

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the September 8, 2020 Planning Board Meeting

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

Voting Associate Member: Mark Jones

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

Discussion of Meeting Minutes

Minutes of August 25, 2020

Karen Kelleher moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Mark Jones seconded.

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

Planner's Report

Outdoor Dining Bylaw Discussion- Selectmen Meeting

Jesse Steadman reported that the Board of Selectmen discussion included who would be responsible for enforcing the new bylaw. The Board approved as amended.

Process for Division of Land at R-8 Parcels 5 and 5A

Jesse Steadman stated he met with Chris Merrill to answer his questions in regards to said property and what other different procedures for creating lots are available for the parcel of land.

Jesse Steadman stated Merrill was seeking how he could divide his land without having to go through the traditional subdivision process. The Board asked to have Chris Merrill come in to explain his request.

79 Edgehill Appeal

Jesse Steadman reported that an abutter to 79 Edgehill appealed the Special Permit Modification via letter to the Town. After speaking with Counsel, Jesse Steadman noted that he provided the abutter with the relevant statute that outlines the process for submitting an appeal to a Chapter 40A Decision.

Stow Acres

Jesse Steadman reported that he, the Conservation Coordinator and Assistant Planner met together with the Stow Conservation Trust and consultant Dodson & Flinker to discuss preliminary goals of a Master Planning process for Stow Acres Country Club property. Jesse Steadman said that the consultant is looking to interview various town Boards and other stakeholders before engaging the Town more broadly.

Lower Village Traffic Safety Improvements

Jesse Steadman reported that the Highway Department has begun procuring supplies for the upgrade to the underground infiltration system under Lower Common. Steadman indicated that he will be working with Highway to resolve the drainage issues at 92 Great Road as well as the work remaining at 196 Great Road.

Athens Lane Concept Plans – Habitech, Inc.

Prior to discussion with Habitech, the Board discussed a communication approach for project. Jesse Steadman stated that everyone should feel free to ask questions, making sure that the Board understood clearly the next steps. Lori Clark said that it would be important to recognize the town's position with AAN, 40B and the current cap in place. She stated we want to be straightforward with Habitech that the Board is interested in influencing development to meet the town's goals. Lori Clark stated we want to take a rational approach.

Lori Clark began the discussion introducing the Planning Board members.

Present:

Larry Reeves, Architect
George Dimakarakos, Stamski & McNary
Tom Miner, Planner & Landscape Architect
Lou Levine, Counsel
Bruce Wheeler, President, Habitech, Inc.

Larry Reeves prepared a narrative, with attached bullets, along with a conceptual plan. Larry Reeves presented the new conceptual plan saying they tried to address the construction feedback within the new conceptual plan with zoning changes looks like with housing sizes.

Larry Reeves said the homes are in clusters, with a wide range of units-sites; the focus on size was below the luxury market and ranged from 1600-2000 square feet of living space. The clusters were conducive with a neighborhood feel offering commonalities with 163 single-family homes, 70 duplexes, and 24 multi-family units making this an affordable sell. Bruce Wheeler added there would be walkout basements creating buffers with trail systems to the larger greenscape areas.

Larry Reeves presented the architectural house designs commenting that the design is to avoid more pavement. Homes have attached two car and tandem designs.

Lori Clark said she appreciates the diversity in housing types shown on the concept plan. The architecture reflects Stow and she appreciates the plan incorporates existing landscape elements and structures on site. Lori Clark said that meeting with other town Boards and getting feedback. Lori Clark said that the Board would be open to talking about raising the cap on AANs, although the number of units proposed is beyond what the Board was originally thinking. Lori Clark indicated that the Board is looking to keep certain aspects of the AAN bylaw, but to potentially make changes that are in line with the Town's current conservation goals. However, that bylaw is based upon 66 unit developments and the 257 units is beyond what the Board had expected to consider.

George Dimakarakos spoke about density saying the concept meets the three units per acre and with the number of moderately priced homes, more units are necessary to make the numbers work. George Dimakarakos noted the infrastructure necessary to service the development is also a factor influencing the number of units.

Bruce Wheeler said if Habitech were to eliminate the age restriction, the density drops to 40-unit development, which a 10,000-gallon system can still support.

Lori Clark said the discussion was encouraging, and asked if Habitech would create smaller units if they were age targeted? Bruce Wheeler indicated that without the restriction a two bedroom unit

would require a sewer treatment facility at 66 units. Bruce Wheeler explained that the DEP allows a waiver for age restricted units that calculates a lower gallon per unit.

Len Golder mentioned the barn structures saying the barns and stone building could be planned conservation areas with enhanced scenic views. Lori Clark indicated the existing barns are unsafe and will likely need to be removed. Karen Kelleher said the buildings are not salvageable.

Karen Kelleher commented on a combination of age restricted and age targeted units. Lori Clark replied we are unclear on age and should look at that. Larry Reeves said that a project of the size in the concept would likely be phased over several years.

Karen Kelleher commented on the open space saying it appears to be very fragmented. Larry Reeves said the team left large areas of land to open space. Bruce Wheeler noted that the open space that the Board is used to seeing in the Planned Conservation Developments is not the same as with an AAN. The Board agreed that having open space incorporated in the design, adds many great things in the plan. George Dimakarakos added that the units and associated open space is designed into pocket neighborhoods. Karen Kelleher said you could augment the Hill and Commons neighborhoods by redesigning to add open space to the rear, which abuts other open space.

John Colonna-Romano brought up runoff and leach fields, asking if the plan covered infrastructure and infiltration. George Dimakarakos replied that it is not fully designed but definitely practical.

Lori Clark commented on traffic saying with this many units for Hudson Road there would be an increase of traffic, asking for a perspective on that. George Dimakarakos replied that they have been looking at the intersection but have not yet performed a traffic study. Len Golder brought up Hudson and Great Road traffic development and Karen Kelleher mentioned the public safety concerns that will be relevant. George Dimakarakos stated there is an opportunity for a wetland crossing for emergency access only that can be accessed via Maple Street. George Dimakarakos said he met with the Stow Fire Chief. According to George Dimakarakos, he said the Chief's primary concerns regarded the width, with a minimum of 24' of pavement due to on street parking and trash receptacles. Mark Jones asked about the potential of other accesses. George Dimakarakos replied there is a potential right of way on the abutting property with an easement on Radant property. Bruce Wheeler said if we need another access based on the feedback we do have a second access on to Maple Street.

Bruce Wheeler asked about next steps. Lori Clark said we would have a discussion at the next meeting. Jesse Steadman will summarize for the Board to discuss next meeting. The next meeting with the Habitech team will be 10/6/2020.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Ostrander
Administrative Assistant