



## NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, February 09, 2016

From 6:00PM to 7:00PM Planning Board members attended the Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee meeting –see meeting minutes of the Ad-Hoc Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee for February 09, 2016 (agenda attached).

Recognizing the presence of a quorum Vice Chairman Mark Key called the meeting to order at 7:00PM with George Murray, Pamela Ferrara and James Berkowitz in attendance. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner and Cindy Key, Associate Member were also present. Brian Massey, Chairman was absent.

Board members welcomed Mr. James Berkowitz (new member) to the Planning Board. Mr. Berkowitz confirmed that he had been sworn-in by the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

The following members of the public were in attendance: Bill Renaud, Edward Renaud, Elizabeth Haberski, and Karen Halbran

### I. CITIZENS FORUM

None

### II. FORM A (81P) PLAN

None

### III. SUBDIVISION RULES & REGULATIONS -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

MGL CH 41 81Q (Amendments)

Vice Chairman Key explained as a result of the absence of Planning Board member(s) the Board shall consider continuing the public hearing.

*Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to continue without discussion the public hearing for the proposed amendments to the Subdivision Rules & Regulations to Tuesday, March 08, 2016 at 8:05PM.*

### IV. MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL –CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

Special Permit [§173-47 B.2 –Planned Business Development]

Site Plan [§173-49.1 –Site plan review by Planning Board]

Vice Chairman Key explained as a result of the absence of Planning Board member(s) the Planning Board shall consider continuing the site plan and special permit reviews. After some general discussion concerning scheduling of the continued public hearing and acknowledgement from the Owner/Applicant (Mr. Renaud) the Board continued the public hearing.

Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to continue without discussion the site plan and special permit reviews for Main Street Commercial to Tuesday, March 08, 2016 at 7:35PM.

## OLD / NEW BUSINESS

### Approval of Meeting Minutes –November 24, 2015; December 08, 2015; January 12 & 25, 2016

Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to approve the meeting minutes of November 24, 2016 as amended. Upon motion duly made (Ferrara) and seconded (Murray) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to approve the meeting minutes of December 08, 2016 as amended. Upon motion duly made (Murray) and seconded (Ferrara) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to approve the meeting minutes of January 12, 2015 as amended. Upon motion duly made (Ferrara) and seconded (Murray) the Planning Board voted (3-0-1 [Berkowitz abstained]) to approve the meeting minutes of January 25, 2016 as presented.

### 2040 Providence Road –2016 Recreational Trails Grant Program Application (CMRPC)

Mr. Bechtholdt explained that the 2016 Recreational Trails Grant for 2040 Providence Road was submitted to the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR). Board members received copy of support letter dated January 27, 2016 from the Community Planning & Development Office to Amanda Lewis, Recreational Trails Program Director at DCR. Mr. Bechtholdt noted his appreciation of CMRPC assisting in and preparing the grant application.

### Zoning Public Workshop –Tuesday, February 23, 2016 (6:00 PM –Town Hall)

Mr. Bechtholdt explained announcements and notice of the public workshop has been displayed on the town's webpage, included on local cable and distributed to the various boards and commissions. The Planning Board is hopeful that the Town Manager, Board of Selectmen and a greater number of the public is able to attend and participate in this follow-up zoning workshop.

### 2016 Spring Annual Town Meeting –Tuesday, May 03, 2016 (7:00 PM)

Point of information –no discussion.

### 2016 SATM Warrant Closes –Friday, March 04, 2016 (12:00 PM)

Planning Board acknowledged receipt of memorandum dated January 19, 2016 from the Executive Assistant to the Town Manager concerning the scheduling of the 2015 Spring Annual Town Meeting (Tuesday, May 03, 2016 at 7:00PM) and the date of the closing of the warrant (Friday, March 04, 2016 at 12:00PM). Planning Board also acknowledged receipt of memorandum dated January 19, 2016 from the Executive Assistant to the Town Manager concerning the submission procedures for warrant articles. Mr. Murray asked if the Planning office has received any additional requests for zoning amendments. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated the only request received was from Mr. Virostek concerning 674 Church Street and the adjacent parcel(s) to rezone from Residential to Business. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that Edward Renaud who represents Mr. Virostek on this matter is in attendance and asked if he had anything to add since the last meeting in which this subject property was discussed. Mr. Renaud explained there is still interest in the property and he is working to put together a conceptual plan for the locus area. Mr. Renaud indicated that they likely would be looking for zone change considerations at the Fall Annual Town Meeting.

Proposed Zoning Amendment Articles –Discussion

The Planning Board reviewed a handout prepared by the Town Planner showing the existing Zoning Districts and locus area of the former Milford Regional Medical Center located at the corner of Church Street and Granite Street. As discussed during the zoning workshop of November 10, 2015 the Planning Board may consider amending the zoning of the subject parcel(s) from Residential –3 to Business -2 to promote and provide greater flexibility in allowable uses of this now vacant building. The Town Planner reviewed with the Planning Board Table of Use Regulations [Sec. 173-12] of the Zoning Bylaw detailing what Retail and Service uses are currently allowed by-right, by special permit and prohibited in the Business and Industrial Zoning Districts. The Board may look to allow additional uses within the B-2 zone which has historically been limited to automobile services. The Board shall consider amending the Table of Uses by permitting by-right Establishments primarily selling food or drink in all Business zones where currently a Special Permit is required within the Business-2 and Business-3 zoning districts. Additionally the Planning Board may look to expand Office for administration, executive, professional sales and other similar uses and Research & Development within the Business zones where such uses are currently restricted to the Industrial zones.

Planning Board Studies & Initiatives –Discussion

The Planning Board will look to discuss and identify initiatives after the February 23, 2016 Zoning Workshop.

Subdivision/Site Developments –Updates

Planning Board received copy of JH Engineering Group, LLC report(s) dated January 15, 2016 and January 27, 2016 for Carpenter Estates. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated that he is still awaiting receipt of sign-offs from the Building Inspector and the Director of Public Works concerning receipt of as-builts and certifications for the retaining walls constructed along the roadway within the Carpenter Estates subdivision. Mr. Murray reminded the Board that these required certifications and as-built plans must be received before lots are released. Mr. Bechtholdt agreed and advised the Planning Board that he has reminded the Developer of this requirement. Mr. Bechtholdt explained that the Developer is looking to establish the performance bond and that JH Engineering Group is to prepare the estimate for consideration at the next scheduled meeting. Mr. Bechtholdt explained to the Board that the Developer of Fairway Drive (remaining portion) has prepared documents in conjunction with and in preparation of street acceptance. Planning Board acknowledged receipt of memorandum (January 22, 2016) from the Fire Chief verifying that the fire hydrant on Fairway Drive has been installed according to guidelines set forth by the Fire Department. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the Board may want to consider sponsoring street acceptance for the 2016 Spring Annual Town Meeting or decide to wait and sponsor an article in the fall.

Housing Production Plan –Update

Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that he met with Karen Sunnarborg, consultant hired to prepare the town's Housing Production Plan (HPP). Mr. Bechtholdt noted that Ms. Sunnarborg is currently reviewing demographic, US Census and other statistical data for the town and will look to meet with the Planning Board in March/April. Understanding that the Board is currently working on an update to the town's Open Space & Recreation Plan Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the scheduling for completion of the HPP may be less aggressive.

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: February 9, 2016 Agenda; Draft Agendas for February 23, 2016 and March 8, 2016; Open Space & Recreation

