



## NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES



Tuesday, February 08, 2022

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so via ZOOM. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted and public participation in any public hearing conducted during this meeting shall be remote means only.

Recognizing the presence of a quorum, Chair Brian Massey (Yes) called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Harry Berkowitz -Yes; Jim Berkowitz -Yes; Abdul Kafal -Yes; and Rainer Forst -Yes were in attendance. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner was also present. Andrew Howden, Associate Member and Barbara A. Kinney, Planning Administrative Assistant were not in attendance.

Attendees also included Robert Duff, PE (Guerriere & Halnon, Inc.) Brian Fitzgerald and Mark Donahue for the Winston Woods subdivision definitive plan application, Denise Brookhouse and Tony Brookhouse for the Camelot subdivision, and Joseph Leonardo for Leonardo Estates.

### I. CITIZENS' FORUM

None

### II. FORM A'S

None

### III. WINSTON WOODS, DEFINITIVE SUBDIVISION -CONT. PUBLIC HEARING

Assessors Map 15A Parcel(s) 224-232 [Spring Street, extension of]

Chapter 222 -Subdivision Rules & Regulations

G Bechtholdt introduced Robert Duff, Engineer and Brian Fitzgerald, Owner/Applicant (Mark Donahue, Attorney) for the Winston Woods definitive subdivision application; noting response letter and updated definitive plan was received earlier in the day; copies of same to be provided to the Planning Board's consulting engineer.

G Bechtholdt shared screen showing revised plan; R Duff reviewed with Planning Board updated definitive subdivision plan; addressing comments per the Board's consultant's comments. R Duff noted roadway layout has not changed based on comments received. R Duff reminded Board as part of subdivision development a number of offsite mitigation measures will be performed, including water and sewer upgrades along Spring Street (loop to Pine Street).

B Fitzgerald explained, through discussions with the Department of Public Works, he is proposing drainage along Spring Street to help address existing stormwater issues from behind the stonewall. B Fitzgerald feels this is a better plan, as painful financially as it may be, it is a better plan. B Fitzgerald indicated that he has no intention of seeking an extension of the decision and has instructed his engineer (Robert Duff) to submit and prepare all necessary documents in a timely fashion. B Fitzgerald explained revised plans will be prepared and presented to the Planning Board in the coming weeks. B Fitzgerald hopes the Planning Board

46 can conclude its review and vote on the definitive plan at its next meeting. G Bechtholdt reminded the  
47 Planning Board that the subdivision application is considered a conventional subdivision plan, which is  
48 allowed by-right, assuming it meets the requirements of the town (Zoning and Subdivision Rules &  
49 Regulations). Understanding this, Planning is to recommend to the Planning Board subdivision approval  
50 subject to conditions.

51  
52 G Bechtholdt informed the Board, after the last meeting a follow-up technical review meeting was held  
53 with the Applicant/Engineer and various town departments to review comments received and planned  
54 revisions to the plan. G Bechtholdt noted drainage remains to be a main concern, noting receipt of video  
55 from an abutter (on Spring Street) showing high volumes of water traveling down Spring Street from  
56 behind the existing stone wall (subject property). Recommendation from DPW is to capture water inlet  
57 was clogged dozen or so properties if town

58  
59 G Bechtholdt added, the focus of concern has been with drainage, existing (behind stonewall) and  
60 proposed (drainage basins) within the subdivision. Conditions of approval shall take into account drainage  
61 concerns that will need to be satisfied as part of the subdivision development. G Bechtholdt noted, a set of  
62 draft conditions will be provided to the Planning Board and the Applicant/Engineer before closing the  
63 public hearing, where the Board can review with the Applicant/Engineer to confirm requirements of the  
64 subdivision approval.

65  
66 G Bechtholdt noted, the revised plan shows a new drainage swale along the backside of the proposed lots;  
67 where an unaccounted amount of groundwater may be captured and directed to Spring Street. This too  
68 will need to be looked at and considered as the Town should not assume unmitigated responsibility  
69 associated with the existing drainage/runoff concerns within the subject property that may impact Spring  
70 Street or private properties.

71  
72 G Bechtholdt noted, the (lower) stormwater basin has been revised to address earlier concerns of the  
73 Planning Board. G Bechtholdt also noted the revised plan shows provisions for a community mailbox (exact  
74 location to be determined by the US Postal Service) and accommodations for off-street parking. Mr.  
75 Bechtholdt reminded the Applicant/Engineer that the Planning Board (not the DPW Director) shall have  
76 final say on street tree locations and the requirements for streetlights.

77  
78 B Massey asked if the existing stonewall is to be modified or fixed to address water run-off from pouring  
79 through it. G Bechtholdt suggested DPW has indicated the need for the existing stonewall to be evaluated.  
80 B Duff indicated the Conservation Commission is scheduled to review project at its next meeting, noting a  
81 trash-rack is proposed (behind the stonewall) aimed to eliminate/reduce blockage.

82  
83 Having no additional input from the Applicant/Engineer, B Massey (Chair) looked to Planning Board  
84 members for comment. H Berkowitz indicated he was okay at this point, suggesting the plan revisions  
85 appear to be an improvement addressing concerns with the lower basin.

86  
87 J Berkowitz sought clarification on how the existing run-off concerns will be addressed. G Bechtholdt  
88 explained there is an existing pipe behind the stonewall that collects water and directs it behind a number  
89 of homes (private properties) of both Spring & Pine Streets; where the concern is there are no formal  
90 easements. G Bechtholdt added, if the Winston Woods drainage is connected to the existing conditions

91 behind the stonewall, the town may (inadvertently) assume responsibility of what historically has been  
92 happening behind the stonewall; this is why Winston Woods' subdivision drainage needs to be separate  
93 and not connected to this existing system (behind the stonewall). B Duff explained an outlet control  
94 structure will be installed behind the stonewall to minimize future blockage.

95  
96 A Kafal sought clarification on subdivision location in relation to Prospect Street. R Forst had no comment  
97 at this time.

98  
99 B Massey sought clarification on the requirement of introducing a formal drainage system within the  
100 existing Spring Street as part of the Winston Woods subdivision. G Bechtholdt and R Duff confirmed  
101 stormwater will tie-into drainage system along Spring Street; to be installed by the Developer. G  
102 Bechtholdt noted this was important as the town does not want to inherit an existing problem. B Fitzgerald  
103 feels confident with the subdivision roadway the amount of water will be reduced; adding the area behind  
104 the stonewall was so clogged and now that its cleared should not be a problem moving forward. B Duff  
105 confirmed for B Massey that the access to the proposed subdivision basins have been improved for the  
106 DPW. B Fitzgerald stated now have a better plan and is prepared to execute it.

107  
108 Having no additional comment from the Planning Board, B Massey sought comment from the public; having  
109 none, the Board looked to continue the public hearing. G Bechtholdt suggested the Board continue the  
110 hearing to February 22, 2022 at 7:05PM at which time the Planning Board may review with the  
111 Applicant/Engineer overall status with the intent of concluded its review at the next subsequent meeting,  
112 including follow-up review by the Board's consulting engineer.

113  
114 B Fitzgerald asked about remaining waiver requests, G Bechtholdt noted the Board typically incorporates as  
115 part of its decision, suggesting B Duff review and provide a comprehensive listing that the Planning Board  
116 may review at its next meeting; B Duff agreed to do so.

117  
118 *Upon motion duly made (J Berkowitz) and seconded (H Berkowitz) the Planning Board voted 5-0 to continue  
119 the Public Hearing to Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 7:05 PM.*

## 120 121 OLD/NEW BUSINESS

### 123 Approval of Meeting Minutes -November 23, 2021 & December 14, 2021

124 Tabled -no discussion.

### 126 Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 -Planning Board Remote/Virtual Meetings

127 G Bechtholdt advised the Board, law extending certain special allowance from the COVID-19 state of  
128 emergency, including an extension until April 01, 2022 of the remote meeting provision. G Bechtholdt  
129 indicated he would update the Board if and when anything changes. Some Board members have indicated  
130 a preference to maintain remote meetings vs. in-person; B Massey suggested if the Board members are  
131 okay with virtual meetings we shall keep doing so as long as we are allowed to.

### 133 Stone Hill Development -Construction Change (Roadway Entrance)

134 Tabled -no discussion.

- 136 Camelot Subdivision -Construction Change (Streetlight /Hill Street)  
137 Planning Board considered request (construction change) to allow streetlight, to be located on an existing  
138 utility pole on Hill Street instead of Rebecca Road. *Upon motion duly made (H Berkowitz) and seconded (J*  
139 *Berkowitz) the Planning Board voted 5-0 to consider and allow construction change to relocate one (1)*  
140 *streetlight from its proposed location along Rebecca Road to an existing utility pole located at the corner of*  
141 *Rebecca Road and Hill Street as requested by Bill Renaud, on behalf of the Owner/Applicant.* Reference is  
142 made to letter dated January 28, 2022 from Bill Renaud, including sketch. In making its determination the  
143 Planning Board acknowledged consent of same by the Director of Public Works, where installation of  
144 streetlight shall be coordinated through the Department of Public Works and National Gird.  
145
- 146 Housing Choice Act (MBTA Communities) -Zoning Compliance  
147 Planning Board voted unanimously to utilize its District Local Technical Assistance hours (DLTA) for the  
148 purpose of having CMRPC -Central Mass Regional Planning Commission assist the Inspector of  
149 Buildings/Zoning Enforcement Office in the review of the town's existing Zoning Bylaw to determine  
150 status/compliance with the recently enacted provisions of the Housing Choice Act legislation, where MBTA  
151 Communities (Northbridge) must allow for by-right zoning for multi-family units at a minimum gross  
152 density of 15-units per acre (w/no age restrictions, suitable for families with children & within a ½ mile  
153 from a commuter rail stations, if applicable).
- 154
- 155 Pine Knoll/Aris Group Funds -Housing Production Plan  
156 G Bechtholdt reminded Board members of escrow account funded as part of payment in lieu of affordable  
157 units within the Pine Knoll Senior Living Development. G Bechtholdt will confirm fund balance, which may  
158 be utilized to prepare a Housing Production Plan (HPP). G Bechtholdt noted the Planning Board desires to  
159 have a HPP prepared before they consider any (re)zoning from non-residential to residential. G Bechtholdt  
160 cautioned the Board on amending zoning from Industrial to Residential, suggesting the town is already at  
161 80 to 85% residential and concerns of impacts (potentially straining town services) with future/additional  
162 residential buildout.
- 163
- 164 2022 Spring Annual Town Meeting -Tuesday, May 03, 2022  
165 Point of information -no discussion.
- 166
- 167 2022 SATM -Planning Board Warrant Articles (TBD)  
168 Planning Board indicated they had no articles at this time for the 2022 Spring Annual Town Meeting.
- 169
- 170 Site Plan/Subdivision Development -Status/Updates  
171 Tabled -no discussion.
- 172
- 173 MGL CH 41 SEC 81U -Proceedings/Hemlock Estates  
174 Tabled -no discussion (placeholder).
- 175
- 176 Green Meadow Court -Status/Update  
177 Tabled -no discussion (placeholder).
- 178
- 179 2021 Planning Board Annual Report  
180 Planning Board reviewed draft annual report for inclusion in the 2021 Town Annual Report.

181 **FY2023 Planning Board Budget**

182 G Bechtholdt reviewed with Planning Board FY23 Planning Board budget which includes salary increase for  
183 Town Planner position and separate article seeking \$65,000.00 for Master Plan update. G Bechtholdt also  
184 advised Board that the Conservation Commission is seeking funding for full-time Conservation Agent,  
185 where current position is considered part-time shared with Upton. Planning acknowledged memorandum  
186 dated January 18, 2022 to Town Manager in support of Conservation Agent funding (2022 SATM).

187 **Planning Board Concerns**

188 B Massey suggested Planning Board consider amending its Subdivision Rules & Regulations, by eliminating  
189 the requirement for a landscaped island within a cul-de-sac. G Bechtholdt indicated that he would not be  
190 in favor of eliminating this provision, suggesting in certain situation eliminating or reducing the size of the  
191 landscaped island may be appropriate, but would discourage eliminating it completely. G Bechtholdt  
192 indicated he would put this matter on a future agenda for additional discussion regarding island cul-de-sac  
193 and possibly other provisions the Planning Board wishes to consider. H Berkowitz asked the Town Planner  
194 to speak to the Community Development Block Grant program the town is currently undertaking: (1)  
195 Housing Rehabilitation Program and (2) Slum & Blight Inventory (New Village & neighborhood in Rockdale).  
196 H Berkowitz will have on his local TV show the town's consultant along with Kelly Bol, Counsel on Aging  
197 Director to speak again on the Housing Rehab Program, to help get the word out.

198 **Mail –Review**

199 In addition to the mail listed (see attached) the Planning Board noted receipt of the following  
200 communications: PB Agenda (February 08 2022); Graves Engineering, Inc letter dated January 25 2022  
201 (Winston Woods); DPW Director letter dated December 10, 2021 (Winston Woods); Highway  
202 Superintendent memorandum dated November 30, 2021 (Winston Woods); Camelot Streetlight  
203 construction change letter dated January 28, 2022 & sketch (Camelot); Planning Board 2021 Annual Report  
204 (draft); Planning Board FY23 Budget request; Planning Admin Assist memorandum dated January 05 2021  
205 (FY23 Budget); (copy of) Community Planning & Development memorandum dated January 18, 2021  
206 (support of Conservation Agent); (copy of) Planning Board letter to Town Manager seeking \$65,000.00 for  
207 Master Plan; and Planning Board 2022 Meeting Calendar.

208 **Other**

209 G Bechtholdt informed the Planning Board that the Director of Public Works will be retiring in March 2022  
210 and the Planning/Conservation Administrative Assistance has been out since January 14, 2022. Planning  
211 Board confirmed for Leonardo Estates, completion date of December 31, 2022.

212 **ADJOURNMENT**

213 Having no additional business, Board adjourned its meeting of February 08, 2022 at or about 8:25 PM.

214

215 Respectfully submitted,

216 Approved by the Planning Board:

217 R. Gary Bechtholdt II

218 Town Planner

219

220 Cc: Town Clerk

221 /File