

TOWN OF STOW  
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the March 26, 2020 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Karen Kelleher, Margaret Costello, Len Golder, John Colonna-Romano

Voting Associate Member: Megan Birch-McMichael

Associate Member: Mark Jones

Lori Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Discussion of Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes of March 10, 2020**

*Karen Kelleher moved to approve the minutes as amended.*

*John Colonna-Romano seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark- Yea; Margaret Costello- Yea; Karen Kelleher- Yea; John Colonna-Romano-Yea; Len Golder- Yea.**

**Member's Updates**

Megan Birch-McMichael said the Lower Village Revitalization Subcommittee met recently for an update on Lower Village zoning and to discuss creative options around water infrastructure and next steps once the permit for 108-118 Great Road has been finalized.

Margaret Costello said she has been attending meetings of the Open Space Committee and has appreciated their discussions around preservation of land in Stow.

Margaret Costello noted that there appears to be an increase in activities at Crow Island. Jesse Steadman said that as the Town moves forward with the design of a shared use path along Track Road, Crow Island's compliance with their Special Permit will be ensured.

**Planner's Report**

*Jillians Lane Escrow*

Lot 2 has been released and the escrow agreement signed by the applicants. Members of the Board will need to sign the escrow agreement as well.

*Annual Town Meeting and Election*

Annual Town Meeting has been rescheduled to June 22, with the subsequent election to be held Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>. A public hearing for the Board's zoning article to allow outdoor dining in the business district will be scheduled for May.

*Collings Foundation Flights*

The F.A.A. has grounded all of the Collings Foundation's flights with passengers after an investigation related to the October 2019 crash.

*Track Road*

The Request for Proposals for Design, Survey, and Engineering for Track Road has been posted. Proposals are due by April 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### *Lower Village Streetscape Improvements*

The Town is now under a new contract with Green International to finalize remaining items related to the Lower Village project.

#### **Review of Active Adult Neighborhood Bylaw Goals**

The Planning Board reviewed a draft letter to Bruce Wheeler of Habitech, Inc. related to their request to increase the cap on Active Adult Neighborhoods (AAN) in order to proceed with a proposal to construct 132 AAN units off Athens Lane. The draft letter states that the Board is open to updating the bylaw so long as it is revised to fulfill additional goals and objects such as requiring a diversity of housing types, focusing on age-targeted units with universal accessibility features, the inclusion of starter homes, increasing the percentage of affordable units, adoption of Open Space provisions, and creating useable communal spaces.

The Board discussed the importance of limiting the number of bedrooms per unit and size of unit as part of the age-targeted objective so that units created truly represent downsizing.

The Board agreed to explicitly state that communal spaces should be included in each development, as even in existing AANs or Planned Conservation Developments in Stow there are not enough shared spaces. Shared spaces could include communal kitchens and community gardens.

Margaret Costello noted that AAN units are lucrative for developers and stated she does not feel the cap should be lifted without ensuring the benefits of a new development. The Board agreed that the cap should only be lifted if the proposal addresses the Board's housing goals.

The Board discussed ideas for the mix of low, moderate and market rate housing to be allowed through a revised bylaw. The Board agreed applicants should not be able to provide a fee in lieu of construction of affordable units.

The Board agreed to send a letter to Habitech, Inc. to outline the types of changes a bylaw revision would include, while continuing to discuss specific changes.

#### **Deliberation- Special Permit and Site Plan Approval, 108-118 Great Road**

The Board reviewed a revised draft of the Special Permit decision for 108-118 Great Road. The Board agreed that language should be added to note that the parcels share common utilities and parking, meaning they are dependent on each other. The Board approved language related to accommodations for bicycle infrastructure.

The Board discussed fire safety, noting that though it is an undue burden to require the owner to install a fire cistern, the Board would encourage the applicant to work with their neighbors to share in the cost as the Town has the desire for a cistern at that location.

Regarding underground utilities, the Board agreed that if any riser poles or transformers are needed, the installation should be done in a way that compliments the rural character of the town.

*Karen Kelleher moved to approve the modified draft decision for a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval for 108-118 Great Road as amended.*

*John Colonna-Romano seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark- Yea; Margaret Costello- Yea; Karen Kelleher- Yea; John Colonna-Romano-Yea; Megan Birch-McMichael (Voting Associate Member)- Yea; Len Golder abstained.**

**Collings Foundation Erosion Control Special Permit Modification Request**

*Karen Kelleher recused herself as an abutter to the Collings Foundation.*

Jesse Steadman said that at a recent meeting with Barbara Huggins Carboni, Town Counsel, and Kathy Sferra, Conservation Coordinator, it was made clear that the existing excavated area is an unpermitted violation and as such is not compliant with the Settlement Agreement. No further site planning should be discussed until the excavated area is remediated. The existing violation is grounds for the denial of any further permitting; a modification of the existing Erosion Control Special Permit or a new application cannot include the building addition.

The Planning Board agreed to draft a letter to the Collings Foundation with the Conservation Commission and to send an update to the Building Commissioner and Fire Chief as soon as possible, as this relates to ongoing meetings with the Collings Foundation regarding a proposal for a new building.

**Lower Village Zoning Bylaw Draft and Request for Proposals**

The Board agreed to discuss Lower Village Zoning at an upcoming meeting.

**Complete Streets Funding**

Lori Clark said she met with Jim Salvie of the Board of Selectmen recently to discuss Complete Streets budgeting, particularly as it relates to an additional services contract for state funded construction projects. It was agreed that while the Selectmen are the appointing authority, the Planning Board's staff ensure the Committee's progress towards Complete Streets goals. The Planning Board agreed that the additional services contract with TEC, Inc. could be split between the two Boards, though moving forward the Planning Board budget will include additional funds for Complete Streets work.

*Karen Kelleher moved to allocate \$2,500 for the Additional Services Contract with TEC, Inc. for engineering services related to Complete Streets improvements at Old Bolton Road and Harvard Road. Margaret Costello seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark- Yea; Margaret Costello- Yea; Karen Kelleher- Yea; John Colonna-Romano-Yea; Len Golder- Yea.**

**Meeting Adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Valerie Oorthuys