



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Tuesday, October 11, 2011



Janet Dolber, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Barbara Gaudette, Edward Palmer and Richard Griggs were in attendance. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner was also present.

The following members of the public were in attendance: Deb Gauthier, Jeff Ciulla, Henry Lane, Judith L. Uthoff, Christopher Riche, Doug Priore, James Gahan, Joseph Susienka, and Richard Barbetta.

I. MASTER PLAN WORKSHOP (6:30PM to 8:00PM)

Planning Board reviewed with residents in attendance the various elements to be included in the Master Plan; Land Use & Zoning, Housing, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Transportation, Open Space, Goals & Policies, and Implementation.

Mr. Bechtholdt distributed a town map, "Community Snap-Shot" prepared by CMRPC –the town's Regional Planning Agency gathered from 2010 US Census data, a worksheet for attendees to identify what they felt are important features & assets in town, as well as a SWOT exercise –Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats.

Mr. Bechtholdt reminded Board members that subcommittees to address the various master plan elements were created for instance Mr. Lane was charged with drafting the Transportation element. Henry Lane, Master Plan Update Committee member indicated that he has prepared his section on transportation and will need to submit for review by the committee.

Mr. Bechtholdt also noted the Cindy Key has been working on the Housing element. Mr. Bechtholdt added as part of the Master Plan update the town is also working on a Housing Production Plan, creating a Local Historic District (in Whitinsville), designated priority development sites, adopted a Historic Mill Adaptive Mixed Use Overlay District that has allowed the Whitin Mill (Alternatives) and now the Linwood Mill Lofts redevelopment project currently underway.

Mr. Bechtholdt also noted in addition to the Community Development Plan prepared in 2004, the Build-out analysis done in 2002 (Executive Order 418), the data from the 2010 US Census may be considered as par to the Master Plan Update, noting a lot of new information, new developments and construction has taken place since the last update (improvements to RT 146, new High School, residential growth, etc).

Jeff Ciulla spoke about the importance of having a good Master Plan for all decision making in town. Christopher Riche agreed, noting he would like to see the town continue to move in a positive direction.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

None

III. ANR PLAN –REVIEW/DECISION

None

IV. ONE PLUMMERS CORNER –CONT. PUBLIC MEETING**§173-49.1 [Site Plan Review]**

Janet Dolber informed the residents in the audience that the Planning Board is in receipt of a letter from Mark Anderson of Heritage Design Group (Applicant/Engineer) requesting a continuance of tonight's review; the purposed of the request is to look into and study the various comments received.

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Griggs) voted (3-0-1 [Gaudette abstained]) to continue the above noted site plan review (without discussions) to Tuesday, November 08, 2011 at 7:05 PM. In taking such action, Mr. Bechtholdt noted the period for decision shall be mutually extended.

Ms. Dolber explained, because the applicant has requested a continuance the Board cannot discuss this matter this evening. In response to a resident's inquiry, the Board indicated such requests for continuance are typically granted by the Planning Board. Planning Board members thanked the residents in attendance and apologized for any inconvenience this may have caused.

V. ZONING AMENDMENT -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING**Section 173-4 [Establishment of Zoning Map] Zone Change –from I-1 to R-2**

Janet Dolber reviewed with the Planning Board and residents in attendance, the public hearing to consider the zoning amendment to extend the Residential –Two (R-2) to include properties within the Shining Rock Golf Community was opened on September 20, 2011. The properties include parcels designated as Assessors Map 25 Parcel(s): 99 & 106 and Assessors Map 26 Parcel(s): 119–151; 154-161 & 163-168. Said parcels are located along Shining Rock Drive, Fairway Drive, Sandtrap Court, Clubhouse Lane, and Linkside Court within the Shining Rock Golf Community and are currently zoned Industrial-One (I-1).

Ms. Dolber sought additional comments from members of the Planning Board and residents in attendance. Judith Uthoff, 128 Clubhouse Lane indicated that she had no questions concerning the proposed amendment. The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Griggs) voted (4-0) to close the public hearing.

Upon motion duly made (Griggs) and seconded (Palmer) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to recommend zoning article to amend Section 173-4 [Establishment of Zoning Map] of the Northbridge Zoning Bylaws by EXPANDING the Residential –Two (R-2) Zoning District to include the following parcels designated as: Assessors Map 25 Parcel(s): 99 & 106 and Assessors Map 26 Parcel(s): 119–151; 154-161 & 163-168.

Said parcels are located along Shining Rock Drive, Fairway Drive, Sandtrap Court, Clubhouse Lane, and Linkside Court within the Shining Rock Golf Community (SRG). In making its determination the Planning Board noted, amending the zoning would result in the land use to be consistent with the Zoning District (residential).

VI. ZONING AMENDMENT -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING**43D Expedited Permitting –New Zoning Provision**

Janet Dolber reviewed with the Planning Board and residents in attendance, the public hearing to consider the zoning amendment to add a new provision entitled “43D Expedited Permitting” was opened on September 20, 2011.

R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner explained, the purpose of this article is to provide for the expedited permitting of Priority Development Sites (PDS) targeted in Northbridge for commercial and industrial development. The 43D Expedited Permitting provision shall establish and codify our local Zoning Bylaw (Chapter 173) the rules, standards and procedures of the State’s Expedited Permitting Program pursuant to Chapter 43D of Mass General Law. The zoning article identifies parcels of land designated as Priority Development Sites (as approved at the 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting); includes definitions; establishes an Overlay District; establishes project review period (of 180-days); includes submittal requirements; and permitting procedures.

Ms. Dolber sought additional comments from members of the Planning Board and residents in attendance. Judith Uthoff, 128 Clubhouse Lane inquired if additional properties have been considered for priority development sites designation and if so what would be the process.

Mr. Bechtholdt explained, at the 2008 Spring Annual Town Meeting voters designated three (3) locations in town; the Linwood Mill on Linwood Avenue, Northbridge Auto on Providence Road and a grouping of parcels on Main Street adjacent to the Walmart and National Grid facility. In addition to local approval the State also need to approve of such designations, noting the property on Providence Road was not accepted by the Commonwealth at this time. Mr. Bechtholdt noted if additional properties were to be considered for priority development designation a separate Town Meeting action would be required.

Having no additional comments or questions, the Planning Board upon motion duly made (Griggs) and seconded (Palmer) voted (4-0) to close the public hearing.

Upon motion duly made (Gaudette) and seconded (Griggs) the Planning Board voted (4-0) to recommend zoning article to amend the Town of Northbridge Zoning Bylaw by adding Article XII entitled “43D Expedited Permitting” to further the expedited permitting for designated Priority Development Sites in town, in accordance with Town Meeting action taken 2008 SATM (Art. 23, 24 & 25), pursuant to G.L. c. 43D.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS**Community Development Strategy Public Workshop –Tuesday, October 18, 2011 (5:30PM –Town Hall)**

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that the Community Planning & Development office, in cooperation with the Board of Selectmen will host a public workshop on Tuesday, October 18, 2011 from 5:30PM to 7:00PM at the Town Hall. The purpose of this workshop is to gather recommendations on updating the town’s Community Development Strategy. Mr. Bechtholdt also noted, as part of this session attendees would review the town’s Community Development Strategy and provide suggestions on possible projects for inclusion in the FY12 CDBG program application. Projects may be infrastructure improvements; housing assistance; economic development/commercial rehabilitation (sign & façade improvements);

public facilities (architectural barrier removal); and public social services. Eligible projects must satisfy one of the three national objectives of the CDBG program: (a) benefit low-and moderate-incomes; (b) prevent or eliminate conditions of slums or blight; or (c) address an urgent or critical community need.

Minutes –September 13, 2011 & September 20, 2011

Tabled

Fall Annual Town Meeting (FATM) –Tuesday, October 25, 2011

Point of information –no discussion

2011 Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant -Planning Board Recommendations

Mr. Bechtholdt noted that the Board of Selectmen, at its meeting of September 26, 2011 voted to layout the roadways within Shining Rock Golf Community, Delwyn Barnes Estates and Castle Hill Estates subdivisions.

The Planning Board upon motion duly made and seconded voted (4-0) to recommend acceptance as a public ways the following subdivision roadways: Shining Rock Golf Community -Shining Rock Drive (portion of); Fairway Drive (portion of); Clubhouse Lane; Linkside Court; Delwyn Barnes Estates –Delwyn Barnes Drive; Castle Hill Estates –Hastings Drive; Windsor Ridge; Cliffe Road; Dublin Way; and Clover Hill Road.

In making said recommendation the Planning Board noted the received and reviewed correspondence from Town Counsel and reportings from the Director of Public Works and Malley Engineering, the Board's consulting engineer. The Planning Board will provide a report at Town Meeting scheduled for October 25, 2011. The Board then determined which articles and Planning Board Reports they would read at Town Meeting.

National Grid Interstate Project –Stormwater Management

Tabled

Camelot Subdivision –Model Home Discussion

Mr. Bechtholdt explained to the Planning Board that J&F Marinella Development, Inc would like the ability to construct a "model home" of Lot #1 the first house lot on the left as you enter the Camelot subdivision from Hill Street. Joseph Marinella submitted letter dated October 05, 2011 requesting permission for marketing purposes, noting that no one would be living in the home.

Barbara Gaudette inquired about possible timelines and expressed initial concerns. Edward Palmer explained that he was concerned with such request, noting the Planning Board has never done this before; lots are released once the roadway is done or properly bonded. Ms. Gaudette suggested the Board table this and solicit additional information from the developer.

This matter was tabled by the Planning Board to its next meeting October 18, 2011. The Planning Board instructed the Town Planner to also notify the two (2) abutting property owners, inviting them to attend the meeting and provide comments on the request.

Hillside Garden Estates -PB Consulting Engineer

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board, like the Camelot subdivision the Board will need to engage the services of a new consulting engineer as Cullinan Engineering no longer able to provide such service. Suggesting if the Board is satisfied with the reporting for JH Engineering Group, LLC they may want to for consistency select them for this project as well.

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Griggs) voted (4-0) to engage the services of JH Engineering Group, LLC of Worcester, MA to perform consulting services on its behalf for the Hillside Garden Estates residential subdivision development.

The purpose of JH Engineering Group, LLC services will be to provide the Planning Board with an independent assessment/review of the construction of the subdivision roadway, drainage facilities, stormwater management & erosion controls, installation of utilities and other amenities associated with the subdivision development. In accordance with the Town of Northbridge and Massachusetts General Law, this consultation shall be performed at the expense of the owner/applicant, for the benefit of the town. As the awarded consultant, JH Engineering Group, LLC shall provide written report(s) to the Planning Board. JH Engineering Group, LLC may also be required to make oral presentation at public meetings held by the Planning Board.

Carpenter Estates -PB Consulting Engineer

For reason noted in the Hillside Garden Estates subdivision (above) the Planning Board elected to utilize JH Engineering Group, LLC for peer review.

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Griggs) voted (4-0) to engage the services of JH Engineering Group, LLC of Worcester, MA to perform consulting services on its behalf for the Hillside Garden Estates residential subdivision development.

As part of this service JH Engineering Group, LLC shall perform engineering review of the construction change to alter the vertical alignment of the roadway as proposed to the Planning Board September 20, 2011.

The purpose of JH Engineering Group, LLC services will be to provide the Planning Board with an independent assessment/review of the construction of the subdivision roadway, drainage facilities, stormwater management & erosion controls, installation of utilities and other amenities associated with the subdivision development. In accordance with the Town of Northbridge and Massachusetts General Law, this consultation shall be performed at the expense of the owner/applicant, for the benefit of the town.

As the awarded consultant, JH Engineering Group, LLC shall provide written report(s) to the Planning Board. JH Engineering Group, LLC may also be required to make oral presentation at public meetings held by the Planning Board.

Farnum Circle -Status

Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he contacted Mark Anderson from Heritage Design Group, the engineering firm that prepared the definitive subdivision plans with the hopes of contact Mike Lambert the developer.

Mr. Anderson was able to contact Mr. Lambert however he has not contacted the Planning Office. Mr. Bechtholdt hopes to review the remaining outstanding issues with Mr. Lambert so they may be addressed next construction season and the roadway readied for street acceptance next fall. Mr. Bechtholdt also noted that had contacted the new DPW Director, Jim Shuris who visited the site with him earlier in September. The Planning office is still awaiting a report from the Department of Public Works.

Brownfields Program –Update

Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned that he received word from CMRPC –the town’s Regional Planning Agency that the Brownfields Steering Committees voted in favor of authorizing staff to develop a budget and consider pursuing a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for 2040 Providence Road.

Mr. Bechtholdt suggested a Phase II ESA for this site, given the size and extent of potential contamination may be a pricey. Adding CMRPC may have in total \$400k for this year’s program of that roughly 2/3 (\$260k) is set aside for Phase II ESA. The cost of a Phase II Environmental investigation may range from as low as \$2,500 to tens of thousands depending on the size of the site an extent of contamination. This particular site is approximately 25 acres. Mr. Bechtholdt will update the Planning Board when additional information is received.

Planning Board –Vacancy

Barbara Gaudette mentioned that Denis LaTour may be interested in filling the vacancy; as he understands the importance of have a full Board.

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: Planning Board agendas for October 18, 2011 & November 08, 2011 (draft); Master Plan Workshop announcement; Master Plan Workshop worksheet;

Other

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board that he is in receipt of communication from Town Counsel indicating unless the landscape Island is expressly excepted from the description of what is being accepted by the town (street acceptance) then the town would be responsible for maintaining the landscape island at the beginning of Shining Rock Drive.

Adjournment

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk