

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the October 10, 2017 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Len Golder,
Karen Kelleher

Voting Associate Member: Mark Jones

Associate Member: John Colonna- Romano

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

Discussion of Meeting Minutes

Minutes of September 26, 2017

Ernie Dodd moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Karen Kelleher Seconded.

VOTED: 4-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Karen Kelleher-Yea).

Len Golder arrived.

Minutes of October 3, 2017

Ernie Dodd moved to approve the minutes as amended.

Karen Kelleher Seconded.

VOTED: 5-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Len Golder, Karen Kelleher-Yea).

Public Input

None.

Member Updates

Mark Jones said that the Town Charter requires a 5-year Master Plan review cycle. Karen Kelleher said that the review is likely to prepare for the 10-year update.

Planner's Report

Harvard Acres

Jesse Steadman noted that staff have been looking into the zoning history of Harvard Acres to determine whether the zoning allowed any reduced setbacks. So far staff have not found any evidence of reduced setbacks as part of the cluster bylaw, although there are some homes with setbacks below the standards set for that time period.

Karen Kelleher noted that this may be considered a Special Permit modification.

Historic Presentation Forum

Jesse Steadman reminded the Board that the Gleasondale Historic Area Subcommittee will be holding a Historic Preservation Forum at the Pompositticut Community Center on October 11, 2017 at 7pm to discuss options for historic preservation in Stow.

Gleasondale Bridge Redesign

Staff held a meeting with members of MassDOT District 3 and Howard Stein Hudson to discuss the process of design for the Gleasondale Bridge over Route 62. MassDOT indicated that they will be doing some structural analysis over the next few months to determine whether they will need to be doing a full bridge, structural replacement or just the main deck. MassDOT Staff suggested that once the preliminary structures report is complete they can determine whether the piers and abutments need to be replaced.

After the preliminary structures report is complete Stow staff suggested an initial design meeting with the neighborhood and area stakeholders, prior to advancing to the 25% design phase. Construction is still slated to begin in the 2020 TIP cycle.

Collings Foundation Sign

Jesse Steadman said that the signs for construction related vehicles and traffic routing for the Collings Foundation have been thrown off of the road. Margaret Costello said that the signs at the Sudbury and Barton Road intersection should stay in place until the museum is given an occupancy permit.

Regency at Stow Minor Modification to Allow Fencing Between Single Family Units

Present: Britton Bradford, Toll Brothers

Britton Bradford said that language in the Special Permit decision read as though privacy fencing is only applicable to attached units, and Toll Brothers has not precluded buyers of single family homes from having a privacy fence.

Margaret Costello asked what the privacy fences would look like to an abutter. Britton Bradford said that they are suggesting 6 foot tall PVC privacy fencing.

Ernie Dodd said that the fencing was meant to provide separation and privacy to attached homes, and it may not be necessary with single family homes. Ernie Dodd noted that because land is owned by the condo association, fencing may confuse maintenance. Britton Bradford said that the fencing would not enclose the yards, as the fencing would only be between units and no greater than 16 feet long.

Ernie Dodd moved to consider this request a minor modification not requiring a public hearing.

Len Golder Seconded.

VOTED: 5-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Len Golder, Karen Kelleher-Yea).

The Board suggested adding language to clarify that the fences are not to be enclosed, but along either side of the home. The Board agreed that the Condo Association may specify the material used for the fencing.

Ernie Dodd moved to approve the minor modification for fences no greater than 6 feet tall and 16 feet long based on the approval of a final draft decision.

Len Golder Seconded.

VOTED: 5-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Len Golder, Karen Kelleher-Yea).

Regency at Stow Request for Approval of Model Home Landscape Lighting

Present: Britton Bradford, Toll Brothers

Britton Bradford said that Toll Brothers is requesting approval for temporary walkway lighting for the model home at Regency at Stow. Britton Bradford said that the lighting would be low voltage down-lighting.

Lori Clark noted that in the light specifications, there was a light facing upwards, directed at the house. Britton Bradford said that it is at a 90 degree angle facing the house. Britton Bradford offered to set up the sample ahead of a site visit. Lori Clark said that the walkway lights likely meet bylaw requirements; however the light at the 90 degree angle does not meet the bylaw, so the Planning Board would be unable to approve it.

Britton Bradford noted that the light is adjustable. Karen Kelleher expressed concern that buyers would want to replicate the lights illuminating the model home on the home they purchase. Britton Bradford asked if down lighting on the soffit would be permissible. Lori Clark said that the Board could consider that.

Ernie Dodd asked that the request for landscape lighting include the date of removal.

Margaret Costello noted that the vendor didn't specify the model on the cut sheet. Britton Bradford said that the walkway lighting would be placed 12 to 14 inches above grade. Britton Bradford said that the sales office is still open when it gets dark in the winter at 4:30pm.

Lori Clark asked if this would be considered a modification, if the decision referenced the bylaw which states that all lighting will be full cut off. Margaret Costello said that she would want to ensure that other owners wouldn't want to replicate the model home's landscape lighting. Karen Kelleher said that as long as they don't exceed the total lumens of the walkway, it would be fine.

Britton Bradford acknowledged that a landscaping plan for the access road, HL&P utility clearing area, and frontage along Boxboro Road will be delivered to the Board by the end of

the season. Jesse Steadman noted that an abutter felt the public water supply access road appeared more elevated than expected. Britton Bradford said that it is not complete and will be stabilized.

Voting and Non-Voting Associate Member Appointments

Jesse Steadman said that Mark Jones is looking to put time into other obligations and would like to step down as Voting Associate Member. Jesse Steadman said that a vacancy was posted on September 19, and that John Colonna-Romano provided a letter stating his interest. Mark Jones would intend to remain as a Non-Voting Associate Member, and the vacancy for that position was posted on September 20.

Lori Clark asked if these appointments would affect the open public hearing for the Joanne Drive application. Jesse Steadman said that Town Counsel felt this would not cause concern, as John Colonna-Romano attended all of those public hearings, though he must be sworn in by the Town Clerk prior to the next public hearing.

Karen Kelleher moved to appoint John Colonna-Romano as a Voting Associate member and Mark Jones as a Non-Voting Associate Member.

Len Golder Seconded.

VOTED: 5-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Margaret Costello, Len Golder, Karen Kelleher-Yea).

Lower Village Traffic Improvement Project

Jesse Steadman updated the Board on the final easement agreements needed for the project to proceed.

Jesse Steadman said that the Town is under contract with E.T.&L., and will provide them with a Notice To Proceed in the coming weeks.

Karen Kelleher asked if the updated plan showing the correct side lot lines at 1 White Pond Road has been provided by Howard Stein Hudson. Jesse Steadman said that it has.

Planning Board Goals and Annual Work Plan

Jesse Steadman provided the Board with a document detailing initiatives the Planning Department has committed to, including the Lower Village Traffic Improvement Project, Complete Streets Prioritization Planning, and a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness assessment. Jesse Steadman said that the work plan includes a Recreational Marijuana Bylaw, as well as other zoning considerations such as accessory apartment upgrades and language clarification in the Erosion Control Special Permit requirements. Jesse Steadman said that staff have been contemplating initiating a Master Planning process, as a number of

plans have been either implemented or finalized recently, suggesting that a Master Plan review beginning in 2018 might be well timed.

The Board discussed the timing of a Master Planning process, noting that it would be preferable to continue to implement goals while considering individual sections of a Master Plan. The Board specifically noted that more should be done regarding zoning in Lower Village before a Master Planning process, especially as outreach and engagement around Lower Village was done recently. The Board suggested considering any new open questions around growth in conjunction with the known vision and goals of the town. The Board suggested that revisiting the 2010 Master Plan can be an iterative process, and that there are more pressing concerns, such as Lower Village zoning bylaw and design guidelines, to approach first. Jesse Steadman noted that more focus on engagement and advocacy would benefit any future public process.

To align on next steps with Lower Village planning, the Board agreed that past presentations and surveys should be revisited to arrive at a clear understanding of what new information is needed. The Board discussed the importance of understanding Stow's demographics, the ability to capture commuter revenue, and the balance of local needs and commuter interests. The Board discussed effective means of capturing new information, such as engaging with master's level students, partnering with the Economic Development and Industrial Commission, and researching available grant opportunities.

The Board discussed holding working meetings once a month to further this conversation.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys