



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

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

The following members of the public were in attendance: Roger Mathieu, Eric Bazzett & David Brossi

I. CITIZEN FORUM

Roger Mathieu explained he would like to see the town develop the town-owned land on Providence Road (Route 122) into an industrial park, noting Northbridge is one of only a few towns without an industrial park; would like to see the ±22-acres across from the sewer beds developed. Mr. Mathieu suggested Northbridge is losing business to other towns; have no business, no commercial and no industry; have all the utilities available (water/sewer/gas/etc.). Mr. Mathieu also indicated the town should have rules in place for the review of industrial and commercial uses. Mr. Bechtholdt explained the town has existing zoning provisions/bylaws which include procedures for site plan review. Mr. Mathieu suggested adding industry would reduce the tax burden on residents, suggesting the town should consider selling the land. Ms. Dolber and Mr. Griggs both stated they were in favor of bringing in new industry and introducing other potential revenues. Mr. Bechtholdt noted the town-owned land abuts one-hundred acres of undeveloped industrial-zoned land located off Providence Road. Mr. Simas asked if there was a shortage of industrial space in town, questioning if there was available commercial/industrial space within any of the existing mills. Mr. Mathieu proposed the town build a roadway and prepare the plans for potential development of the town-owned land. Board members questioned where local funding would come from. Mr. Mathieu suggested the town has plenty of gravel (at the sewer beds) to build the road; suggesting now-a-days you can blast through anything. Mr. Mathieu also suggested the town should work with the JFK Administration School; students can put together construction plans for the town at no cost. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that a mixed-use office park is being designed and currently under review (MEPA) for property adjacent to Osterman Propane on Church Street extension. Mr. Mathieu was not aware of such proposal, adding it would be a positive for the town. Ms. Gaudette thanked Mr. Mathieu, suggesting the Planning Board take this under advisement and look to revisit this matter during a future meeting.

II. FORM A'S

None

III. ST. CAMILLUS HEALTH CENTER –CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

§173-49.1 -Site Plan Review

Eric Bazzett, PE of Heritage Design Group met briefly with the Planning Board indicating that the applicant has decided not to pursue the parking lot expansion as originally proposed; new parking plan will only include eight (8) additional spots with some reconfirmation of existing spaces and some restriping; expanding the rear parking lot is no longer under consideration. Heritage Design Group will provide revised plans within the next few days (reduced scope).

Upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Dolber) the Planning Board voted (5-0) to continue the site plan review to Tuesday, May 14, 2013 (7:05PM).

IV. PRESIDENTIAL FARMS -REVIEW/DISCUSSION

Phase IV

David Brossi (developer) met with the Planning Board to continue discussion/request (of April 09, 2013) concerning Phase IV –Presidential Farms (open space improvements -parcels A & D). Mr. Brossi provided the Board with a cost estimate proposal (\$50,000.00) prepared by Earthworks Site Development & Utilities. Mr. Brossi explained that he is open to the idea of considering an alternative to the bikeway/walking paths, however would like the Board to allow him to continue with home construction (sales) within Phase IV and satisfy the conditions of approval specific to the open space improvements to Phase V. Mr. Simas inquired about the overall project phasing (1-5) and the number of house lots (105-total; 9 remaining Phase III; 20-lots Phase IV & 14-lots Phase V). Mr. Simas also inquired about the required improvements for parcels A & D (open space).

Mr. Bechtholdt asked about the status of the remaining work (infrastructure improvements) within the current phase (Phase III). Mr. Brossi noted the sidewalks, streetlights and street trees would be completed this spring and final paving later this year. Mr. Simas noted it may be advisable to hold-off on final paving until a majority of the house lots are developed (citing provisions concerns expressed by DPW regarding remaining portion of Shining Rock Drive); Mr. Brossi agreed however would like to clean-up and complete Phase III sooner than later, adding extra precautions would be implemented to ensure that the curbing, sidewalk, etc are not damaged during remaining home construction.

Mr. Brossi asked the Board for direction –if they prefer he complete the bikeway/walking path or would like to consider an alternative that is deemed more beneficial to the town such as funds to improve an existing ball fields or something else he would be agreeable. Ms. Gaudette expressed concerns with request to postpone improvements; uncomfortable with putting the Board on the spot; not sure how best to proceed.

Mr. Griggs indicated that he is in favor of and would support the idea of an alternative and is willing to work with the developer. Mr. Palmer asked who would be responsible for the maintenance of the walking paths and bikeway; Mr. Brossi indicated they would be turned over to the town. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Board consider alternatives to the bikeway and walking path as the town may not be in a position to properly maintain these facilities and suggest the Board work with the developer to identify suitable alternatives. Mr. Simas supports the idea of postponing required improvements, noting the town may be in a better position to determine whether the bikeway/walking path is advantageous or an alternative if preferred.

Ms. Gaudette expressed concerns and question if the development does not get finished; town gets nothing (no bikeway or any alternative). Mr. Brossi assured the Planning Board that he fully intends to complete the subdivision; noting he would be foolish to walk away from the 14-house lots in Phase V which he already owns. Board members agreed.

Mr. Bechtholdt suggested if the Planning Board is agreeable to postponing the improvements for parcels A & D they may also consider and decide whether or not to waive the requirement regarding the open space performance guarantee as provided for in the Special Permit decision (condition #4).

Upon motion duly made (Simas) and seconded (Dolber) the Planning Board voted (5-0) to allow the developer to commence construction of Phase IV (including dwellings) and postpone the required improvements to parcels A & D prior to the construction of Phase V –Presidential Farms. In doing so the Planning Board also voted not to require a performance bond at this time for the required improvements (playground & bikeway/walking path), noting the developer shall work with the Planning Board on satisfying improvements or suitable alternatives prior to the commencement of Phase V.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes –April 09, 2013

Upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Dolber) the Planning Board voted (5-0) to ACCEPT the meeting minutes of April 09, 2013.

June 25, 2013 Planning Board Meeting –Vote to Cancel

Upon motion duly made (Palmer) and seconded (Dolber) the Planning Board voted (5-0) to CANCEL its meeting of June 25, 2013 -special election (US Senate) scheduled for same.

SATM Articles –Planning Board Reports

Ms. Gaudette agreed to present the Planning Board report for Article #21 –Zoning Amendment (Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers/Moratorium) for the 2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Palmer agreed to present the Planning Board report for Article #22 –Street Acceptance (Gilmore Drive) for the 2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Simas agreed to present the Planning Board report for Article #23 –Street Acceptance (Ash Street) for the 2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting.

2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting –Tuesday, May 07, 2013 (7:00PM)

Point of information –no discussion

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update –Schedule Public Workshop

Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Planning Board host a workshop aimed to generate interests from residents to participate in the Open Space and Recreation Plan update. Board members set meeting date of Tuesday, June 11, 2013 (6:00PM –Town Hall). Ms. Gaudette offered to prepare a letter, to be distributed at Town Meeting, inviting those interested to attend.

Linwood Mill Lofts –Condition of Approval #13 (Special Permit)

Tabled discussion at the request of EA Fish Development (developer)

Camelot Subdivision –Update/Status Report

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board that he has not heard from the Sewer Superintendent and again was not aware of any concerns with the sewer pump station. Mr. Bechtholdt noted it was his understanding that the DPW -Sewer Division requires additional testing of the pump station however nothing has been scheduled with the developer. Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board that JH Engineering Group (the Board's consultant) will be onsite to perform a site visit of Phase 2 infrastructure as requested by the developer (J&F Marinella). Mr. Bechtholdt explained to the Board that the developer should provide the town with a construction schedule for Phase 2, noting receipt of a call from the Whitinsville Water Company inquiring about recent work. Mr. Bechtholdt will contact the developer to request an updated

construction schedule for Phase 1 and Phase 2, noting the Planning office is still awaiting response to communications sent November 2012 and January 2013.

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: email communication from Town Planner to Mark Anderson, Heritage Design Group dated 4/16/13 regarding St. Camillus site plan application; Community Planning & Development memorandum to Planning Board and Mark Anderson dated 3/7/13 concerning St. Camillus Health Center Site Plan Review; Site Plan Review Checklist for St. Camillus Health Center; JH Engineering Group report dated 3/7/13 regarding St. Camillus Health Center Site Plan Peer Review; email communication from Town Planner sent 4/11/13 to David Brossi (developer) concerning Presidential Farms Phase IV and Open Space; Community Planning & Development memorandum dated 2/7/13 to Planning Board regarding Presidential Farms Status; copy of draft meeting minutes for April 09, 2013; copy of 2013 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant; copies of (draft) Planning Board Reports for article #21, #22 & #23; excerpts from the 2002 Open Space Plan –including Inventory of Open Space Parcels, Managing Recreation Areas, Section 8 -Goals & Objectives, Action Plan, as well as, descriptions of identified facilities (1-10) and conservation lands (1-8); copy of Community Planning & Development memorandum to James Sheehan, Inspector of Buildings dated December 12, 2012 concerning Linwood Mill Lofts; email communication from Jeff Howland, JH Engineering Group (Board's consultant) received April 15, 2013 regarding the Camelot subdivision; copy of 5-year Capital Plan (FY11-FY15); the 2013 Planning Board meeting calendar.

Other

The Planning Board briefly reviewed excerpts from the 2002 Open Space Plan, which included an Inventory of Open Space Parcels, Section 8 -Goals & Objectives, Action Plan, as well as, descriptions of identified facilities (#1 - #10) and conservation lands (#1 - #8). The Planning Board also briefly review the town's five year Capital Plan for FY2011 through FY 2015; Mr. Bechtholdt is to check with the Town Manager on its status/update.

Adjournment

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at or about 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk