cindy Key (Clubhouse) suggested there should be a clear understanding of expectations as to what the developers' responsibilities are; noting one-lane plowed down the center of the roadway is not acceptable. Bill Mason (Clubhouse Lane) echoed concerns, citing conditions are horrendous leaves his home at 5:15AM. Mr. Bechtholdt explained to the Board that he has been in contact with Norwood Cooperative Bank about plowing and sanding and has suggested to the bank that they consider hiring a different contractor for the Shining Rock Golf Community. Ms. Gaudette added that she would work with Ms. Dolber in drafting a letter to the bank.

II. ANR PLAN (338 CHURCH STREET) –REVIEW/DECISION

The Planning Board reviewed ANR plan entitled “338 Church Street” Plan of Land in Northbridge, MA prepared by Guerriere & Halnon, Inc., dated January 27, 2010 with Craig Holmberg from Guerriere & Halnon.

Upon motion duly made (Gaudette) and seconded (Griggs) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to grant an ANR endorsement. As noted on the plan the intent of the ANR is to convey Parcel A, “a non-building lot” to be combined with Parcel B, creating Lot 2, consisting of 20,156 square-feet fronting on Granite Street.

III. SHINING ROCK GOLF COMMUNITY –CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING **SPECIAL PERMIT / DEFINITIVE SUBDIVISION –MODIFICATION(S)**

As the result of the absence of Edward Palmer of the Planning Board, the owner/applicant for the above noted application(s) requested a continuance of the public hearing scheduled for January 11, 2011.

Upon motion duly made and seconded the Planning Board continued without discussion the public hearing for Special Permit/Definitive Subdivision –modification(s) of Shining Rock Golf Community to January 25, 2011 at 7:15PM. The Planning Board noted receipt of email commutation from Pulte Homes requesting continuance.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS

Minutes –Approval

None –Tabled to the next meeting of the Planning Board.

Green Communities Action Plan –Criteria #1 Discussion (Tuesday, January 25, 2011)

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that arrangements have been made for the Board's next meeting (01/25/11) to continue the discussion on Criterion #1 of the town's Green Communities Action Plan. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he mentioned at the last meeting that he would indicate the meeting date in advance on an upcoming agenda so residents would be able to make arrangements to attend and participate in the discussions.

690 Church Street (vicinity of) –Zone Change Discussion

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board reviewed with the Planning Board Planning Memorandum dated December 09, 2010 regarding 690 Church Street (Varky's Cleaners) and his discussions with Mary Arakelian, the property owner. Accordingly, Ms. Arakelian would like the Planning Board to sponsor a zoning article to change the zoning of 690 Church Street from residential to business. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that extending the existing Business Zone to 690 Church Street would include 2 other properties currently zoned residential. Mr. Bechtholdt will provide the Planning Board with additional information at the next Planning Board meeting at which time the Board may vote to sponsor a zoning article for the Spring Annual Town Meeting.

Spring Annual Town Meeting –May 03, 2011

Date of the Spring Annual Town Meeting noted above. Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned the warrant will close on Friday, March 18, 2011.

Ch 43D Expedited Permitting Regulations –Review

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with copy of email communication from CRMPC (the town's regional planning agency) noting that he is currently working with Vera Kolas of CMRPC on the preparation of 43D Expedited Permitting regulations and application procedures; draft provided to the Planning Board.

CH 43D Expedited Permitting Initiatives –Status

See above.

Town of Northbridge Permitting Guidebook

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board that the Permitting Guidebook the Planning office prepared, with the assistance of various town departments and particularly Jeanne Gniadek of the Board of Health office was recently completed and that he attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting of January 10, 2011 to announce same. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that the permitting guidebook is designed to assist property owners and applicants through the permitting process; provides a summary of the various town

departments/board involved; the types of permits approvals and licenses that may be required for land-use based projects. The guidebook is divided into 3 sections: a general overview and what types of permits that may be required; department directory and summary overviews on the various town hall departments; and appendix which includes Frequently Asked Questions and other supportive resources that may be required for land-use based projects. Adding that funding for the printing of this guidebook has been provided through the state's 43D Expedited Permitting Initiatives. An electronic-version will be included on the town's website and available for review within the municipal departments.

Planning Board 2010 Annual Report –Review

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with a copy of the 2010 annual reporting of the Planning Board: During the calendar year of 2010 the Planning Board held 20 regularly scheduled meetings. Applications reviewed by the Planning Board include: Approval Not Required, ANR- division of land creating new lots on existing roadways; Preliminary and Definitive Subdivision- divisions of land creating lots and new roadways; Site Plans- plans for commercial/industrial developments; Common driveway special permits; and Permits for proposed work that may affect public street trees and/or stonewalls along town designated Scenic Roads. As a result of the continued economic downturn a number of residential subdivisions remain unfinished and in various phases of construction. The following subdivisions are currently under construction: Carpenter Estates; Castle Hill Estates; Green Meadow Court; Hemlock Estates; Hillside Garden Estates; Presidential Farms; and Shining Rock Golf Community. Heather Hill, Erica Drive and Rocky Road were accepted as public ways at Town Meeting. Despite the economy one (1) definitive subdivision was approved in 2010. The Camelot, a 65 lot single-family development is to be located off Hill Street and extending through Hillcrest Road. The Planning Board has observed based upon applications received (from 2001 to 2010) Northbridge could see a build-out of 300 to 600 additional house lots/units. The Board cautions, as the town continues to grow the need to evaluate its land use provisions to ensure that the historic character and natural resources are preserved. Adding, as more and more development occur the demand on public infrastructure and town services will increase. As gas prices creep up to \$3.05 per gallon, the town continues to look at alternative energy and smart growth principles that will help reduce dependency on oil, lessen our carbon-footprint and promote green design. As part of this initiative the Board of Selectmen established a Green Committee and adopted a Green Communities Action Plan (September 2010). The Planning Board is currently reviewing a Wind Turbine and Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic zoning provisions. The town may also consider minimize life-cycle cost in energy construction. The Stretch Code requires new construction to minimize life-cycle cost by utilizing energy efficiency, water conservation and other renewable/alternative energy technologies. During the summer of 2010, the Planning Board and other elected officials met with the National Park Service to discuss the re-authorization of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. While the Blackstone River Valley will retain its National Heritage Corridor designation (in perpetuity as designated by Congress) the federal management presence is currently scheduled to sunset in 2011. Maintaining a community-based partner is very important. The Planning Board has long valued the role of the Corridor Commission as a supporter and facilitator of many local/regional plans and initiatives. The Commission has been an outstanding advocate and custodian. The Board appreciates the hard work and dedication of the Corridor Commission and the National Park Service. A Local Historic District Study Committee was established in the Fall of 2010 to explore the idea of creating a local historic district in Whitinsville. According to Kenneth Warchol, Chairman of the Northbridge Historical Commission, the village of Whitinsville is likely the best preserved industrial mill village in New England. In November 2010, the former Northbridge Auto site (2040 Providence Road) was selected and awarded a Federal Brownfield

Assessment grant to perform a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. The program identifies and assesses properties that have known or perceived environmental containments to seek methods for cleanup. The Planning Board views this site as an important first step and critical element in the potential redevelopment of this property. In an effort to better assist the public a Permitting Guidebook was prepared. The guidebook provides a summary of the various municipal departments/boards and describes the procedures for permits, approvals and licenses related to land-use development. In November 2010, the Board of Health, Building Department, Conservation Commission, and Community Planning & Development offices were relocated to the Aldrich School building. This building, located at 14 Hill Street will now serve as the town's main land-use and permitting annex.

Planning Board members thanked Mr. Bechtholdt for preparing the annual report. Ms. Gaudette noted that it was well done.

Housing Production Plan –Status/Review

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board that arrangements will be made for a future meeting to review the draft prepared.

Best Development Practices Guidebook

Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned in addition to the Permitting Guidebook, the Best Development Guidebook reviewed/prepared by the Planning Board last year (2009) has also been included on the town's website. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he has received a number of comments and praises from applicants and engineers on how comprehensive and useful this document is.

Castle Hill Estates –MGL CH 41 SEC 81U

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with a copy of the Mass General Law statute (Chapter 41 Section 81U) and asked that the members read through and at a subsequent meeting review provision and the Director of Public Works correspondence on remaining outstanding issues with the Castle Hill Estates subdivision.

