

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the June 9, 2020 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Margaret Costello, Karen Kelleher, 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 May 19, 2020

Karen Kelleher moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Len Golder seconded.

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

Correspondence

137 Harvard Road Cease and Desist

The Board reviewed correspondence between the Building Inspector and the builder at 137 Harvard Road.

Kathy Konno, 138 Harvard Road, stated that there is still traffic on the lot indicating that either interior work or onsite work is continuing despite the Building Inspector's Cease and Desist and fine. The Board agreed to confirm that the builder is not working under any permit and to discuss with the Building Inspector what options are available, including rescinding any permit the builder may have been granted or issuing daily fines.

John Mascia, 153 Harvard Road, stated that runoff along that section of Harvard Road has been increasing and noted that he has brought the concern to the Board previously as he believes the runoff is stemming from Wedgewood Pines Country Club. The Highway Department previously assessed the issue and suggested a catch basin could be installed between 137 and 153 Harvard Road, which would improve the runoff. Lori Clark said the Board contacted the owners of Wedgewood after hearing those concerns and unfortunately the Special Permit granted to Wedgewood has outdated conditions meaning that enforcing the decision would not result in meaningful changes. Jesse Steadman said a letter was previously sent to Wedgewood to ask about the work being done and the increased runoff. The explanation at the time was that a pipe burst and was replaced, though there was no pipe as part of the original Special Permit, indicating that unpermitted improvements were made over time. Karen Kelleher noted that the Building Inspector could act on the bylaw which states that sites cannot increase stormwater runoff.

The Planning Board agreed to invite the Building Inspector to a meeting to discuss both 137 Harvard Road and runoff from Wedgewood.

Subsidized Housing Inventory

Stow's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) for 2019 shows no increase in affordable units provided from 2018. This is likely due to some units being sold without a deed restriction and a group home leaving Stow, while few units were constructed. With the 2020 census likely showing an increase in households in Stow, it is possible that the percentage of affordable housing will decrease a percentage point on the 2020 SHI.

Lower Village Cemetery

Karen Kelleher noted a letter from a concerned resident related to access to the Lower Village Cemetery. The Board agreed that parking at the site is a long term problem not meant to be solved by the streetscape improvements, though the flat area in front of the stone wall was expanded and an improved entrance was created at the intersection of Great Road and Pompositticut Street. The Board agreed to provide a summary of the project to the Board of Selectmen, Cemetery Department, Historic Commission, and Highway Department and state that the Planning Board is happy to participate in a conversation around long term parking solutions.

Special Permit Public Hearing Template

The Board agreed on revisions to the template for public safety upon their review of plans ahead of a public hearing.

Planner's Report

Jillian's Lane Street Trees

Jesse Steadman said the Tree Warden and Lori Clark approved new locations for several street trees along Jillian's Lane, given the former locations seem less appropriate after the construction of the roadway. The number of trees planted did not change.

Lake Boon Commission

Jesse Steadman said the Lake Boon Commission's application for a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant is moving forward.

Gleasondale Bridge

Jesse Steadman said that he will continue discussions around a reduced speed limit along the bridge with MassDOT, though the crosswalk connection will not be part of the bridge replacement.

Chapter 61 Withdrawal

The Chapter 61 withdrawal notice for Hallock's Point Road was received by the Town, giving the Town 120 days to decide whether to use its Right of First Refusal.

Wheeler Road

Jesse Steadman said that a concerned neighbor contacted the Planning Department related to a possible septic issue at a property along Wheeler Road. The complaint was forwarded to the Board of Health along with the plans for the rain garden.

Collings Foundation Erosion Control Special Permit

Jesse Steadman said that correspondence with the engineer for the Collings Foundation has shown that the Board's previous discussions with Collings were misunderstood. In the interest of time, it now appears that the Collings Foundation may opt to comply with their existing Erosion Control Special Permit rather than modify the permit through the public hearing process.

45 Orchard Drive

Jesse Steadman said that consultants at MetroWest Collaborative Development are working to correct a violation of the foreclosure sale of 45 Orchard Drive. While the affordability of the unit is not at risk, the bank owner has not followed the sale protocol listed in the deed restriction.

Lower Village Traffic Safety Improvement Project

Jesse Steadman said there are three items remaining to close out the Lower Village streetscape improvements: the addition of steps along a walkway at 196 Great Road, the completion of the infiltration basin at the Lower Common, and a drainage solution at 92 Great Road.

Jesse Steadman said the Town Administrator has not provided for further funding for legal costs, tightening the budget for the project.

The Highway Department is looking to attempt parts of the installation of the infiltration basin in order to decrease the cost. It is possible that the Highway Department could save up Chapter 90 funds and wait to finish the infiltration basin for another year. Jesse Steadman said E.T.&L. Corp noted that the installation will now be harder to complete, with part of the system already in place underground.

The Board reviewed plans for repairing a drainage concern at 92 Great Road. Sue Carter of Places Associates has not yet had an opportunity to review the plans on the Town's behalf. Additionally, the plans have not been shared yet with the land owner, and the improvements are predicated on the owner's grant of an easement.

Outdoor Dining

Lori Clark said that several restaurants in Stow are advertising that they are providing outdoor dining, though that is not currently allowed in the Zoning Bylaw. The Board acknowledged that a Town Meeting warrant article will allow outdoor dining in the business district through a Special Permit. The Board noted that other towns are providing temporary relief from zoning or from the public hearing process in order to allow restaurants to more quickly respond to health and safety concerns in light of coronavirus. Members of the Board stated concern for some elements of outdoor dining including signage, location of tables, trash pick-up, and waste created through use of disposable plates and cutlery. The Board agreed to contact the Board of Health, the Building Inspector, and Public Safety to see if they would be interested in collaborating on a quick response.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys