

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the November 7, 2018 Planning Board Meeting

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

Voting Associate Member: Megan Birch-McMichael

Associate Member: Mark Jones

Absent: Margaret Costello

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

Member Updates

John Colonna-Romano stated that he attended a site walk for the proposed Hallocks Point Subdivision. John Colonna-Romano said that he would like the location and quality of the existing utility poles to be discussed at the public hearing continuance on November 27th.

Planner's Report

Registered Marijuana Establishments

Valerie Oorthuys said that with the Town Elections completed, there are four types of Registered Marijuana Establishments allowed in Stow through a Special Permit from the Planning Board in the Overlay District: Product Manufacturers, Research Facilities, and Independent Testing Laboratories.

Joanne Drive Fire Cistern

Valerie Oorthuys said that correspondence in the Planning Board's packets relate to a question from an abutter of Joanne Drive who is concerned about the placement of the fire cistern at the Forest Road extension. The abutter would like the Board to discuss whether the cistern could be moved to Joanne Drive in order to limit clearing around the Forest Road extension. The Board agreed to discuss further at their meeting of November 27.

Boxmill Bridge

Valerie Oorthuys said that the Conservation, Highway, and Planning Departments as well as the Historical Commission sent a letter to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation after reviewing the 25% design plans for the Boxmill Road Bridge. Staff recently met with MassDOT and the design team on site to discuss utility locations, right of way plans, and the construction of a temporary bridge. Revised plans will be submitted to the Town in the coming months, and it was noted that the project may be pushed to 2020 or 2021.

Complete Streets

Valerie Oorthuys said that the Complete Streets Committee will meet soon to open proposals for survey and design services for two projects, including intersection improvements at Old Bolton Road and Great Road and pedestrian improvements at Harvard Road and Great Road.

Lower Village Traffic Improvement Project

Lori Clark stated that the Town Administrator has assumed the role of Project Manager and that in the coming days, the Town will learn more about how the engineering is shaping up.

Valerie Oorthuys noted correspondence from an abutter to the project regarding concerns of the installation of the tree well and the final condition of her property. The Board agreed that the engineer and contractor should be notified of the concern and the expectation of the final condition of all areas within temporary easements. The Planning Board discussed the request to rezone the abutter's parcel from Business to Residential, noting the history of the request and the need to retain the size of the Business District. The Board agreed that zoning recommendations for the district as a whole may be included in the work of the Lower Village Revitalization Subcommittee after the completion of the Market Analysis and Business District Assessment.

Public Hearing

Erosion Control Special Permit, Collings Foundation

Karen Kelleher recused herself as an abutter to the Collings Foundation.

Present:

Steve O'Connell – Andrews Survey & Engineering, Inc.

Bob Collings, Sr. – Collings Foundation

Rob Collings, Jr. – Collings Foundation

Len Golder moved to waive the reading of the Public Hearing Notice

John Colonna-Romano Seconded.

VOTED: 4-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Len Golder, John Colonna-Romano, Megan Birch-McMichael (Voting Associate Member)- Yea).

Steve O'Connell of Andrews Survey and Engineering said the Erosion Control Special Permit application was submitted in response to a zoning violation for earthwork performed on Collings Foundation property south of the museum parcel. The Collings Foundation also received an enforcement order from Stow's Conservation Commission.

Steve O'Connell said the site composite plan included in the application does not include an as-built plan for the access road, though the road was constructed according to plan. Steve O'Connell noted that several parcels make up the Collings Foundation property. The site

plans submitted also relate the area to the Assabet River. Steve O'Connell said that it has not been determined where the riverfront boundary is, as it is unclear where the river flows.

Steve O'Connell stated that in 2014, the excavation area had sparse and brushy vegetation. The Foundation has a permit for perpetual maintenance of the area through the Conservation Commission.

Steve O'Connell said the conservation plan shows how the area that has been excavated will be restored. Steve O'Connell stated the area was excavated for the exclusive use of the museum, and that material excavated from the museum site was not quality material. The site currently looks like a pit, and does not pose a drainage issue. Restoration plans show the intent of bringing in the edges of the pit to create a softer slope, rather than complete infill. Steve O'Connell said the vegetation and soil conditions make the area well drained, as the soils are sandy. Erosion controls are proposed around the south and west sides.

Steve O'Connell identified a large loam stockpile to the west of the excavated area, saying it will be spread throughout the restoration area and seeded with a New England wildlife conservation mix. The Conservation Commission is currently deliberating on their area of jurisdiction and a plan for remediation, and their public hearing on the subject has been continued to November 20th.

John Lage, of 90 Hunter Avenue in Hudson, asked whether materials would be trucked on and off site as part of a remediation plan. Steve O'Connell said that as proposed, all material needed is located onsite.

Megan Birch-McMichael asked why the loam stockpile was not used to fill in the excavated area around the museum. Steve O'Connell said the loam cannot be used as fill, though remediation could include a layer of loam at the surface.

Megan Birch-McMichael asked for more explanation of how the excavated area is able to be filled in using materials onsite. Steve O'Connell said that sand and gravel would be spread inward from the edges of the excavated area and embankments of the hill would be knocked in. Lori Clark said that a remediation plan would not return the hill to what it once was, but would look to stabilize the existing condition. As such, these plans would not restore the original condition of the area.

Lori Clark asked what volume of loam is stockpiled to the east of the excavation area. Steve O'Connell said that it is unclear, and that the loam is intended as a final treatment to help vegetation grow and to stabilize the area, though no more material would need to be imported on site. The final condition of the area is proposed as a consistent, gradual slope. Steve O'Connell said a 3:1 slope can be mowed and the slope proposed through remediation is twice as flat at a 6:1. This would be achieved by blending in the edges and bringing up the bottom of the excavated area, though a depression will remain.

Lori Clark asked how much wider the pit will be after remediation, as the plan proposes knocking in the edges of the pit to fill. Steve O'Connell said that the pit would expand by about 30 feet at the easterly side, thereby avoiding the Conservation Commission's area of jurisdiction. Material is proposed to be blended in from east to west.

John Colonna-Romano said that it would be helpful if the plans included a cross section of the disturbed area. Steve O'Connell shared a sketch of the cross section, noting that the deepest area is to the north, where it reaches a crest ahead of the wetland. Steve O'Connell said that the remediation plan includes knocking down the crest and using that material to fill.

Lori Clark asked how deep the deepest point of the excavation is, and what the slope is. Steve O'Connell said that the contours show 212 feet in the southern portion to 206 feet in the northern portion, with a slope of 1.5%. Steve O'Connell said that there is a localized dome at an elevation of 216 feet, which drops to 212 feet, with other localized depressions. The hill slopes steeply to the Assabet River to the west and to the wetlands to the north.

Mark Jones said that as this parcel is part of a larger site, it would be useful to see the entire site shown on one plan to see how it relates to the other parcels, including the new topography around the museum.

Mark Jones said that the application includes an estimated 18,000 cubic yards of earth removed from the excavation area, which may correlate to 900 trucks of material leaving the site. Steve O'Connell said that there are no trucking slips for the export of materials, though the topography shows what was excavated.

John Colonna-Romano asked what path the trucks used to excavate material. Steve O'Connell said that there were existing paths used.

Megan Birch-McMichael said she would like to know more about the environmental impacts of further alteration related to remediation.

Mark Jones said he is concerned with the remediation proposal as it includes further excavation to gather more materials to be used as fill.

Lori Clark said that when the Board first became aware of the excavation, prior to requesting the applicant file for an Erosion Control Special Permit, the Board's initial reaction was a preference for full restoration. Lori Clark said that the application proposes remediation, which proposes a challenge as importing materials impacts neighbors. Lori Clark reiterated that the amount of material taken off site is estimated at 900 truckloads.

Len Golder asked if remediation would solve any erosion control concerns. Steve O'Connell said that the Conservation Commission agreed that the earth work did not create an erosion problem.

The Planning Board agreed that a site visit would be beneficial prior to the next public hearing. The Planning Board agreed that comments from the consulting engineer at Places Associates, Inc. as well as comments from the Conservation Commission are needed. The Board discussed holding a joint meeting with members of the Conservation Commission to discuss opportunities for remediation.

Len Golder moved to continue the Public Hearing for an Erosion Control Special Permit to December 4, 2018 at 7:30pm.

John Colonna-Romano seconded.

VOTED: 4-0 Unanimously in favor (Lori Clark, Len Golder, John Colonna-Romano, Megan Birch-McMichael (Voting Associate Member)- Yea).

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys