

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the June 7, 2016 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Len Golder, Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn

Voting Associate Member: Mark Jones

Absent: Margaret Costello

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

Discussion with Valerie Oorthuys

Valerie Oorthuys, a candidate for the Assistant Planner/GIS Administrator position described her fellowship with the New Economy Transition, and said she is trying to get involved in community development work in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. Valerie Oorthuys said she is particularly interested in technical assistance programs for small business development, aimed at providing assistance and workforce development.

The Planning Board members discussed their various reasons for getting involved with the Planning Board.

The Planning Board asked Valerie to discuss why she is particularly interested in working for a municipality like Stow. Valerie Oorthuys said she is excited about land use, community engagement and economic development, and feels she could partake in more projects than working with a larger city. Valerie Oorthuys said she has been a visitor to Stow for several years, and appreciates the place specifically. Valerie Oorthuys explained her past experience as a mobile food truck coordinator, including presentations to the coordinating board, adding that much of her experience comes from an intimate knowledge of community organizing. Valerie Oorthuys said she is interested in creating stable, resilient neighborhoods and towns to keep an engaged citizenry. Valerie Oorthuys explained that the GIS tool is crucial, as she discussed her Tufts Field Project regarding identification of vacant land for urban agriculture as part of Boston's Article 89.

Public Hearing Continuance

Minuteman Airfield Erosion Control Special Permit and Earth Removal Permit

Present

Greg Roy – Ducharme and Dillis

Don McPherson – Owner, Minuteman Airfield

Greg Roy said that in the beginning of May the applicant issued revised plans and wrapped in some comments from the Conservation Commission. Greg Roy said they now have a use Special Permit and the floodplain permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Greg Roy said that per the Planning Board's request they have included a construction plan showing some signage at the street and a widened access. An overall site plan has been produced said Greg Roy, adding that consistencies have been corrected on the plan.

Greg Roy noted that they do not have a good response to noise mitigation since they are unsure of the length of the project. Greg Roy said there would be heavy vehicle loads if they were to complete the project too quickly. Greg Roy said it is likely they would extend the project into the fall. Greg Roy assumes the Board could limit vehicle trips or limit the trips per hour.

Don McPherson said he still does not know where the material is going to go.

Ernie Dodd said if he notifies the Town of the work and expected route in the local papers, it would make it public knowledge. Ernie Dodd agreed signs should be put up.

Lori Clark said that defined routes need to be made. The Board agreed Packard Road is not sufficient.

Don McPherson said they could request a police presence. Lori Clark said speed and weight limits could be considered.

The Board discussed whether to close the Public Hearing. It was noted that Sue Carter has not had the chance to respond to the letter of May 2, 2016 provided by Ducharme and Dillis. Don McPherson asked why Sue Carter needed to review the response. The Board discussed that volume and rates of runoff are what would be commented on by Places Associates and the Earth Removal as well. All the work of removing the pile is inside the security area, noted Don McPherson.

Jesse Steadman noted that there is nothing in the plans that delineates the separation between the work area and the tarmac and runway. Don McPherson said they have to comply with numerous FAA regulations on work within in an airfield. Jesse Steadman said that kind of information would be helpful to be shown on the plan. Greg Roy noted that regarding routes for the trucks, there is no alternative access to where the trucks are going to go.

The Planning Board discussed a Continuance date with the Applicant.

Ernie Dodd moved to continue the Public Hearing to June 21st at 7:30pm.

Steve Quinn seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor. (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn, Mark Jones – Voting Associate Member).

Public Hearing

Hudson Road Hammerhead Lot Special Permit

Ernie Dodd moved to waive the reading of the Public Hearing notice.

Steve Quinn seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor (Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn, Lori Clark, Mark Jones – Voting Associate Member).

Scott Hayes said that this a project by Kane Built at 148 Hudson road where there was a Hammerhead Lot Special Permit filed in 2010 with the Town Clerk, but was never recorded. A Building Permit was issued, followed by an occupancy permit. This plan is updated to show the dwelling unit, and the required notes for the Hammerhead Lot according to the 2010 decision.

The Board asked for a signature block and a note that the Special Permit should be recorded herewith. The Board agreed the additions would allow people to understand when the Special Permit was issued.

Ernie Dodd moved to close the Public Hearing

Steve Quinn seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor. (Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn, Lori Clark, Mark Jones – Voting Associate Member).

Len Golder Arrived.

Review of Meeting Minutes – May 17, 2016

Ernie Dodd moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Steve Quinn Seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor. (Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn, Lori Clark, Len Golder).

Discussion of Summer Schedule

The Board discussed their upcoming meeting schedule, noting that Len Golder will be absent on the 27th of June.

Bose Supplemental Plans

The Planning Board reviewed tree planting, temporary parking and signage plans required to be submitted to and approved by the Board, prior to starting construction on the parking lot upgrades.

Ernie moved to approve the documents as submitted.

Steve Quinn Seconded.

Lori Clark Abstained.

VOTED: 3-0 Unanimously in favor (Steve Quinn, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder).

Public Hearing Continuance

Joanne Drive Preliminary Subdivision Plan

Present: Applicant - Frank and Rick Lundy

Project Engineer - Rich Harrington

Rich Harrington reported that the Applicant has no additional information to provide since the last meeting, but have completed a site-walk with the Planning Board. Lori Clark asked if there was any comment from the Board regarding the site-walk.

Ernie Dodd said that Lot 1 is the only lot that could be problematic. However, Ernie Dodd imagines that the Definitive Plan will be able to address the concerns raised. Rich Harrington said they will be looking at improving the swale at Lot 1 to catch the incoming water and keep it moving in the direction of the Assabet River, as it currently flows. Ernie Dodd said he is in favor of a connection to Forest Road, but would like “no through traffic” signage. Len Golder agreed with the signage recommendation. Ernie Dodd said perhaps during apple season that access could be closed off by the police.

Lori Clark said that a central question regarding the Forest Road connection, is what compromises can be made that will still meet the spirit of the Fire Chief and Highway Superintendent’s concerns. Lori Clark said she is in favor of the signage. Karen Kelleher said that on Sylvan Drive, the emergency access that exists is unusable due to fallen trees and debris. Len Golder said the connection could provide access without large amounts of traffic. Lori Clark said she would be open to alternatives, such as narrowing the travelled way.

Lori Clark said that she believed some trees along Lot 1 were worth saving. Lori Clark said that they also talked about extending the open land onto lots 6 and 7 to avoid encroachments into the open land. Rich Harrington said the original design was created to take advantage of all of the available residential land that was not part of the open space.

Keith Acosta of 47 Forest Road, said he is concerned with the access road and the opinions of the Board being expressed. Keith Acosta said Forest Road has never been a safety concern in the past and why it is a safety concern now.

Rich Harrington said an alternative would be for the Applicant to provide the right of way on paper and the final outcome could be discussed down the road. Ernie Dodd said both the Highway and Fire Department’s have strongly recommended that they have a connection. Lori Clark said it needs to be maintained to stay passable.

George Port of Robinwood Lane said that maybe there could be signage that states emergency vehicles only.

Scott Bracci of 48 Forest Road, said he submitted pictures regarding the lot condition after a storm after the sitewalk. Is there a comment from the Board on the condition of the lot and where the house is going? Scott Bracci said he is not happy with where it is going and suggested that he would not be against the home located in a different position on the lot.

Is there any feedback? Scott Bracchi said that visible water stands in there for days and weeks and what are the results of the perc tests? Rich Harrington said he considers the perc tests a formality and will have that information at the time of the Definitive Plan submission.

Lori Clark asked Rich Harrington about the options for the position of the house on Lot 1. Rich Harrington said the lot is oversized so there is probably some flexibility, although there are required setbacks from wells, septic and drainage. Lori Clark said that is the lot that will contain the most amount of change that the neighbors will see. Rich Harrington said he spent some time after the walk with the abutters and understands the concerns, and will look into it.

Ernie Dodd said that the drainage issue is going to need to be addressed and maybe will solve some of the problems. Lori Clark said it will go a long way if the visual impact can be mitigated. Rich Harrington said that there is a lot of disturbance in that area. Rich Harrington said that a dry hydrant, instead of a cistern could save space, as well as the sidewalk space that could potentially be saved.

Lori Clark said that they would rather have sidewalks on more appropriate roads. The roadway could be narrowed due to the sidewalks being eliminated, she added.

