



BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

2 MECHANIC STREET
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Meeting Minutes October 11, 2012

MEETING LOCATION: ARCAND MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL CENTER

Present at the Meeting

Patricia M. Buckley (PMB), Chairman - absent
Glenn C. Wojcik (GCW), Vice Chairman
Amber S. Griffiths (ASG)
Roger H. Oakley (RHO)
Peter Pappas (PP), Secretary
Andrew T. Greene (ATG), Alternate

Other Officials:

Stacey J. Wetstein (SJW), Town Planner
Jean Keyes (JK), Planning Board Coordinator

Meeting Location: Arcand Meeting Room in the Municipal Center

GCW opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

New Business (81-P's) 3-7 Chestnut Street – Cifizzara

The Applicant was not present at the meeting. SJW explained that the Applicant wants to give the land in Lot 13 to Lot 9 so the existing building sits on Lot 13 and not Lot 12. This is a land swap and because these lots are pre-zoning and frontage does not apply. GCW stated that he is glad that the Applicant noted on the map that Lot 13 is a non-buildable lot.

RHO: Motion to approve the 81-P for 3-7 Chestnut Street – Cifizzara.

PP: Second.

Vote 4-0 Carried. (GCW, ASG, RHO, PP)

Board members signed the plans and the mylar.

Informal Discussion: Bellingham Commons II Second Entrance

Present were:

Dan Millis of MDM Transportation Consultants, peer reviewer for the Town
Mark Beaudry, engineer for Meridian Associates who is working with the property owners
George Levine one of the owners of Bellingham Commons II

Mr. Beaudry explained the site plan and the tentatively proposed new plaza entrance on Route 140. He stated that TMC will not be building the project behind the plaza. The existing road/entrance was built to accommodate the plaza and the original plans put forth by TMC were to add a subdivision behind the plaza. The owners of the plaza and the tenants are very concerned that the traffic heading east from Bellingham does not see the entrance and consequently drives right by the plaza. The owner would like to add a second entrance into the site.

George Levine explained that recently there was a small smoky fire in one of the businesses and the Bellingham fire trucks missed the entrance. He stated that this further illustrates the necessity for a second entrance. Mr. Levine reiterated that the tenants want to capture the retail customers as they drive east so they don't miss the entrance to the plaza.

Dan Mills questioned Mr. Levine and Mr. Beaudry to see if they have performed a traffic count to determine how much business is going in and out of the plaza and to determine from which direction the traffic is coming when it enters the plaza. Determining the direction of the traffic would help them decide if a right only in/out entrance is really necessary for traffic heading east on Route 140. The traffic count would also help determine if a deceleration lane is necessary. Mr. Beaudry stated that it may be appropriate to update the traffic counts but wanted to know if the Board would agree with a second entrance proposal before the owner spends additional money.

Present was Rich Goldberg, owner of Marshall Jewelers who is a tenant in the plaza. He stated that 75% of his customers say the entrance is horrible. He has seen people park in the gas station and walk across the grass to the plaza. Mr. Goldberg also has observed cars turning around and coming back to the plaza because they have missed the entrance. Again, he addressed the issue that the Town's own fire department missed the entrance and stated that this further illustrates that this is a real issue.

Present was Paul Winchman, owner of Risottos and Bison Burger restaurants in the plaza. He has observed cars slamming on their brakes while trying to find the entrance. He stated that a right turn entrance further down Route 140 from the current entrance is easier to make and that a deceleration lane is not needed as the drivers are expecting the traffic to be turning and stopping in that area. A new right turn only in/out would be a significant improvement over what exists now.

GCW and RHO strongly disagreed and both stated strenuously that they believe a deceleration lane is needed.

SJW suggested that Mr. Beaudry and Mr. Levine re-evaluate the parking within the context of the new parking bylaws. They may be able to reduce the number of parking spaces under the new bylaw, push the landscaping back, and add a deceleration lane. They may also have an opportunity to apply for a Special Permit to reduce the number of parking spaces based on the new parking bylaws.

Mr. Levine asked for Amber Griffiths and Andrew Greene's input. ASG stated that she lives near the plaza and visits it frequently and she misses the plaza entrance every time. ASG further stated that she agrees there is a need for a second entrance and thinks that the deceleration lane is really good idea. The new entrance would be more inviting, would provide adequate advance notice, and would be safe. ATG stated that he would be very interested in seeing the traffic count to see if the right turn in/out entrance would be warranted and how severe the turn in should be.

PP stated that he believes the plaza will benefit greatly from a new entrance as signage now is very poor. GCW stated that the Board understands the owner and tenants concerns. The Board would like to see a plan that works, is safe, and meets all Town regulations.

SJW asked Mr. Mills to provide a copy of the Route 140 Master Plan to Mr. Beaudry and Mr. Levine. She summarized the key issues that should be addressed should the owner and engineer decide to pursue this project:

1. Traffic count
2. Deceleration lane
3. Route 140 Master Plan
4. Review the new Parking Bylaws to see if they can reduce parking, by right or a Special Permit
5. Push back the landscaping once the deceleration lane has been added and parking has been reduced
6. At a minimum, a Development Plan Modification would have to be submitted

PP: Motion to sign the September 27, 2012 Meeting Minutes.

RHO: Second.

Vote: Carried 4-0. (GCW, ASG, RHO, PP)

RHO: Motion to sign the vouchers.

ASG: Second.

Discussion: SJW explained the vouchers.

Vote: Carried 4-0. (GCW, ASG, RHO, PP)

Miscellaneous Discussion:

Northwoods: SJW explained the site walk around that was conducted and described several of the major problems. She presented the Board with a memo detailing the issues and reviewed with the Board.

Crystal Springs: A memo from DPW Director, Don DiMartino about this work site was presented by SJW to the Board and she asked if the Board wants more information or a site inspection. RHO was on site today and was very concerned about the first pond on the left as it is not draining. SJW asked if the Board would like to have the Town's peer reviewer inspect this site instead of the Town's inspector and the Board agreed that this should be inspected by the peer reviewer.

Site inspections: SJW explained that the Town's inspector is not checking work sites to confirm that the construction is being performed in accordance with the Final Decision and Plans that have been approved by the Planning Board. The Board agreed that they have to be more stringent with inspections and that the peer reviewer for the project should be the one inspecting the work site at all stages of construction. SJW further explained that the Applicant will have to pay for these additional inspections and the Board agreed. PP and GCW agreed that the Planning Board needs to see the inspection forms and Form J all throughout the process and not just at the end of the construction.

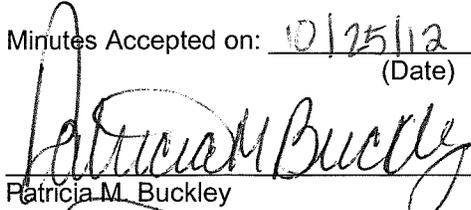
RHO: Motion to adjourn.

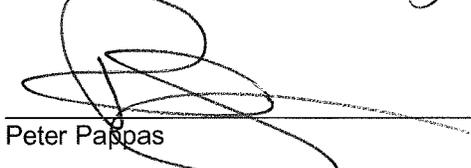
PP: Second.

Vote: Carried 4-0. (GCW, ASG, RHO, PP)

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

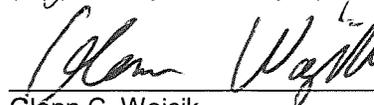
Minutes Accepted on: 10/25/12
(Date)

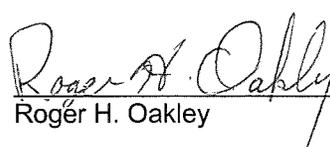

Patricia M. Buckley


Peter Pappas


Amber S. Griffiths


(Prepared by: Jean Keyes)


Glenn C. Wojcik


Roger H. Oakley