



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
TUESDAY, October 10, 2023



Recognizing the presence of a quorum Rebecca Rushford, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with the following other members in attendance: Michael Baker, James Berkowitz, and Michael Wilkes. Abdul Kafal and Andrew Howden, Associate Member, were absent. R. Gary Bechtholdt, Planning & Community Development Director and Barbara Kinney, Administrative Assistant, were also present.

Attendees of the Public: Bill Renaud.

I. CITIZENS FORUM

None

II. FORM A'S
GENEVIEVE DRIVE (& REBECCA ROAD) -REVIEW/DECISION
ANR -81P Plan, Assessor Map 16 Parcel(s) 263 & 264

The Planning Board is in receipt of the checklist from the Planning Office. The Form A's intent is to convey Parcel A to Lot 66 (Parcel F) and Parcel B to Lot 48 (366 Rebecca Road). This will give Lot 66 the minimum frontage needed on Genivieve Drive so a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals for a retreat lot will not be needed. The notation that Parcels A & B are not separate building lots will be added to the plan and confirmation is needed for the ownership of Lot 48. All concerns have been addressed and the Planning Office recommends approval of the Form A.

Upon motion duly made (J. Berkowitz) and seconded (M. Wilkes), the Planning Board voted (4-0) TO GRANT ANR ENDORSEMENT for the referenced plan. The intent of the ANR plan is to convey Parcel A from Lot 48 (366 Rebecca Road) to Parcel F and to convey Parcel B from Parcel F to Lot 48; creating Lot 48R and Lot F-R as shown and described on the plan. It is the understanding of the Town, prospective buyer of 366 Rebecca Road is aware of ANR plan filing with reference made to email communication received October 11, 2023 from Turning Point Engineering.

III. PROVIDENCE ROAD SUBJECT PROPERTY -DISCUSSION
Conceptual Development Plan, Assessor Map 24 Parcel 21 (& Assessor Map 14 Parcel 17)

Bill Renaud, one of the owners of subject property on Providence Road met once again with the Planning Board; following the completion of the town's Housing Production Plan. B. Renaud seeks to develop parcel for mixed-use development, including senior housing, apartment rentals and commercial/retail. B. Renaud briefed the Board on conceptual layouts and proposed access to the town's upper ballfields (High School) as part of development proposal. B. Renaud also noted and acknowledged requirements of affordable housing and open space component, including certain public amenities. B. Renaud indicated he has had preliminary discussions with Mass Highway (Providence Road/Rt 122), where they may limit the second access/egress (via town property) to right-turn only (in and out). B. Renaud indicated that he is to meet with Department of Public Works Director and Sewer Superintendent on overall sewer capacity, as well as with the Water

Company on water usage. B. Renaud noted receipt of initial comments from other town departments, including the Northbridge Fire Department. Board members expressed concerns with original proposed buildouts; number of housing units vs commercial/retail, need to include buffer areas and screening for existing residents, added demand on town services, what impacts development would have on schools, etc. B. Renaud will provide the Planning Board (Planning office) with a draft bylaw allowing for mixed use, likely an overlay district. Board members indicated they will review as part of subsequent meetings and may look to host public forums and workshops on zoning. Board members noted if property is to be rezoned (currently Industrial), the development will need to include affordable housing in support of the town's recently completed Housing Production Plan. G. Bechtholdt reminded the Board and B. Renaud that the Open Space & Recreation Plan update, nearing completion has identified the town parcel for an upland park; whereas part of a development proposal could be improved to include public amenities such as walking trails, multi-use recreational fields, a pavilion area, and basketball and tennis courts. B. Renaud indicated that he has been in contact with the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen members and would like to see a zoning article presented at the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting, if not sooner. B. Renaud suggested he will look to meet with the Board of Selectmen in the coming weeks to meet with them about their thoughts on the driveway access to the upper ballfields where it's a relatively steep grade and would require a wetland crossing.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Meeting Minutes -September 12, 2023 & September 26, 2023

Upon motion duly made (M. Wilkes) and seconded (J. Berkowitz), the Planning Board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of September 12, 2023.

Upon motion duly made (M. Wilkes) and seconded (J. Berkowitz), the Planning Board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of September 26, 2023.

2023 Fall Annual Town Meeting -Tuesday, October 24, 2023 (7:00 PM)

Point of Information.

2023/2024 Snow Plowing & Sanding Contacts (Subdivision Roadways)

The memos will be mailed to the developers asking them to provide the contact information of who will be plowing and sanding their private roadways within their subdivisions for the 2023/2024 winter season. This information will be provided to the Department of Public Works so they will know who to contact about a weather event. In an emergency, the Department of Public Works will plow/sand the private road but will then bill the developer for the plowing and/or sanding.

MBTA Communities Zoning Law -MGL Chapter 40A Section 3A

The Planning Office is waiting to hear from the state if Northbridge is in Zoning compliance.

2023 Housing Production Plan -Strategies & Local Initiatives

Accessory dwelling units are not allowed in Northbridge and this should be something to be reviewed with the Building Inspector. Accessory dwelling units are part of inclusionary zoning. The Planning Board may sponsor a Town Meeting warrant article to allow accessory dwelling units in Northbridge. A Forum/Workshop may be held in the spring regarding basic zoning education (Zoning 101) to help educate the public.

Comprehensive Master Plan -MGL Chapter 41 Section 81D

This item is a placeholder for a future discussion. The master plan will take one (1) year to one and a half (1 ½) years to complete. Information has been provided on accessory dwelling units, inclusionary zoning, transfer of development rights which will be part of the master plan.

Scheduling of Meeting(s) w/Developers -Construction Updates

The Planning Board will invite the developers to come in and discuss the status of their subdivisions. Joe Marinella will be invited to the next Planning Board meeting to discuss Hemlock Estates and The Camelot. The developer for Leonardo Estates will be invited to the second meeting in November or the first meeting in December. Moon Hill Estates has no houses built yet so the Planning Board will wait on this subdivision. Presidential Farms has one road (Washington Street) that has not been accepted by the town.

Site Plan/Subdivision Developments -Status

Subdivisions under construction remain private and anyone who buys a dwelling in a subdivision under construction takes a risk that the subdivision will be completed. The Planning Board oversees that the developer constructs the subdivision to town standards. When the subdivision is submitted for street acceptance by the Town, there is no guarantee that the town will accept the street. That is up to the voters.

The process to call in a bond is to have the town engineering consultant prepare a punch list that is reviewed by the town departments such as the Department of Public Works. The developer is then notified that they have XX (45 or 90) days to complete the punch list items. If the items are not completed, then the Town may call in the bond. However, the Town would then need to prioritize what work is to be completed with the remaining bond funds and hire a contractor to finish the work.

Mumford Riverwalk Boardwalk -Status

The contract has been awarded for the Mumford Riverwalk and it has come in under budget. The work will start in the spring.

Rockdale Pocket Park -Status

Invitations for bids will be sent out. Construction is expected to be done in the spring.

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 October 10, 2023; Draft Planning Board Agenda dated November 14, 2023; Citizens Forum Document; Form A Application for Endorsement of Plan Believed Not to Require Approval dated September 21, 2023 for The Camelot Lot 48 and Lot 66 (Parcel F); Plan of Land dated September 18, 2023 for Rebecca Road and Genivieve Drive Lot 48R and Lot 66 (Parcel F); Checklist for Approval Not Required Plan dated October 04, 2023 for Rebecca Road and Genivieve Drive (Camelot Subdivision); Conceptual Layout Plan for Northbridge Commerce Park dated January 16, 2023; Memo dated February 10, 2023 to Planning Board from Town Planner regarding Providence Road (Town Owned Property

and Private Property) Conceptual Development Plan; Memo dated February 02, 2023 to Town Planner from Chief of Police regarding Providence Road Conceptual Layout (Development Proposal); Letter dated February 02, 2023 to Planning Board from Fire Chief regarding Conceptual Design Plan for Providence Road; Letter to Town Planner from Whitinsville Water Company regarding Proposed Commerce Park Development; Memo dated February 13, 2023 to Planning Board from Director of Public Works regarding Providence Road Conceptual Layout; Draft Planning Board Minutes of September 26, 2023; Memo dated October 18, 2023 to Developers from Planning Administrative Assistant concerning 2023/2024 Snow Plowing and Sanding Contracts; Email dated October 05, 2023 to Town Planner and Planning Administrative Assistant from Planning Board Chair regarding Potential Planning/Zoning Strategies to Help Affordability Percentage; Understanding Accessory Apartments document; Model Bylaw for Accessory Dwelling Units; Understanding Inclusionary Zoning; Understanding Transfer of Development Rights; Understanding Planned Unit Development; Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit Overview; Mumford Riverwalk Improvements dated October 04, 2022; Rockdale Pocket Park Document; Site Plans for Rockdale Pocket Park at 2217 Providence Road dated March 30, 2023 and revised through September 13, 2023; 2023 Planning Board Meeting Schedule.

Other

A suggestion was made regarding a tree preservation bylaw so that a developer cannot clear cut all the trees at once and only cut them as needed. It was explained that ideally, we have a master plan first and then have the master plan drive what bylaws will be needed. However, certain bylaws may need to be done before the master plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business, the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at or about 8:24PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board:



Barbara A. Kinney
Planning Administrative Assistant

November 14, 2023

Cc: Town Clerk /File

October 10, 2023

Planning Board

FROM	DATE	SUBJECT

Douglas

- Public Hearing Notice - Application of 392 N.E. Main Street LLC for a Special Permit for relief from additional parking standards specifically location to allow existing parking dimensions to remain with a new construction layout which is currently to the property line to allow the required 24 foot turning area between opposing parking spaces at 392 Northeast Main Street.

Grafton

- Public Hearing Notice – Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 3.2.3.2 entitled Intensity of Use Schedule by adding footnotes that reduce side and rear setback requirements in each zone to allow accessory structures to one and two-family principal uses, that do not occupy more than 200 square feet.

Mendon ZBA

- Public Hearing Notice – Appeal of the Building Commissioner's Decision regarding 20 Lovell Street with the petitioner, Cornelis & Susan Vandervalk appealing the enforcement placed on the parking lot located across the street from their business.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Chad & Michelle Labastie for a Variance from the frontage requirements at 5 Thornton Street.

Sutton

- Decision – Granted the Special Permit with conditions for a Retreat Lot to Joseph Danko, Jr. at 125 Burbank Road.

Upton ZBA

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of David Duffy, Jr. for a Variance to allow for a front set back of 42 feet where 50 feet is required at 126 Elm Street; and Application of Lobisser Building Corp. for a Comprehensive Permit for a proposed project "Upton Apartments" at 0 Main Street (AKA 47 Main Street) located between 45 and 51 Main Street for a total of 68 garden-style rental units, parking (including three [3] detached garage buildings), landscaping, and associated improvements.
- Decision – Approved the Special Permit (Variance) to provide two (2) internally illuminated signs attached to the building's storefront for Serrato Signs on behalf of client, The Coffee Bean, at 113 Main Street.
- Decision – Approved the Special Permit (Variance) to allow a 10 foot addition with a walk-in, display cooler to existing gas station building which is a pre-existing, non-conforming use for Imperial Gas Upton, LLC at 44 Milford Street.