Presidential Farms Open Space –Update

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with a copy of email communication received from Town Counsel concerning the open space restriction for the parcels within the Presidential Farms subdivision. The Planning Board reviewed same and determined that the document offered by the developer (David Brossi) met and satisfied the conditions of approval as originally required of the Planning Board (at that time). As such the Board noted that they would not require any alteration to the language in the document (as suggested by MDAR). Ms. Gaudette mentioned that she was on the Planning Board when this subdivision development was considered and approved. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he would contact the developer and advice him that the Restriction as currently drafted and as approved in the original subdivision approval may be recorded. Mr. Bechtholdt will also inform Town Counsel of same.

Water Filter Plant –Discussion

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with a draft zoning article to amend Section 173-12 [Table of Use Regulations] by allowing water filter plant within all zoning districts. Mr. Bechtholdt briefly reviewed with the Board that the Whitinsville Water Company is looking to address the water issues from the Carr Street well (iron content) and that the Water Company may consider installing a water filter plant off

Purgatory Road (Carr Street) however the current zoning provisions do not permit water filter plant in the underlying residential zone. Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned that he met with Randy Swigor (Whitinsville Water Company), the Town Manager and the Inspector of Buildings in December and noted that the Water Company may solicit the state for an exemption under public utility, however revising the zoning may be an easier options. Board members reviewed draft changes and will consider sponsoring article for the Spring Annual Town Meeting at an upcoming Board meeting.

The Camelot –Update/Status

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that he arranged for and attended a site visit (January 6th) attended by the DPW Director, the Planning Board's consulting engineering (Bill Richard, Cullinan Engineering), the developers (Joe & Frank Marinella), and George Murray, along with Paul Hutnak from Heritage Design Group. The site visit was a follow-up to the pre-construction meeting held on December 16, 2010. The purpose of the visit was to review the current site conditions and review the Board's approval and required inspections prior to construction. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that the developer was looking to initiate site clearing (tree cutting) starting from the Hill Street entrance through phase one of the subdivision, including the sewer easement to Rumonoski Drive. Ms. Gaudette mentioned she saw the group out there and reminded that an Arborist needs to be included on the sequence of construction. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that he made this aware during the site visit and that he would contact Mr. Murray again about this requirement.

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: (draft) Planning Board agenda for January 25, 2011; ANR Checklist for 338 Church Street; Pulte Homes of New England letter dated January 06, 2011 regarding special permit/subdivision modification; Planning Memorandum dated January 06, 2011 regarding Green Communities Action Plan Criterion #1 & #2; December 09, 2010 Planning Memorandum concerning 690 Church Street; (draft) 43D Expedited Permitting regulations; letter dated December 30, 2010 from Bowditch & Dewey concerning Presidential Farms Open Space; Presidential Farms Open Space Restriction –Quitclaim Deed; Presidential Farms Open Space –Agricultural Open Space Restriction; letter dated October 01, 2010 from MDAR – Department of Agricultural Resources concerning Presidential Farms Open Space Restriction; (draft) zoning amendment Section 173-12 [Table of Use Regulations]; Pre-construction meeting notes for Camelot subdivision (December 16, 2010); letter dated January 04, 2011 from FEMA –Federal Emergency Management Agency regarding Northbridge's recently completed re-evaluation of flood hazards; Planning Memorandum dated January 07, ~~2010~~ (2011) regarding FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map; copy of Zoning Bylaw Section 173-18 [Floodway and Floodplain Districts], Mr. Bechtholdt explained as part of the FEMA's update communities will need to amend their local bylaw and ordinances accordingly; Planning Memorandum dated January 05, 2011 regarding planning grants submitted the past 3 calendar years; announcement from Sujatha Mohanakrishnan from CMRPC (Regional Planning Agency) concerning draft populations and employment projections for central Massachusetts; copy of email communication sent January 05, 2011 concerning proposed Shining Rock Golf Clubhouse site plan alterations; Norwood Cooperative bank letter dated December 29, 2010 regarding Shining Rock Golf Community roadway acceptance; and copy of the 2011 Planning Board meeting schedule.

Other

None.

Adjournment

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk