

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the May 25, 2021 Planning Board meeting

Planning Board members present: Lori Clark, Margaret Costello, Karen Kelleher, John Colonna-Romano, Mark Jones (voting associate), Nancy Arsenault

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

*Karen Kelleher moved to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021 meeting as amended
John Colonna-Romano seconded*

Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark -**Yea**; Karen Kelleher -**Yea**; John Colonna-Romano -**Yea**;
Margaret Costello -**Yea**; Nancy Arsenault -**Abstain**

Correspondence

Karen Kelleher said that the letter from Youfei Chen regarding a desire to purchase a portion of a recently accepted land donation in Lower Village deserved a response, and that the Board should add his letter to a future agenda. Town Planner Jesse Steadman said that the Planning Department would need to know more about the history of the site before any such discussions could seriously begin. Lori Clark requested that the Board reply and say that it would be discussed at a future meeting.

Mark Jones asked if Jesse Steadman had any more information about town wide energy efficiency requirements. Jesse Steadman said that the Town Counsel told him that the Board could regulate efficiency up to a point. Jesse Steadman said that there would be an energy efficiency committee formed soon to understand the limits of the Town's authority.

Lori Clark addressed correspondence regarding screening issues at 118 Great Road raised by abutter Sally Griffin. Lori said she wants to make sure everyone is clear that the Planning Board does not have anything currently open on the nearby Presti property. Dorothy Granat said that she has problems getting the Building Commissioner to enforce zoning bylaws at the Presti Property. Dorothy Granat said that she wanted to make the Board aware that the Building Commissioner has not responded to her emails about enforcement of signage bylaws. Dorothy Granat said she had an issue with screening at 118 Great Road and wanted to be sure that the owner complied with the bylaw despite having a split parcel.

Public Input

Katie Fisher said that the boundary marker had been replaced on her property but that she cannot move a mess that remained in the drainage easement. Jesse Steadman said that he was pushing the Highway Department to finish cleanup at the site. Jesse Steadman said that the Highway Superintendent had been preoccupied with the Old Bolton Road Complete Streets project.

Dorothy Granat said that the court case related to the Presti property had been ignored by Craig Martin and that had caused problems for the Planning Board. Dorothy Granat said that there was no paperwork documenting Craig Martin's determination of zoning compliance with a used car dealership. Dorothy

Granat said that there was a finding of no increased use. Dorothy Granat said that Katie Fisher should have gotten a more detailed explanation from Craig Martin about the reasoning for his zoning determination.

Mark Forgues said the case was ongoing. Mark Forgues said that Craig Martin should not have grandfathered the property in 2010.

Planning Board Member Updates

Karen Kelleher said that the Zoning Board of Appeals would soon receive a request for a variance from Linear Retail at the shopping plaza in Lower Village. Karen Kelleher said Linear Retail will be applying for a setback variance in order to construct a small shed at the corner of Samuel Prescott Drive and Great Road to house supporting infrastructure. Lori Clark asked if Karen Kelleher knew what equipment would be housed. Karen Kelleher said she expected to have a plan next week and would update the Planning Board when the Zoning Board of Appeals knew more.

Mark Jones said he would like to discuss making fire cisterns required for new developments in Lower Village at a future Board meeting,

Planner's Report

Jesse Steadman said that June 15 would be the public hearing for 137 Harvard Rd. Lori Clark asked if the site plan would be reviewed by the Board's consulting engineer before that date. Jesse Steadman confirmed that the consulting engineer would be reviewing the site plan soon.

Jesse Steadman reminded the Board that a decision on the Nan's Market outdoor dining permit needs to be issued by July 14. Jesse Steadman said that this would be reflected in an upcoming work plan for the Planning Board.

Jesse Steadman said that next meeting would include lot releases for Spring Hill Estates. Karen Kelleher requested that the Planning Board also reorganize at the next meeting.

Lori Clark said the Nan's decision should be discussed by the entire Board before Jesse Steadman begins drafting a decision. Lori Clark said it was necessary for the Board to reach some agreement on the main components of the decision before any language was drafted.

Jesse Steadman said that the next meeting would include a review of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding cost sharing for consultants at Stow Acres.

Jesse Steadman said that following the passage of the Active Adult Neighborhood (AAN) amendments at Town Meeting, the Planning Board will need to begin drafting Rules and Regulations. Jesse Steadman said that the prospective developer for Athens Lane had told him that he intends to use the new bylaw.

Jesse Steadman said that the final steps will be taken on the 0 Great Road land donation, including a title search. Mark Jones asked why the Planning budget would be expended for the title search instead of the Select Board. Jesse Steadman said it was because the parcel was created as part of a Planned Conservation Development (PCD) and was decided to be in the Planning Board's wheelhouse.

Jesse Steadman said that the Old Bolton Road project is now under construction. Jesse Steadman said that the Highway Superintendent has been monitoring the site closely and ensuring quality construction. Jesse Steadman said the project should be done sometime in late June. Margaret Costello asked when the next Town Meeting was likely to be. Jesse Steadman said he expected that there would be a Special Town Meeting in the Fall.

Lori Clark said that the Board should talk about doing something to recognize Len Golder's years of service on the Board. Karen Kelleher said she would be amenable to getting together outdoors somewhere.

Nancy Arsenault said she would not be in Town for the Tuesday July 13 meeting. Lori said that next meeting the Board would review their respective summer schedules.

Lot 1 – Joanne Drive – Update

Planning Board member introduced themselves.

Lori Clark said that Scott Bracci and Chuck Black had met independently since they last appeared before the Planning Board. Scott Bracci said that Chuck Black had spoken to him shortly after the last meeting. Scott said they had come to some agreements given the concerns that Scott Bracci had raised earlier regarding the proximity of new construction to his house. Scott Bracci reported that he and Chuck Black would negotiate a landscaping for the Planning Board to review, that would include some additional screening. Scott said he may allow some additional screening on his property given the tight margins.

Chuck said that, per the existing subdivision plan, he will plant 15 new trees. Chuck Black said the new homeowners would move in during September. Chuck said that the plantings would be done in September and that he would speak to a couple landscapers for recommendations about where to best locate the new plantings. Chuck Black said that he would like to see the Planning Board approve any plans for screening so that there would be nothing outstanding on the subdivision at a future date.

Scott Bracci said he appreciated that Chuck was willing to work with him to mitigate his concerns. Scott Bracci said that he still believed none of the documentation supported the eventual location of the new house.

Lori Clark said that the Planning Board does not dictate exact housing placement, which is instead determined by Conservation Commission determinations, suitable locations for well and septic systems, and zoning bylaws regarding setback. Scott Bracci said that the situation was not normal because normal zoning regulations had been loosened as part of a Planned Conservation Development process. Lori Clark encouraged Scott Bracci and Chuck Black to continue to find an amenable solution and keep the Board apprised of any agreements they come to. Scott extended his invitation to the Board to view the site in person. Karen Kelleher said that a visit should wait until a plan was in place for screening. Chuck Black requested to be invited by the Board back to a future meeting with Scott Bracci.

Special Permit Deliberation – Stow House of Pizza

The Board reviewed the updated draft decision.

Lori Clark said that the owner had been denied a temporary outdoor dining permit by the Select Board because of work that had already commenced at the site. John Colonna-Romano noted that the Governor's proposed legislation may leave the option for a temporary outdoor dining license in place longer than expected, and that the Board should consider this in the decision.

Mark Jones said that the Board should consider recording the decision itself, on the expectation that the applicant would not.

Following revisions, The Board agreed to move the final motion to approve the decision to the following meeting on June 1.

108 – 118 Great Road Special Permit Plan Endorsement

Margaret Costello said that the Planning Board had only seen changes to the building renderings and asked if other aspects of the site plan had been altered. Jesse Steadman said that that nothing else was being modified, and the only change from previous discussions were the architectural renderings. Jesse Steadman said that the plan is very specific in what is being permitted.

Karen Kelleher moved to endorse the Special Permit site plan for 108-118 Great Road
Margaret Costello seconded

Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark -**Yea**; Karen Kelleher -**Yea**; John Colonna-Romano -**Yea**;
Margaret Costello -**Yea**; Nancy Arsenault -**Abstain**

John Colonna-Romano moved to authorize Karen Kelleher to sign on behalf of the Board
Margaret Costello seconded

Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark -**Yea**; Karen Kelleher -**Yea**; John Colonna-Romano -**Yea**;
Margaret Costello -**Yea**; Nancy Arsenault -**Yea**

Remote Participation and In-Person Public Meeting

Jesse Steadman said the State will end the state of emergency on May 29th and expects meetings to return to in-person on June 15th. Jesse Steadman said that the Governor has filed legislation to extend zoom meetings to September 1st to provide time for a permanent amendment to the Open Meeting Law. Lori Clark asked if the plan would be to stick with Zoom for as long as possible. Lori commented that hybrid models can be more complicated and expensive to implement.

Margaret Costello moved to adjourn
John Colonna-Romano seconded

Roll Call Vote: Lori Clark -**Yea**; Karen Kelleher -**Yea**; John Colonna-Romano -**Yea**;
Margaret Costello -**Yea**; Nancy Arsenault -**Yea**

Respectfully submitted,
Malcolm Ragan