Plan Update Notice of Public Workshop; Open Space & Recreation Plan Consulting Services Project Schedule/Timeline; Subdivision Rules & Regulations Proposed Amendments; Draft Roadway Cross-Section (typical) minor/secondary streets plan; Standard Road Cross section plan; Cul-de-sac/Island/Travelway plan; Leonardo Estates Definitive Subdivision plans; Local Street Hierarchy; Section 222-9 Definitive Plan pages 1-5 of 15; Memo dated January 26, 2016 to Heritage Design Group with a cc to Planning Board and JH Engineering from Town Planner regarding Main Street Commercial (Draft) Traffic Impact Analysis; Letter dated January 7, 2016 to Planning Board Chair from Heritage Design Group regarding Main Street Commercial Safety Committee Approval; Memo dated October 29, 2015 to Heritage Design Group with a cc to the Planning Board from Town Planner regarding Main Street Commercial Special Permit and Site Plan Review; Letter dated January 28, 2016 to Planning Board Chair from Heritage Design Group regarding Main Street Commercial Waiver Requests; Memo dated July 7, 2015/July 15, 2015 to Planning Board and Heritage Design Group with a cc to Town Manager BOS, DPW Highway, JH Engineering, Board of Health, DPW Sewer, the Owner/Applicant, Building Inspector, Fire Chief, Attorney Henry Lane, Conservation Commission and Whitinsville Water Company from Town Planner regarding Main Street Commercial Special Permit and Site Plan Review; Draft Minutes of November 24, 2015, December 8, 2015, January 12, 2016, and January 25, 2016; Letter dated January 27, 2016 to Department of Conservation & Recreation with a cc to Town Manager/BOS and Planning Board from Town Planner concerning 2016 Recreational Trails Grant Program for 2040 Providence Road; Planning Board Notice of Public Workshop for Zoning and Economic Development strategies and opportunities; Memo dated January 19, 2016 to All Departments, Committees, Boards and Commissions and Town Moderator from Executive Assistant to the Town Manager regarding the Spring Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2016; Memo dated January 19, 2016 to All Departments, Boards, Committees and Commissions from Executive Assistant to the Town Manager regarding Warrant Article Submission Procedure; GIS Data layer of 18 & 28 Granite Street (former) Milford Regional Medical Center; Zoning Table of Use; List of Uses; Letter dated January 27, 2016 to Town Planner with a cc to Conservation Commission DPW Director and Andrews Engineering from JH Engineering concerning Carpenter Estates Construction Observation Report; Letter dated January 15, 2016 to Town Planner with a cc to Conservation Commission, DPW Director, Whitinsville Water Company, and Fire Chief from JH Engineering concerning Carpenter Estates Construction Observation Report; Memo dated January 21, 2016 to Town Planner with a cc to DPW Director from JH Engineering concerning Carpenter Estates Compaction Test Results; Email dated January 20, 2016 to DPW Director, Building Inspector and Owner/Applicant with a cc to DPW Highway Superintendent, JH Engineering, Andrews Engineering, Planning Administrative Assistant, Planning Board Chair, and Quarry Hill Excavating regarding Carpenter Estates Retaining Walls; Letter dated December 16, 2015 to Earth Retention Systems, LLC from Souhegan Valley Engineering, LLC regarding Carpenter Estates Retaining Walls; Memo dated January 22, 2016 to Town Planner from Fire Department concerning Fairway Drive Extension Fire Hydrant; Email dated January 15, 2016 to Planning Board from Town Planner concerning Benson Road and Highland Street; Mixed-use bylaw –things to consider when drafting; Email dated January 19, 2016 to CMRPC from Town Planner regarding Request for Additional LTA Hours; Email dated January 20, 2016 to Town Planner from Citizen Planner Training Collaborative concerning 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Conference; and the 2016 Planning Board Schedule of Meeting Dates.

#### Other

Planning Board members received copies of the town's Sexual Harassment Policy distributed through the Office of the Town Clerk. Mr. Bechtholdt informed the Board of the upcoming 2016 Citizens Planner Training Collaborative Annual Spring Conference to be held March 19, 2016; interested members can go online or contact the Planning office for more details.

Mr. Renaud presented the Planning Board with a conceptual layout plan of a mixed-use development proposed for a portion of the properties associated with the ongoing Forest Cutting Plan activities off Providence Road (owned by Trimount Trust and Whitinsville Redevelopment Trust). Mr. Renaud suggested a 10-year build-out for the project. Mr. Bechtholdt noted that the subject property is currently zoned Industrial and does not allow for mixed-use or residential units. Mr. Renaud indicated that they are willing to donate some of the land to the town to improved access to the High School's upper ballfields and donate land for a future school site. Mr. Bechtholdt and Board members questioned the proposed density (404 housing units). Mr. Renaud noted that they are also proposing to have business/commercial space along Providence Road. Mr. Bechtholdt cautioned the Board and suggested that a zoning proposal such as this will require formal impact analysis and vetting before Town Meeting considerations; Mr. Renaud agreed. Mr. Renaud suggested the proposal will be for two-bedroom apartment and townhouse/condo-units so it will not have an impact the schools. Mr. Renaud compared the proposal to Heritage Park (off Linwood Avenue) where there is very little impact to the school.

Mr. Murray expressed initial concerns and stated there would be impacts on the schools. Mr. Bechtholdt asked Mr. Renaud if he has had any discussion with the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Renaud indicated that he has spoken with a couple members individually but has not met with the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bechtholdt reminded the Planning Board that he attended a Selectmen's meeting in December concerning the Forest Cutting activities where Henry Lane only offered some general information specific to this subject property. Mr. Renaud felt the town should reconsider adopting the Planned Unit Development bylaw utilized for the Hills at Whitinsville project.

Mr. Key suggested the Board take a transparent approach in considering the proposed use and potential impacts. Mr. Renaud indicated one of the retail tenants would be a restaurant. Mr. Bechtholdt suggested the business/retail component would help offset the associated municipal costs but the proposed residential density of 400-plus units is a concern. Mr. Bechtholdt confirmed with Mr. Renaud that he planned to attend the upcoming zoning workshop. Board members expressed initial concern with converting industrial land to residential. Mr. Renaud suggested there is not a lot of property in town that is ideal and has the necessary infrastructure (water/sewer) for industrial use.

Mr. Bechtholdt reiterated his concerns with the number of units proposed, however suggested at least it starts the conversation. Mr. Renaud noted as far as industrial availability there is the Osterman Commerce Park and the Shops where approximately 500,000 square-feet is available between the Whitin Machine Works and the former Potpourri.

Mr. Key asked if residents in attendance had any comment or questions. A resident asked if the proposal presented by Mr. Renaud planned to develop land near Devon and Louisa Drive. Mr. Key suggested what may be shown on the proposal is very preliminary at this time. Mr. Renaud agreed suggesting the plan is not to scale. Mr. Bechtholdt indicated the proposal shows development to the property line. The resident followed-up asking if the proposed development would connect to existing streets such as Louisa Drive. Mr. Murray cautioned that Louisa Drive and Nolet Street are substandard roads and could not handle the additional traffic. After some back and forth concerning right-of-ways, easements, etc. Vice-Chairman Key suggested we are a long way from finalizing things and there will be plenty of time to discuss, review and provide comment. Mr. Bechtholdt offered as part of the Board's considerations for a new zoning provision

such as mixed-use they should look to require buffers separating intensity of use (business/commercial, single-family/high density multi-family use, etc.).

Mr. Key thanked the residents for attending and asking questions, reminding them of the ongoing process. The Planning Board thanked Mr. Renaud for attending the meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Having no additional business the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, February 09, 2016 at or about 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board –

R. Gary Bechtholdt II  
Town Planner

Cc: Town Clerk

MEETING DATE: February 9, 2016

MEETING TIME: 6:00PM

ISSUE DATE: February 3, 2016

REFERENCE: Northbridge Open Space and Recreation Plan  
Kick-off Meeting  
B+T Project No. 2674.00

PREPARED BY: John Gelcich, AICP

COPIES TO: Gary Bechtholdt, Town Planner

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**PURPOSE:**

Kick-off meeting to discuss and coordinate the preparation of the Northbridge Open Space and Recreation Plan Update.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

1. Introductions
2. Overview of OSRP Process
  - a. Timeline/Schedule (attached)
  - b. Future meeting dates
  - c. Review of proposed outline (attached)
3. Ad-Hoc OSRP Committee Documentation
4. Town Input on Process and Objectives
5. Questions

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Schedule  
Proposed Outline