Barbara Jones of 61 Sudbury Road, asked where the open space is located on the plans? Rich Harrington showed the floodplain line, zoning districts and the location of the open land being proposed. Barbara Jones said there has been significant impact to the Sudbury Road neighbors from Robin Wood lane, in terms of runoff. What assurances are there for the future owners of the lot? Barbara Jones said it is easy to say that it will be dealt with but what if it is not?

Rich Harrington said that there is a little higher groundwater on Lot 1. However, the rest of the lots have home sites that sit higher on the lots, and all are downhill of abutting property owners. Lori Clark said the regulations say they cannot increase runoff and the Board's consulting engineer reviews and inspects the plans and the construction to be sure that the regulations are complied with.

George Port of Robinwood Lane asked if there would be fill required? Rich Harrington said there would be some fill required, however, with minimized shoulders they could cut down on the cuts required.

In response to discussions of drainage concerns, Rich Harrington said the Applicant knows where all the water comes from and they will make sure that the water continues to flow through to the Assabet River.

Scott Bracchi asked about the maintenance of a storm basin at the end of Robinwood that is completely overgrown and not sure if it is functioning to its original design. The Board agreed that the Highway Department is responsible for the drainage structures accepted by

the Town and that if the neighbors alert the Highway Department to the issue they will respond.

Laura Spear of 42 Forest Road, asked where snow would go being so close the river? Rich Harrington said that typically they follow the standards for a public road in the Town of Stow and it would be put on the shoulder.

Laura Acosta of 47 Forest Road said that the snow from Forest Road currently piles at the cul-de-sac. Laura Spear said that typically the snow will be piled 20 feet. If the plows went straight through, they would run into homes, Laura Spear said. Laura Spear said she is concerned about de-icing and other chemicals due to the proximity to the river.

Laura Spear said that trees are continually coming down. Ernie Dodd said he prefers to see the Conservation Commission hold the land. Rich Harrington said the first step is to show the open land and then discuss the ownership.

Scott Bracci asked if the parking spaces are still to be on Forest Road? Rich Harrington said they selected that location for potential parking spaces to have a turnout area for a connection between two neighborhoods. Rich Harrington said that area was chosen since they did not want to have it near a wetland or stream crossing. Lori Clark said that she does not see why they would a wider turnout at this time.

Ernie Dodd said if it is public land, they may want to park along the road to access the land. Rich Harrington said that the town of Acton would want a 20' width for emergency access.

Greg Jones of 61 Sudbury Road, said it looks like there is a lot of work done but not the final plan. Lori Clark explained the preliminary plan process. Greg Jones said his land has a lot of variation and would be curious as to the soils along Joanne Drive and from an engineering standpoint how will the water be handled on the road. Rich Harrington described infiltration basins and noted they are required to have the homes two feet higher than the groundwater.

Barbara Jones said they often have to maintain a basin on their property. Rich Harrington said there is an operations and maintenance plan to govern maintenance of the drainage structures while the developer owns the land and if the Town takes it they maintain the structures. Laura Spear said the town could set up a fund to maintain the basin as well.

Lori Clark said that if they approve the Preliminary Plan it does not necessarily mean they will approve the Definitive Plan.

Rich Harrington said that they can go in the conventional or cluster approach and are seeking input to go forward with the Definitive Plan for a Planned Conservation Development.

Lori Clark said some of the mitigations can be in the way of plantings and screenings.

Planning Board Comment

Lori Clark asked about Lot 7 on the Proof Plan. Rich Harrington said they are allowed to alter 10% of the riverfront area. Rich Harrington said the proof plan can be updated to show the house and required infrastructure. Lori Clark said keeping the wetland in the open space on Lots 6 & 7 could help keep encroachments at bay. Rich Harrington said Lots 6 and 7 are around 100,000 square feet and were designed to take advantage of the residential area.

Lori Clark said that the access to the open land should be considered. Rich Harrington said that in the past some trail groups and Conservation Commission have walked the site with the owner if it is headed in that direction.

Lori Clark asked about the ownership of the Open Land. Rich Harrington said the applicant may like to keep it private. Lori Clark said the Board will be identifying the required timing for a decision on Open Land ownership in the Definitive Plan Decision.

The Board discussed the requirement for NFPA standards, noting that the road should be between 18 feet and 20 feet wide. Karen Kelleher said that the Fire Chief has indicated he does not have any flexibility, and is required to have roads built to a 20' surface, maintainable year round. Len Golder said to talk with fire chief and see what can be minimized.

Steve Quinn said that Lot 1 should have the most care taken in the design because it will have the most impact to abutters. Steve Quinn said he is open to considering option for access to and from Forest Road without a full road going through.

Scott Bracci of 48 Forest Road asked about the process. Lori Clark said that once the Public Hearing is closed they can no longer take any new information.

Laura Acosta of 47 Forest Road said that the walking trails that are there now are beautiful and if there was some open space that was public it would be great to have the beautiful views of the river. Greg Jones said that an existing cart path exists on Lot 7 and asked if the engineers have a way of getting back into the Open Land if there is a private lot developed there? Greg Jones said the road would go through private property and a lot of people use it.

Lori Clark agreed that she too would like to see public access component. Lori Clark said an easement could be considered. Rich Harrington said there is a private trail there now and they can take a look at that.

Barbara Jones of 61 Sudbury Road, said that her land abuts lot 5, 6, and 7 and when they put the septic in, they realized they were in sand after going just three feet down and their septic system failed after 13 years. If that is the best land, it still did not support a leach field.

Ernie Dodd moved to close the Public Hearing.

Steve Quinn seconded.

VOTED: 4-0 Unanimously in favor. (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder, Steve Quinn).

Gleasondale Survey Proposal

Karen Kelleher said that survey work should take place within the next year. Karen Kelleher said it is the only proposal they have received. The Board discussed the deliverables, timeline and scope.

Pennie Lane Discussion

Greg Roy said there is a purchase and sale agreement pending at Alice Cushing's property. The existing parcel is 8.62 acres and the Chapter 61 boundary is not clear although there are roughly 6.5 acres not in chapter. Greg Roy said they create an ANR to allow for part of the 8.62 acres to be parceled off and combined with another ANR parcel that would equal the five acres necessary for the land to be able to remain in Chapter and not trigger a right of first refusal from the Town. Greg Roy said they would be creating a parcel of land to be sure that 5 acres would remain in Chapter. Steve Quinn said it is understandable given the buyer's concerns.

Annual Reorganization Appointments

The Board discussed and agreed upon annual appointments of Board members and staff.

Ernie Dodd moved to approve the appointments of:

Chairman – Lori Clark

Vice Chair – Ernie Dodd

ANR Plan Endorsement – Steve Quinn and Jesse Steadman

Community Preservation Committee Representative – Ernie Dodd

MAGIC Representative – Jesse Steadman

Elementary School Building Committee Representative – Steve Quinn

Liaison to ZBA – Mark Jones

Liaison to MAPC – Jesse Steadman

Steve Quinn Seconded.

VOTED: (4-0) Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder, Steve Quinn).

Member Updates

Mark Jones said that growth in Stow has already reached the strong growth outlook by MAPC. Mark Jones said a hot topic is whether the demographic trends are positive or negative.

Mark Jones said he attended the SMAHT meeting and they intend to talk with CPC regarding their plans for Affordable Housing at 241 Boxboro Road. Karen Kelleher said if SMAHT would pay for \$140,000 for the hammerhead, why not another \$40,000 for the extra 4 acres?

Karen Kelleher notified the Board that staff are planning to attend the working group meeting of Bill Wrigley.

The Board asked that staff make it apparent that they are in support of SMAHT pursuing affordable housing opportunities at the site. The Board asked staff to draft a letter of support for the Winkler property by SMAHT.

Karen Kelleher said she recommended they speak with Toll Brothers to see if there is any efficiency gains that could be offered by working with Toll Brothers, who will likely be building 66 Active Adult units across the street. The Board agreed it could be an enticing option for a developer given the age restricted housing is more difficult to find affordable buyers for.

Mark Jones noted that Habitat for Humanity met with SMAHT to discuss participation in a program for crisis improvements to keep elderly tenants in their homes. Mark Jones noted that they could float the idea of giving money to Habitat from a Town Meeting vote and then ask CPC to refund the development to be able to pursue further housing opportunities.

Planner's Report

Zoning Reform

Karen Kelleher said that staff will be getting zoning reform on an upcoming agenda. The Board asked staff to put out a comment to Senator Eldridge outlining their key points of opposition. After that, the Board agreed, staff can work on drafting a letter that will go out to the surrounding communities and legislators.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jesse Steadman