



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Recognizing the presence of a quorum Chairman George Murray called the meeting to order at or about 7:00PM with Barbara Gaudette, Brian Massey, Mark Key, and Pamela Ferrara 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: Stephen O'Connell (Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc.)

I. CITIZENS FORUM

None

II. FORM A

None (postponed at request of Applicant/Engineer).

III. HEMLOCK ESTATES -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

Subdivision Modification –Smith & Gendron Street Improvements

Stephen O'Connell, Andrews Survey & Engineering reviewed with the Planning Board plan entitled "Gendron Street Improvements" dated January 12, 2015, along with a series of photographs depicting locations along Gendron Street that correspond to locations on the plan prepared by Andrews Survey & Engineering Inc. The Board noted the absence of Mr. James Gendron, abutter who had attended previous meetings concerning the requested modification.

Mr. O'Connell noted that J&F Marinella Dev has reviewed proposed improvements (shown on plan) with Lynch Construction and is awaiting final pricing. Mr. O'Connell in reviewing his notes from last meeting indicated that Mr. Gendron was in favor of new surface coat and hoped to review with Mr. Gendron this evening proposed improvements. Mr. O'Connell indicated that he will talk with Mr. Gendron after the meeting to confirm.

The Planning Board reviewed (photos & plan) with Mr. O'Connell the three (3) sections of Gendron Street shown on the plan; (1) a ±272-foot stretch which included areas proposed to install bituminous leveling course; (2) a ±157-foot section proposed to mill existing pavement, install tack coat and an overlay with 2-inch bituminous top course; and (3) a ±225-foot section proposed to install bituminous leveling course and overlay with 1-inch top course. The Board also reviewed planned improvements to an existing 12-inch CMP culvert. Board members repeated concerns of potentially creating run-off and ponding issues along the roadway that do not exist today; noting they do not want improvements to negatively impact the homeowners of Gendron Street. Mr. Bechtholdt reminded Mr. O'Connell about the need to also prepare legal descriptions and necessary conveyance documents for the formal acceptance of Smith and Gendron Street. Chairman Murray directed Mr. O'Connell to contact the DPW Director to get written correspondence from DPW regarding the proposed improvements to Gendron Street. The Board thanked Mr. O'Connell for providing the plan, noting it was helpful. Having the need to review and seek additional input from others Chairman Murray looked to the Board to continue its public hearing.

Upon motion duly made (Gaudette) and seconded (Massey) the Planning Board voted 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to Tuesday, February 10, 2014 at 7:45PM (Town Hall).

OLD / NEW BUSINESSApproval of Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2014 & December 16, 2014

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Ferrara) and seconded (Gaudette) voted 5-0 to accept the meeting minutes of November 18, 2014 as amended. The Planning Board tabled action regarding December 16, 2014 to the next scheduled meeting.

2015 Special Town Meeting (February 24, 2015) /Warrant to Close January 16th (12PM)

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Planning Board that the Board of Selectmen called a Special Town Meeting, with a warrant closing date of this Friday, January 16, 2015. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated the Special Town Meeting is a result of Woonsocket Glass Fabricators (369 Douglas Road) seeking a TIF –Tax Incentive Financing (local/state approvals); in order to meet the State’s scheduling for consideration of same the town needs to hold a special meeting as the scheduled Spring Annual Town Meeting (May 2015) would be too late. Board members did not vote to sponsor articles for the Special Town Meeting.

2015 Spring Annual Town Meeting (May 05, 2015) /Warrant to Close March 6th (12PM)

Mr. Bechtholdt asked the Board if they felt at this time if they would have any zoning articles for consideration. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Board may look to sponsor a zoning amendment for mixed-use after the conclusion of the public workshops for the Reuse Study of 2040 Providence Road, also the Board may want to consider designating the town-owned land on Providence Road (Route 122) as a Priority Development Site (43D), noting he has contacted Vincent Osterman regarding same for property located within the Osterman Commerce Park. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he is still waiting to hear back from Mr. Osterman, suggesting that an article could be ready in the Spring; Mr. Bechtholdt asked the Board if they wanted to move forward with the town-owned parcel now (for the Special Town Meeting) or wait until the Spring Annual. Board members expressed a desire to wait; to have both the town-owned and Osterman land for the same Town Meeting.

2040 Providence Road Reuse Study –2nd Public Workshop (7:00PM -Tuesday, January 27, 2015)

Mr. Bechtholdt noted receipt of report and recommendation from CMRPC on the Reuse Study completed for 2040 Providence Road. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that a mailing will be sent to attendees of the first public workshop as well as the certified abutters to notify them of the follow-up workshop scheduled for January 27, 2015.

Blackstone River Valley National Park Designation (Whitinsville, MA) –Discuss Opportunities

Mr. Bechtholdt provided the Planning Board with a copy of news article from Worcester Business Journal published on December 15, 2014 entitled “Congress approves Blackstone National Park” and asked the Board to start thinking what that could mean for Northbridge as Whitinsville was designated specifically, an opportunity to partner with National Park in creating a destination within Northbridge. Board briefly discussed the thought of relocating the DPW facility and creating a linear park along the Mumford River (canoe launch, hiking, and park; extend downtown where visitors can learn about the Valley’s role in Industrialization (including walking tour, etc.) look to create a destination (economic development opportunities). Mr. Bechtholdt suggested perhaps the Planning Board champion the cause to revisit the idea of relocating the DPW facility (long-term). Moving forward the Board would like to formulate a game plan to create some PR and contacts at the state and federal level.

Osterman Commerce Park Proposed Designation of Priority Development Site (CH 43D) –Discussion
See discussion above.

Site Plan Submittal /Douglas Road –Schedule Meeting & Engage Services of Consulting Engineer

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board of site plan review application submittal for Douglas Road; proposed food composting facility. Arrangements were made for the Planning Board to have its public meeting (site plan review) for Tuesday, February 10, 2015. The Board upon motion duly made (Key) and seconded (Ferrara) voted (5-0) to engage the services of JH Engineering Group, LLC of Worcester, MA to perform consulting services on its behalf.

369 Douglas Road –Construction Change/Elimination of one (1) Parking Space

The Planning Board upon motion duly made (Gaudette) and seconded (Massey) voted (5-0) to grant modification of approved site plan pursuant to Section 173-49.1 H of the town's Zoning Bylaw to alter the site layout by eliminating one (1) parking space. The purpose of the modification is to accommodate additional grading required around the building foundation for frost protection. In making its determination the Planning Board acknowledged that the Building Inspector (/Zoning Enforcement Officer) has reviewed and consented to same. Reference is made to site development plan entitled "Proposed Addition WGM Fabricators, LLC 369 Douglas Road Northbridge, MA" prepared by Geisser Engineering Corporation, October 09, 2014 (revised through November 18, 2014), Certificate of Approval dated November 19, 2014 and letter dated January 07, 2015 from Geisser Engineering Corporation regarding request for modification.

Vote to Sponsor Article(s) –Special Town Meeting (February 24, 2015)

Planning Board took no action regarding sponsorship of a zoning article for the Special Town Meeting.

Planning Board Meeting (February 24, 2015) –Vote to Cancel

Upon motion duly (Gaudette) made and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (5-0) to cancel its meeting of Tuesday, February 24, 2015, as a result of a Special Town Meeting called for and scheduled for the same.

Rebecca Road Stone Wall (Right-of-Way) –Status of Indemnification Agreement

Brian Massey stated that he spoke with his attorney (Ton Wickstrom) indicating that it was recorded and will provide the Town Planner with a copy. Mr. Bechtholdt noted changes per Town Counsel were made.

Pine Knoll, Senior Living Development –Special Permit (Pending Application)

Mr. Bechtholdt noted he is awaiting receipt of special permit application (modification of) from the new owner to amend the affordable unit requirement.

Subdivision/Site Developments –Status/Update(s)

Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Board that the signed lenders agreement for Hillside Gardens has been received and has provided the Developer with the lot release. Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Board since the last meeting the necessary funds (deposit of money) for the Camelot subdivision have also been received and as such the lots release form as acted on by the Planning Board was provided to the Developer for recording. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he has not heard from the Developer/Engineer for Hemlock Estates. Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board that the Planning Office is in receipt of the updated punchlist and construction estimate for Presidential Farms from JH Engineering Group, LLC (the Board's consulting

engineer). Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board that he has been in contact with Town Counsel recently about reviewing the status of Rumonoski Drive in preparation for (re)consideration at the 2015 Fall Annual Town Meeting or the next Spring Annual; Mr. Bechtholdt reminded Board members that Rumonoski had been accepted as a public way in the late 1990's however due to conveyance issues was never formally recorded (accepted). Mr. Murray inquired about the status of Tracey Drive: Mr. Bechtholdt noted that he is awaiting correspondence from Town Counsel. Mr. Bechtholdt advised the Board of a pre-construction meeting held December 22, 2014 for Carpenter Estates, LID subdivision (Board received copy of meeting notes).

Green Meadow Court –Status/Update

Tabled –no discussion (place holder).

Farnum Circle –Status/Update

Tabled –no discussion (place holder).

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: January 13, 2015 Agenda; Draft Agenda for January 27, 2015; Email dated January 6, 2015 to Andrews Engineering with a cc to Planning Board Chair and DPW Director from Town Planner regarding Hemlock Estates Modification request specific to Smith & Gendron Streets; Letter dated October 22, 2014 to Town Clerk from Town Planner regarding Hemlock Estates Subdivision Modification – Smith & Gendron Street Improvement continuance; Hemlock Estates Construction Schedule; Hemlock Estates Overall Layout Plan; Draft Minutes of November 18, 2014; Telegram article published on December 15, 2014 entitled "Rezoning may be sought for Rockdale 'gateway';" Worcester Business Journal article published on December 15, 2014 entitled "Congress approves Blackstone National Park;" Email dated December 22, 2014 to the State of Massachusetts with a cc to the Town Manager and Planning Board Chair from Town Planner concerning Northbridge (43D) Priority Development Site; Sample warrant article wording designating certain parcels of land as a Priority Development Site; List of Priority Development Sites (existing and proposed); Locus and Assessor Maps of Priority Development Sites; Town of Northbridge Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173, Section 173-53 (Article XII 43D Expedited Permitting); Document from Massachusetts Permit Regulatory Office regarding Chapter 43D – Expedited Local Permitting; Document from Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies concerning Chapter 43D: A Step-by-Step Guide to Adoption; Massachusetts Permit Regulatory Office Chapter 43D Flow Chart; Interagency Permitting Board Chapter 43D Application; The Camelot Phasing Plan; Pre-Construction Meeting Notes dated December 22, 2014 from Town Planner concerning Carpenter Estates; Retaining Wall Illustrations prepared by Neal Mitchell Associates; Email dated January 5, 2015 to Geisser Engineering and the Building Inspector from Town Planner regarding 369 Douglas Road Parking Space; Proposed Conditions Site Plan 369 Douglas Road; Email dated January 6, 2015 to Presidential Farms, LLC from Town Planner concerning Presidential Farms Bike Path and Walking Trails; Email dated December 19, 2015 to Town Planner and Town Counsel from Town Manager concerning Tracey Drive and Rumonoski Drive; Memo dated January 2, 2015 to Board of Selectmen, Town Manager / Administrator / Executive Secretary, Planning Board, Board of Appeals and Building Commissioner from Petrini & Associates, P.C. regarding Quarterly Update on Land Use Law; Cost Effective Green Infrastructure in the Blackstone River Watershed Project Kickoff Meeting; Flyer; Worcester Business Journal article published January 5, 2015 entitled "Worcester to Providence by train: Who 's on board?;" Memo dated January 5, 2015 to All Departments, Committees, Boards and Commissions from Town Manager's Sr. Administrative Assistant /

Human Resources Assistant concerning the Annual Town Report for 2014; and the 2015 Planning Board Meeting Schedule.

Other

Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he reached out to David Brossi (Developer) regarding Presidential Farms and the bike path and walkway; Mr. Bechtholdt will look to meet with Mr. Brossi in the upcoming weeks after which arrangements will be made with the Board to review informally before a subdivision modification request is filed for consideration. Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board that their Annual Report will be due March 02, 2015; Mr. Bechtholdt will provide the Board with a copy at the next meeting. Mr. Bechtholdt noted he was recently contacted by CMRPC (regional planning agency) to see if Northbridge is interested in participating in a Freight Rail Planning Project Initiative; Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that unfortunately CMRPC has not been able to provide him with necessary information as to what the intent or potential outcome of such a study would mean for Northbridge and as such Mr. Bechtholdt is hesitant to participate. Mr. Bechtholdt shared with the Board an email he sent to Eric Smith (CMRPC) which reads as follows: “Thanks for follow-up email, I will present this to the Planning Board later this week. As stated before -if the purpose of this initiative is to identify potential land for a by-pass rail spur; not sure if occupying potential developable land (future economic development) within Northbridge with a stagnant line is the highest and best use for a site locally (that is) “would not generate an increase in our local tax base”. If this spur (for the lack of a better term) was to provide for a future transfer station (or the like) –this would need to be reviewed in a comprehensive manner, as the potential traffic generated may be a burden on the town and perhaps not supported (?). I am not discounting this as an option but need more information; this would have the potential to help provide a needed economic boost, but at what cost (?). Again, if we are talking about just a by-pass spur then perhaps this is something the town (utilizing town-owned land running parallel to the P&W rail) may be interested in either through land lease or sale. Again, in talking with Ted (Town Manager) additional information is needed as to what the end goal of this initiative is before progressing. It is my understanding you have already talked with a private property owner regarding this. As I mentioned to you before –I do not see a benefit in participating in this initiative at this time; however will look to our PB. More info is still necessary. By way of this email I shall provide same to the Town Manager and PB Chairman to keep them in the loop.” Planning Board members agreed with the Town Planner and would like additional information from CMRPC before participating.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at or about 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk