



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, March 09, 2010



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

Meeting attendees include: Richard Griggs (Brookway Drive).

I. PLANNING BOARD REORGANIZATION

As a result of the resignation of Chairman James Vitello, the Planning Board upon motion duly made and seconded voted Barbara Gaudette Chair of the Planning Board. Janet Dolber and Edward Palmer shall remain Vice Chair and Clerk respectively. Prior to such action Ms. Gaudette nominated Ms. Dolber as Board Chair. Ms. Dolber thanked the Board however due to family matters did not feel she could devote the time necessary.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

Marline McIlvaine, 109 Clubhouse Lane informed the Board of her concerns of continued runoff from the golf course property onto the townhouse units' property, behind units 107 & 109 Clubhouse. Ms. McIlvaine explained that she has brought this to the attention to Pulte Homes, Norwood Cooperative Bank and the owner of the golf course. Ms. McIlvaine noted that she spoke with Tim Gordon (the new owner of the golf course) last year, prior to owning the course. Ms. McIlvaine also spoke of a secondary concerning regarding the front/side of her unit, where water runs across the lawn onto her driveway. Ms. McIlvaine provided the Planning Board with a copy of letter dated February 07, 2010, which included photos illustrating the flows of large amounts of stormwater collected and originating on the golf course property, traveling through a wooded section and then into the townhouse lot(s).

The Planning Board asked the Town Planner to talk with the Building Inspector and contact the owner of the golf course regarding the runoff issue. The Board noted they will need to address this matter as it appears clearly in the photographs taken that the water is flowing from the golf course. The Board also requested that James Malley, the Board's consulting engineering review this matter. Members also mentioned as part of the scheduled site walk to review proposed street tree locations the Board should also take a look at this area.

III. FORM A'S

Hill Street/Hillcrest Road (Camelot & the Hills at Whitinsville subdivisions) –upon the request of the applicant/engineer this matter was tabled to the next Planning Board meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2010.

IV. THE HILLS @ WHITINSVILLE –OPEN SPACE

Review/Discussion

At the request of the applicant/engineer this matter was tabled to the next Planning Board meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 2010.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS**Minutes –Approval**

Upon motion duly made and seconded the Board voted (3-0) to APPROVE the following meeting minutes: April 22, 2008; November 13, 2007; March 11, 2008; April 08, 2008; April 22, 2008 (Executive Session); and April 06, 2009 (Executive Session). The Planning Board tabled review/approval the meeting minutes of February 17, 2010.

Housing Production Plan

Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned that five (5) individuals have been appointed to serve on the Local Housing Partnership committee: including Vincent Tynan (Housing Authority); Thomas Melia (Selectmen); Wyatt Mills (Conservation); Barbara Gaudette (Planning Board); and Cindy Key (Citizen at large). Originally sought to have seven (7) members; one additional citizen at large and representative from the Council on Aging. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he will look to schedule a meeting sometime in April and asked that the Board review their calendars so they may set a date/time at its next meeting.

Overlay Map Update/Amendment

No discussion.

Master Plan Update / Open Space & Recreational Plan

Mr. Bechtholdt and Ms. Gaudette noted that they attended the Board of Selectmen's meeting of March 08, 2010 to discuss the status of the Open Space Committee. The Selectmen will contact the various boards/committees and individuals who have served on the committee in the past to see if they are willing to assist in the updating of the Open Space & Recreation Plan.

Agri-Tourism Farm –Discussion

Planning Board met with Greg VandenAkker (419 Purgatory Road) owner of West End Creamery to review a proposal that would help supplement income on his working farm. Mr. VandenAkker provided the Planning Board with examples of various learning and play activities from around the country. Mr. VandenAkker provided photographs from a farm in Lancaster, PA Cherry Crest Farms. Mr. VandenAkker explained that he met with the Building Inspector, along with the Town Planner to review zoning, noting that a portion of the farm is zoned business.

Mr. Bechtholdt reviewed with the Planning Board his memorandum dated March 02, 2010 concerning the meeting attended. Mr. VandenAkker is looking to create an "Agri-tourism" component to the property where school-aged children and parents may visit the working farm for recreation and educational purposes. Activities may include hayrides, petting zoo, corn maze, picnic, & play areas (similar to Davis Farmland in Sterling, MA and the Stowe Farm Orchards in Millbury, MA).

Mr. Bechtholdt noted after reviewing our Zoning By-law with the Building Inspector the proposed "Agri-tourism" may be pigeonholed within certain defined uses however did not seem to be the best fit. As a result, a draft provision was prepared. AGRI-TOURISM FARM -An agricultural based operation or activity that brings visitors to a working farm of a minimum of 15 acres (10 acres) for recreation, entertainment or educational purposes. Activities may include hay rides; petting zoo; destination mazes; tours; workshop; seminars; picnicking; and children play areas. Activities shall not include camping; hunting; apparatus

typically associated with amusement parks; operation of motorized go-carts or bikes (exclusive of hay and tractor rides); or Commercial Recreation, Exercise and Athletic Facilities.

Mr. VandenAkker asked if the Board would be willing to sponsor the Zoning Article for the Spring Annual Town Meeting. Board members thought it was a good idea and suggested why limit such use to just the Business zone. Ms. Gaudette questioned what about Foppema's Farm on Hill Street which is within a residential district. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that certain use such as hayrides and pick-your-own may be considered agricultural exempt and therefore already permitted. Agri-tourism may be more of an intense use such as Davis Farmland in Sterling, MA, where they have hayrides, petting zoo, corn maze, and a children's splash-down/water park, such use may not be considered under the agricultural exemption.

Town Meeting Warrant -Vote to sponsor article(s)

Upon motion duly made and seconded the PLANNING BOARD VOTED (3-0) TO SPONSOR the following zoning article for the 2010 Spring Annual Town Meeting. AMEND the Town of Northbridge Zoning Bylaws by (1.) revising Section 173-2 [Definitions] by adding "Agri-tourism Farm" and (2) revising Section 173-12 [Table of Use Regulations] to allow by-right "Agri-tourism Farm" within certain zoning districts in town. Arrangements shall be made for the Planning Board to hold its public hearing on April 13, 2010.

43D Expedited Permitting Initiatives –Status

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Board with a brief overview on the status of the town initiatives, noting that the sewer extension feasibility study with Sutton was completed earlier this year. Remaining tasks includes regional projects with Sutton and Douglas; one being roadway study with Sutton Main Street and Lasell Road and the other a proposed roadway along the westerly side of Route 146 (Sutton, Douglas & Northbridge).

Meadow Wood 8 Street Acceptances –Update

Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned that he has not received all the necessary documents to recommend that the Planning Board sponsor street acceptance article(s).

Green Community Initiative –Update

No discussion.

Planning Board –Vacancies

The Planning Board met with Mr. Richard Griggs of Brookway Drive. Mr. Griggs, who recently pulled papers for one of the Planning Board seats for the May elections, attended the meeting solely to observe and introduce himself to the Board. After discussions relating to the current Planning Board vacancies the Board, with the consent of Mr. Griggs; voted (3-0) to support the appointment of Mr. Griggs to fill one of the vacancies created by the departures of James Vitello and George Martin. Arrangements will be made for the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen to consider the joint-appoint of Mr. Griggs at the next Selectmen's meeting scheduled for Monday, March 22, 2010.

Mail –Review

See mail listing attached hereto. The Board received copies of the following: Planning letter dated February 01, 2010 regarding Linwood Lofts (Clerk of Works); Planning letter dated February 22, 2010 regarding Linwood Lofts (Parking); Town Manger letter dated February 19, 2010 regarding Linwood Loft (Sewer

connection fee); Planning memorandum dated February 23, 2010 regarding unaccepted subdivision roadways; Planning memorandum to Town Counsel dated July 31, 2009 regarding Rocky Road; Planning memorandum dated February 04, 2010/February 22, 2010 to Town Counsel regarding Shining Rock Golf subdivision roadways; copy of petition article for Ash Street; Planning letter dated March 01, 2010 to Equinox Realty Trust regarding Ash Street petition article; Planning letter dated March 16, 2009 to Attorney Henry Lane regarding Ash Street; Planning letter dated March 01, 2010 to Henry Lane (Blackstone-Chicago Corp) regarding Castle Hill Estates; Highway Superintendent email communication received March 01, 2010 regarding collapsed catch basing within Castle Hill Estates; cope of email communication regarding MGL CH 40 SEC 6C & D (snow plowing subdivision roads & private streets); copy of MGL CH 40 SEC 6C & 6D. Talent Bank Form (Richard Griggs); CMRPC memorandum dated December 18, 2009 regarding DLTA Request for Proposals; DRAFT meeting minutes noted herein.

Other

Mr. Bechtholdt mentioned that he, along with the Building Inspector met with Tim Gordon (Shining Rock Golf Course owner) and Jack O'Donnell (site manager) last week to review the temporary facility and certain revisions to the maintenance facility. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that it was his understanding that the planned alterations will not trigger any formal review(s) of the Planning Board. As part of the discussions reviewed the responsibilities of Jim Malley, the Planning Board's consulting engineer. Mr. Malley's shall inspect the installation of the clubhouse parking lot and associated drainage structures, noting prior to the issuance of occupancy(s), it shall be the owner's responsibility to provide the Inspector of Buildings with the appropriate certifications verifying that the site development has been constructed as approved and designed.

The Planning Board scheduled a site visit for Shining Rock Golf subdivision development for Monday, March 15, 2010 (5PM) for the purpose of reviewing proposed locations of street trees along Clubhouse Lane.

Adjournment

Have no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, February 09, 2010 at or about 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk