



BOXBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
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Owen Neville, Chair Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk Nancy Fillmore John Markiewicz Hongbing Tang

Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2015
7:30 PM
Grange Meeting Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road

Members Present:

Owen Neville, Chair
Nancy Fillmore, Member
John Markiewicz, Member
Hongbing Tang, Member
Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner

Members Absent:

Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2015

Mr. Markiewicz MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of April 27, 2015 as amended. Ms. Fillmore SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Correspondence

Mr. Duchesneau indicated he had received an email from Rich Harrington of Stamski and McNary, Inc., the engineer for the Town Center Senior Housing project proposed for the intersection of Stow Road and Massachusetts Avenue, on Thursday, April 30, 2015. Mr. Harrington requested the Town Center Senior Housing project matter be rescheduled to the Planning Board's meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 to allow for additional planning.

Discussion regarding Town Meeting Warrant Article # 28 and Presentation Preparation of Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw Amendment Warrant Articles

Mr. Markiewicz noted he would be presenting Article 22 and requested Mr. Duchesneau provide him the with the exact wording, in writing and in a large font, the motion he needs to read at Town Meeting. Ms. Fillmore requested the same and Mr. Duchesneau stated he could provide this to all of the Planning Board members that would be presenting Warrant Articles.

Ms. Fillmore noted she would be presenting Articles 23 and 24. Mr. Duchesneau reminded her that Article 23 was simply making the definition of mixed use consistent with how the Zoning Bylaw is currently operating. Mr. Duchesneau also pointed out that Article 24 was merely a housekeeping amendment as Section 4001 references another section that is no longer in the

Zoning Bylaw. Ms. Tang indicated she would be presenting Article 25 which simply changes the word "churches" to "places of worship" to be clear this section of the Zoning Bylaw covers all places of worship.

Mr. Neville indicated he would be presenting Articles 26 and 27. Mr. Markiewicz noted it was important to point out the Planning Board is recommending Article 26 because it could be beneficial to those residents who live in larger homes but their children have left town. At this time Mr. Neville stated the Planning Board would not be discussing Article 28 until 8:15 PM.

205 and 223 Flagg Hill Road – Preliminary Subdivision Plan Application – Applicant Meridian Homes, Inc. seeks approval to subdivide two existing lots into eleven buildable lots and one open space parcel off a proposed new cul-de-sac road named Silas Taylor Farm Road off Flagg Hill Road

The Chair opened the public hearing for the application at 7:45 PM. Bruce Ringwall from Goldsmith, Prest & Ringwall, Inc. and Glen Kaufmann from Meridian Homes, Inc. were in attendance to discuss the proposed project with the Planning Board. Mr. Ringwall recapped the conceptual design discussion that had occurred at an earlier meeting with the Planning Board, discussed the existing conditions, and provided an overview of the proposed project. He also went over the various design scenarios they had presented to the Planning Board previously. Mr. Ringwall noted he had additional conversations with the Fire Chief regarding the proposed fire protection system for the project, including a fire cistern. He pointed out that curbing, berms, and catch basins would be incorporated into the drainage system for the project. Mr. Ringwall also noted they were beginning soil testing with the Board of Health on May 6, 2015.

Mr. Ringwall noted as part of the proposed project they had originally requested four waivers from the Rules & Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, but they would now be looking for a fifth waiver to be awarded. Mr. Ringwall stated the original four waivers were: 1) relief from the 500 foot maximum length for a dead-end road; 2) allowing for a reduction in the width of the grass planting strip from 10 feet to 5 feet; 3) an increase in the maximum height of retaining walls from 4 feet to 6 feet; and 4) to increase the maximum number of developable lots served by a dead-end street from 10 to 11. The fifth waiver they were now seeking would allow for a reduction in the minimum roadway width from 22 feet to 20 feet.

Mr. Ringwall indicated they would be designing the roadway in order for it to be turned over to the Town as a public way at a future date. If they were allowed to construct retaining walls 6 feet in height, this would reduce the amount of wetland area they would need to fill. Mr. Neville asked how far away the proposed roadway entrance would be from the Woodward Lane neighbor's property. Mr. Ringwall indicated the proposed roadway would be 15 feet from the property line, but as the proposed road went deeper into the site it would move further away from the property boundary.

Ms. Fillmore asked if the Applicant had discussed the proposed 20 foot roadway width with the Fire Chief and Mr. Ringwall indicated they had not yet had that conversation. Mr. Neville encouraged the Applicant to seek a waiver from the sidewalk requirement as opposed to creating a narrower roadway. Mr. Markiewicz agreed with Mr. Neville and indicated he would not support a narrower roadway. Mr. Markiewicz also noted the proposed roadway would have a

significant slope and curvature. He stated having a sidewalk along the proposed roadway would be a maintenance issue for the Town in the future. Mr. Markiewicz also suggested that perhaps some granite curbing could be used around each of the catch basins to help channel water into them.

At this time Mr. Ringwall distributed an updated plan set and a memorandum dated May 4, 2015, which responded to various items raised in the Town Planner's Staff Report. Mr. Ringwall then went through each of the comments and questions in the Staff Report. However, before doing this, he also noted that meetings regarding the gas line in the area have already been taking place. Mr. Ringwall indicated the project team has been working with the Department of Public Works to coordinate running gas lines across Flagg Hill Road before the Town finishes paving the road this summer.

Mr. Ringwall began by going over the comments raised in the memorandum provided by Places Associates, Inc. Mr. Ringwall pointed out the updated plan set had been revised to include the proposed lot dimensions and he noted a survey crew will obtain the dimensions of the culverts in the area as they get further along in the engineering process. Mr. Ringwall also indicated they have had some conversations with the Fire Chief about the project, but they wanted to discuss the proposed roadway lighting with the Planning Board. Mr. Markiewicz felt minimal lighting, located only at the front of the residences but not at the intersection with Flagg Hill Road, would be appropriate. Mr. Ringwall noted that with regard to the minimum lot size requirement and the potential easements for stormwater management areas which may reduce the lot sizes of lots 3 and 4, the Applicant will address this issue, if necessary, as the project design is more fully developed. Mr. Ringwall also pointed out that some other missing dimensions had been turned back on in CAD and added to the drawings.

The Planning Board then discussed the waivers the Applicant was requesting. Mr. Neville stated he wanted to ensure the neighboring property on Woodward Lane would not be greatly impacted by the proposed roadway entrance. Mr. Markiewicz indicated he wanted to see a sufficient amount of screening between the proposed roadway entrance and the neighbor on Woodward Lane. He felt allowing a slightly higher retaining wall to help minimize disturbance to the wetland made sense. Mr. Neville noted the Planning Board was willing to continue the conversation regarding the requested waivers for the maximum number of dwelling units served by a dead-end street and the minimum distance a sidewalk should be offset from the edge of roadway pavement. However, the Planning Board would like to have a further discussion about them at the Definitive Subdivision Plan level. In terms of the proposed roadway width, Mr. Neville felt the shoulder should be reduced in order to accommodate a 22 foot wide roadway within the 50 right-of-way. Ms. Tang asked if the wetland crossings would involve simply filling in the wetlands or if bridges and/or culverts would be used. Mr. Ringwall stated they would be using culverts in most locations.

Beth Reid of 140 Flagg Hill Road asked if the headlights from vehicles entering the proposed roadway would impact the neighbors on Woodward Lane. Mr. Ringwall noted the immediate neighbor on Woodward Lane is substantially elevated from the proposed roadway entrance and a buffer will also be used. Therefore, there should be little lighting disturbance, if any, on the abutting properties. Ms. Reid asked if there would be a pathway along the side of the proposed

roadway and Mr. Markiewicz stated the Planning Board was encouraging the Applicant to create an unpaved, informal pathway.

Vanessa Brown of 164 Flagg Hill Road stated there were not enough sidewalks in town currently and she would like to see a sidewalk built on Flagg Hill Road. Mr. Neville noted the Department of Public Works does not plow sidewalks except for the ones on Route 111 and Swanson Road. He also pointed out that Flagg Hill Road will be repaved this year and there are no plans to add a sidewalk at this time. Therefore, it seems it will be a number of years before a sidewalk was even considered for the road. Mr. Markiewicz stated that sidewalks in subdivisions do not work and felt that a flat grassy area adjacent to the proposed roadway would be preferable.

Laurel Shirley of 105 Flagg Hill Road stated she was concerned about the traffic speeds on Flagg Hill Road.

Nancy Miller of 77 Woodward Lane indicated she felt the project was very dense and it was a lot of housing to be putting on Flagg Hill Road. She stated she was not sure if the existing roadway could handle the additional amount of traffic. Ms. Miller was also worried about drainage from one of the proposed rear lots traveling onto her property and causing erosion or flooding issues. Mr. Neville indicated the Town's consulting engineer would be doing a thorough review of the plans to ensure those types of problems could be avoided.

Alan Berrey of 67 Woodward Lane was concerned about the basis for the requested waivers. He was curious to know why 11 lots served by a dead-end street would be appropriate when 10 lots was the maximum allowable in the regulations. He also asked if the alignment of the proposed roadway where it meets Flagg Hill Road had been considered with regard to its location across from Mountain View Road. Mr. Berrey stated he preferred to have the proposed roadway located further to east, further into the wetland. Mr. Neville indicated the Board will have the Applicant look into the site lines for the proposed roadway.

Eric Wong of 86 Stonehedge Place asked if there would be any proposed street lighting other than the ones in front of the residences. Mr. Neville stated the Planning Board would inquire with the Police Chief, but dark skies principles are preferable. Mr. Wong also expressed concerns about snow storage in the proposed cul-de-sac at the end of the proposed roadway.

Ms. Fillmore then MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to Planning Board's next scheduled meeting on May 19, 2014 at 7:45 PM. Mr. Markiewicz SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Discussion regarding Town Meeting Warrant Article # 28

Mr. Neville asked Mr. Markiewicz to express the comments he wanted to make regarding Article 28 at the Planning Board's last meeting. Mr. Markiewicz stated he had received a lot of comments regarding this proposed amendment and he was recommending that the Planning Board withdraw the article from the Town Meeting Warrant. He felt the Planning Board did not have enough information to understand the existing gaps in the Police and Fire Departments' communication systems. He wanted to know where the gaps in the system are located and what

the impacts of having these gaps means for public safety before attempting to move the proposed amendment forward. Ms. Tang indicated she agreed with Mr. Markiewicz.

Mr. Neville stated the Police and Fire Departments do not want to have any gaps in their communication systems. Mr. Markiewicz reiterated his feelings that the Board did not have enough information on the existing gaps in the systems and he did not like the fact that if the proposed amendment passed, the Police and Fire Departments could locate these facilities in almost any location in town.

Mr. Markiewicz then MADE a MOTION to have the Planning Board withdraw Article 28 from the 2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Tang SECONDED the MOTION. Mr. Neville then opened the motion up for discussion.

Mr. Neville stated he had spoken with both the Police and Fire Chiefs and they both wanted Article 28 withdrawn as well. He indicated they would be taking this project to the Zoning Board of Appeals whether or not the proposed amendment passed at Town Meeting. Mr. Duchesneau stated this was correct because the project could request a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals under Section 5008 of the Zoning Bylaw. Mr. Neville noted legitimate questions had been raised about the project at the last public meeting and felt members of the public had called the coverage study for the project into question. He pointed out that many members of the public wanted to see if there were other location options. Mr. Neville noted that in Concord the Police and Fire Departments piggy-back onto wireless communication towers. Mr. Duchesneau then provided an explanation as to why the project could apply for a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals under Section 5008.

Mr. Neville stated he felt further conversation needed to occur about potential location alternatives to the Museum site on Middle Road. He felt the public was entitled to see and hear about alternative options.

Bette Bement of 535 Middle Road asked if the abutters would be notified as part of the Zoning Board of Appeals process and Mr. Duchesneau indicated abutters within 300 feet would be mailed public hearing notices. Mr. Markiewicz stated the existing Zoning Bylaw requires a public hearing in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals, but he simply did not like the fact that the Planning Board did not have enough information about the communication systems that are currently in place.

Mr. Neville then called for a vote on the motion and all members voted in favor.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Markiewicz, SECONDED by Mr. Neville, with all members voting in favor.

On Behalf of the Boxborough Planning Board


Eduardo Pontonero, Clerk