



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday, July 12, 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, Brian Massey (Yes) called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. Mike Baker - Yes; Jim Berkowitz - Yes; and Abdul Kafal - Yes were in attendance. Rainer Forst was absent. Andrew Howden, Associate Member was present. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner, and Barbara A. Kinney, Planning Administrative Assistant, were also present.

Attendees: Rob Lussier, CMG Engineering.

I. PLANNING BOARD REORGANIZATION

Chair, Vice Chair & Clerk

Upon motion duly made (J. Berkowitz) and seconded (M. Baker), the Planning Board voted 4-0 by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; and B. Massey – Yes to appoint B. Massey as Chair.

Upon motion duly made (J. Berkowitz) and seconded (A. Kafal), the Planning Board voted 4-0 by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; and B. Massey – Yes to appoint J. Berkowitz as Vice Chair.

Upon motion duly made (B. Massey) and seconded (J. Berkowitz), the Planning Board voted 4-0 by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; and B. Massey – Yes to appoint M. Baker as Clerk.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

None

III. FORM A'S

None

IV. CONTRACTORS YARD - PUBLIC HEARING

Douglas Road -Assessor Map 3 Parcel(s) 115 & 116

Site Plan Review §173-49.1

J. Berkowitz abstained from this Public Hearing because he is the applicant.

In accordance with provisions of Massachusetts General Laws & Chapter 173 Section 173-49.1 [Site Plan Review by Planning Board] of the Northbridge Zoning Bylaw, the Northbridge Planning Board shall hold a public hearing (via ZOOM) Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 7:05 PM to consider application of TJJ Development Corp. (Whitinsville, MA) for a "Contractor Yard" consisting of two (2) steel buildings with parking, utilities & other associated site improvements on subject property identified as Assessor Map 3 Parcel(s) 115 & 116, Douglas Road within the Industrial-One (I-1) Zoning District in Northbridge. Copy of Site Plan Review Application dated May 20, 2022; Site Development Plan entitled "Proposed Contractor Condominiums" prepared by CMG Engineer Services dated May 20, 2022; Stormwater Report prepared by CMG Engineering

Services dated May 20, 2022; and other supportive documents are on file with Town Clerk (7 Main Street) and Community Planning & Development (14 Hill Street) may be viewed during regular office hours or viewed via the town's webpage at: northbridgemass.org/planning-board. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this public hearing shall be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so in the following manner: (ZOOM Meeting ID/Passcode to be included on posted Agenda). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, and public participation in any public meeting conducted during this meeting shall be by remote means only. The purpose of this notice is to provide opportunity for public comment. Anyone wishing to be heard may submit comments directly to Community Planning & Development at planning@northbridgemass.org or participate during said meeting.

Upon motion duly made (M. Baker) and seconded (A. Kafal), the Planning Board voted 3-0-1 (J. Berkowitz abstained) by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; B. Massey – Yes and J. Berkowitz – Abstain to waive the reading of the Public Hearing Notice.

Graves Engineering has reviewed the project and sent their report. Rob Lussier explained that they have also filed a Notice of Intent with the Conservation Commission and for a Special Permit with the Zoning Board of Appeals. There is no street number yet as the property is undeveloped at this time. The project consists of two (2) parcels on two (2) +/- acres with wetlands on the west side of the property. The soil is fly ash with a depth of six (6) feet in some places. There are proposed two (2) metal buildings that will house contractors, welders, landscapers, etc. The parking spaces exceed the Zoning requirements. There will be access from Douglas Road as well as access from the adjacent property in the back. The utilities consist of town water and sewer, natural gas and overhead electricity.

There will be a stormwater basin and infiltration system with chambers to handle up to a 100-year storm. This will reduce runoff from the site. There is a drainage easement associated with the wetlands from the Castle Hill Estates subdivision. The easement will be referenced on the plan. There were flooding concerns on the adjacent site to the east that have been addressed. There will be grading (fill) to get the buildings level so that area will be piped so the runoff will not pond and flooding issues will not happen here.

G. Bechtholdt gave a refresher summary on the site plan process. Zoning dictates whether a site plan review is needed. The Building Inspector determines if it can just be built (smaller projects) or if a site plan review is needed from the Planning Board. The Planning Board is charged with making sure that impacts to the surrounding area are limited. The Planning Board has an outside peer reviewer (Graves Engineering). Once a submittal is received, a technical review meeting is scheduled with all departments and then they provide memos with any concerns noted. G. Bechtholdt also provides a checklist overview to the applicant and Planning Board. He notes in bold anything that still needs to be addressed.

The center of the driveway has been staked out along with the curb cuts and the four (4) corners of each building. The sightlines do not appear to be a concern. Graves Engineering can do a separate report if the Planning Board wants them to review the sightlines. The Planning Board would like them to review and Graves Engineering will be contacted to do so. There has been no decision yet by the applicant for the signage. The Planning Board just needs the developer to indicate the location of the sign on the plan for now so the Planning Board can make sure the sign does not hinder the sightlines. The applicant can come back

later with the actual sign for Planning Board approval at a later date. J. Berkowitz mentioned that it will probably be a free-standing sign with no lights. He will locate it on the grassy area set back from the road.

There will be no light poles and the photo metrics have been submitted. There will be no night operations so the wall pack lighting on the buildings will be for safety reasons. The Planning Board wanted to know if it will be an open site or secured by a gate. J. Berkowitz is not sure yet. There will be a gate on the rear of the property and the front will probably be open. J. Berkowitz needs to consider if the access is open, there is minimal lighting and no security that the potential for undesirables back there increases and problems of after-hours dumping, etc. could occur. He will put some thought into how to address this concern.

The dumpster will be located between the buildings; it is shown in the wrong location on the landscape plan and will be corrected. For landscape plantings no invasive species are allowed and the developer needs to use the native species listed in the Best Development Guidebook. Whitinsville is a National Historic Park and the visual quality of the buildings and property need to be considered. Some enhancements may be needed. The regulations state that vertical curbing is to be used. However, sloped curbing is proposed along Douglas Road because a large truck entering or exiting the site may nick the curbing and less of an impact will be created with sloped curbing. Several departments have provided comments so far (Graves Engineering, Building Inspector, and Sewer Department). Revised plans will be prepared and submitted.

Upon motion duly made (M. Baker) and seconded (A. Kafal), the Planning Board voted 3-0-1 (J. Berkowitz abstained) by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; B. Massey – Yes and J. Berkowitz – Abstain to waive the impact assessment based on the scope of the project and the use of the property.

Upon motion duly made (M. Baker) and seconded (A. Kafal), the Planning Board voted 3-0-1 (J. Berkowitz abstained) by roll call vote of A. Kafal – Yes; M. Baker – Yes; B. Massey – Yes and J. Berkowitz – Abstain to continue the Public Hearing to August 09, 2022 at 7:05PM. The applicant needs the Zoning Board of Appeal's decision on the Special Permit and the comments raised by the Planning Board need to be addressed.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes –May 24, 2022 & June 14, 2022

Upon motion duly made (J. Berkowitz) and seconded (M. Baker), the Planning Board voted 4-0 by roll call vote of M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; A. Kafal – Yes; and B. Massey – Yes to accept the minutes of May 24, 2022 at written.

Upon motion duly made (A. Kafal) and seconded (M. Baker), the Planning Board voted 3-0-1 (B. Massey abstained) by roll call vote of M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; A. Kafal – Yes; and B. Massey – Abstain to accept the minutes of June 14, 2022 with the change as noted.

Earth Removal Board – Planning Board Representative

This was tabled until a full Planning Board is present.

Bylaw Review Committee -Planning Board Representative

This was tabled until a full Planning Board is present.

Housing Partnership Committee -Planning Board Representative

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has been hired to produce the Housing Production Plan. Pioneer Valley will be present at the August 08, 2022 Planning Board meeting for the kick-off event. At that time, it may be decided on whether a Housing Partnership Committee is needed.

Remote Participation by Public Bodies -Legislative Status (currently expires July 15, 2022)

There is no word yet from the state on whether they will extend the deadline for remote participation. The Board of Selectmen is encouraging everyone to meet in-person. The Planning Board members present tonight are fine with either way. G. Bechtholdt would not have been able to attend tonight's meeting if it was in-person. R. Forst will not attend any in-person meetings. The Planning Board thinks they have had good public participation with the remote meetings so far. Hybrid meetings create some headaches so they are not a good choice for the Planning Board. The Planning Board will continue meeting remotely for now and will revisit this topic again at the end of September.

Mumford Riverwalk Boardwalk -Status/Update

The survey company has done the field work and the plans are coming before the end of next week. Then the Request for Proposal (RFP) will be prepared for design and construction of the boardwalk.

Site Plan/Subdivision Development -Status/Updates

There is not a lot happening right now with the subdivisions except at Moon Hill Estates. All the roadways are paved there and it looks nice. The Town Planner commented that there will need to be lots of cuts and fills to build the dwellings because of the steep topography. This project is not phased and no lot releases have been requested yet. Hemlock Estates and Leonardo Estates are waiting for granite curbing and/or subcontractors for the work to proceed.

Roadways under construction are private ways owned by the developer. The Planning Board is charged with making sure the roadway is constructed to town standards so when/if the street is to be accepted at town meeting the roadway meets the town standards. A status update/construction schedule will be requested from all the developers. The Planning Office will provide the Planning Board members with a list of all current subdivisions under construction including the developer information and street names.

MGL CH 41 SEC 81U -Proceedings/Hemlock Estates

There has been no contact with developer. The Planning Board could pull the bond now, but certain improvements will not be done. The construction costs are higher than the amount of the bond being held due to the current market. Ultimately, the Planning Board wants the developer to finish the project.

Green Meadow Court -Status/Update

G. Bechtholdt and Jamie Luchini (DPW Director) have not visited this subdivision yet. This was tabled to a future meeting.

Planning Board Concerns

None

Mail –Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached), the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: Planning Board Agenda dated July 12, 2022; Draft Planning Board Agenda dated July 26,

2022; Email dated May 24, 2022 to Committees from Town Clerk regarding Committee Reorganization with attachment; Citizens Forum Document; Public Hearing Notice for Contractor Yard on Douglas Road; Letter dated June 1, 2022 to Town Planner from CMG Environmental and Engineering Services regarding Proposed Contractor Condominiums on Douglas Road; Application for Site Plan Review dated May 20, 2022 for TJJ Development Corporation for two steel buildings with associated parking and utilities at Douglas Road; Site Plan Layout of Contractor Condominiums on Douglas Road; Checklist for Site Plans dated June 15, 2022 for Contractors' Yard on Douglas Road; Memo dated June 15, 2022 to Planning Board from Town Planner regarding Contractors' Yard – Douglas Road; Draft Planning Board minutes of May 24, 2022; Draft Planning Board minutes of June 14, 2022; Email dated July 06, 2022 to Planning Office from Town Clerk concerning Remote Participation of Meetings; Email dated June 28, 2022 to Town Planner from Town Manager concerning Meetings Held By ZOOM; Memo dated June 29, 2022 to All Departments Boards & Commissions from Assistant to the Town Manager regarding the Fall Annual Town Meeting and Closing of the Warrant; Letter dated June 20, 2022 to Planning Board from Graves Engineering concerning Shining Rock Par 3 Golf Course; Letter dated June 29, 2022 to SNEP Watershed Grants from Conservation Agent concerning Support of SWIG Proposal "Prioritizing Culverts for Resilience and Aquatic Connectivity in the Blackstone Watershed;" Letter dated June 13, 2022 to Town Accountant from Town Planner regarding Master Plan Update Encumbered Funds; Community Planning & Development Weekly Report June 20 – 24, 2022; 2022 Planning Board Meeting Dates.

Other

Upon motion duly made (M. Baker) and seconded (J. Berkowitz), the Planning Board voted 4-0 by roll call vote of M. Baker – Yes; J. Berkowitz – Yes; A. Kafal – Yes; and B. Massey – Yes to cancel the meeting of July 26, 2022 due to the potential lack of a quorum.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business, the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of July 12, 2022 at or about 8:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara A. Kinney
Planning Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Planning Board: _____



Cc: Town Clerk /File

July 12, 2022

Planning Board

FROM	DATE	SUBJECT
Conservation Commission	07/06/2022	Contractor Buildings, Douglas Road Comments
Building Inspector	7/12/2022	Contractor's Yard Douglas Road

ZBA

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of TJJ Development Corp. for a Special Permit for a contractor's yard with two (2) metal buildings on Douglas Road.

Douglas

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Thomas Brennick for a Special Permit for an accessory apartment at 24 Monroe Street.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of National Grid Electric for a Special Permit to upgrade overhead conductors and replacing/relocating 24 poles on Oak Street.

Grafton

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Pulte Homes of New England, LLC (applicant) and D & F Afonso Builders, Inc. (owner) for the Modification of a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval for the mixed-use development "Afonso Village" to modify the type, size and location of certain buildings at 100 Westboro Road.

Sutton

- Decision – Approved with conditions the Definitive Subdivision for Sutton Douglas Development, LLC at 61 Duval Road entitled "Sutton Douglas Development."

Upton ZBA

- Decision – Granted Variance to Andrew Freedman for placement of a shed within the rear setback at 3 Summers Circle.
- Decision – Approved a Special Permit to Ralph & Deborah Whitney for an accessory apartment for in-law use at 11 Hartford Avenue N.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Jessica Golden-Weaver for a Variance for side setback relief for a 12' by 14' deck over an existing brick patio at 6 Depot Street; Application of Joshua Cooney for a Variance for side setback relief for the installation of an in-ground pool at 5 Henry's Path; Continued Public Hearing for 27 James Road Comprehensive Permit application; and Continued Public Hearing for Governor's Landing Senior Housing Community and Townhouse Development.

Uxbridge

- Decision – Granted Modification for Ledgemere Country IV Subdivision.