

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2011
6:30 P.M. – SPECIAL MEETING – BOARD ROOM**

PRESENT: STEPHEN BANNON
ANDREW BLECHMAN
ALANA CHERNILA
DEB PHILLIPS
SEAN STANTON
KEVIN O'DONNELL, TOWN MANAGER

STEVE SAVARIA – Fuss & O'Neill
JON DIETRICH – Fuss & O'Neill
ROB HOOGS – Foresight Land Services

6:30 P.M. – Special Meeting – Board Room

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M

2. Discuss/Review 25% Mass. DOT comments/questions on the Main Street Reconstruction Project with Design Team.

Sean Stanton said that this meeting is to discuss what the Town's response to the State will be.

Kevin O'Donnell said that the DOT comments are numerous in each area and suggested that the Board look at each one individually and make a decision on how to respond.

Jon Dietrich said that the 25% had been submitted; Boston reviewed the plans and then wrote down comments about the review requirements and design requirements. The last comment was received in May and they are still waiting for the landscape architect from Boston to make his comments. The next step is to decide if there are policy questions and to write the design exception report.

1) Bike path Combinations

Sean Stanton asked if bike lanes were suggested.

Kevin O'Donnell replied yes.

Sean replied that there is a desire for this and said it is a good idea.

Steve Savaria said that they followed the guidance of the DOT in the plans by using shared lanes. There is an 11 ft vehicle space and a 4 ft bike space. He said that if a dedicated bicycle lane is desired then there has to be a 5 ft lane and Main Street would have to be widened.

Jon Dietrich said that the Board would then have to ask for an exception.

Rob Hoogs replied that there is 4 ft lane for the bike lane but it won't be designated and striped as such.

Steve Savaria said that we will be using a bike symbol with chevrons to indicate the lane usage.

MOTION: Stephen Bannon to ask for a design exception for the 4 ft bike accommodation lane with the chevron signage throughout the lane.

SECOND: Alana Chernila

VOTE: 5-0

2) Parking Spaces –

Alana Chernila asked if the real issue is that the parking spots are not uniform.

Jon Dietrich replied that the plan was to vary the spot sizes based on space and the need for parking.

He said that some spots are less than 22 ft; some are 20 feet and some are 17 ft.

Deb Phillips suggested that they should respond stating that the Town is maintaining its standard as a green community and therefore, bringing in smaller cars.

Alana Chernila responded if it's a case of uniformity then they should make all of the spaces small.

Stephen Bannon suggested that a design exception be requested.

Alana Chernila added that they maintain the parking spaces as in the plan.

3) The merge Northbound – Jon Dietrich said that they did include signs in the plan and put a longer distance for merging. It was requested that we have better pavement marking, which we will do.

4) Cottage St. Intersection- Jon Dietrich said that the comments questioned the need for a new signal. He said that they will have to prove it if traffic warrants a signal.

Rob Hoogs said that they will justify not losing the signal.

Jon Dietrich responded that the explanation will be sight distance and they will give numbers in regards to traffic at a given time.

Alana Chernila asked about the temporary crosswalk and asked what a temporary crosswalk means.

Jon Dietrich responded that during the construction, there are temporary crosswalks.

Stephen Bannon asked that signs be erected to warn people.

5) Pedestrian accessibility – Rob Hoogs said that in most cases valid concerns and questions are raised about handicap line of sight. He said that he found out that some shrubs would be allowed and some benches will be moved back.

6) Diverging surfaces- there are a number of places where the handicapped parking spaces are parallel to the street with a 5 ft access aisle next to the space that get cut into the curb line. The ramp is also parallel to the sidewalk. The edge of the curb is considered a divergent surface that needs to be protected so you can't go off the ramp. Therefore, a railing may have to be put in.

Rob Hoogs said that they will receive guidance as to other options and said that it can be done with landscaping or other ways. This is an ADA law, not an exception.

Andrew Blechman asked if the ramps don't work where they are, could they be shuffled around again.

7) Utilities - Jon Dietrich said the memo indicates where they anticipate underground problems; a wire duct runs right along the curb line down Main St. This may affect the catch basins under ground.

Rob Hoogs said during construction, they will have to dig test pits to see how to get around it. This was discussed but only just put in writing.

Joe Sokul said that the Fire District wants to move the water main and during that construction, we can see where the utilities are located.

Deb Phillips asked how the Fire District will time this construction.

Sean Stanton said that they asked for protocol on this.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he has asked that the Fire District take out road cut permits (the Town will waive the fee) so that he knows when projects will take place.

Stephen Bannon asked if they can have a 'heads up' on their plans with traffic flow and pedestrians.

Joe Sokul responded that it is under design and he will get as much info about the plan and timing (possibly April or May).

Stephen Bannon said if this project hampers down town, then we won't be able to go forward on our project and it isn't fair to do to merchants because we promised to work with them.

Rob Hoogs said we will work with the Fire District to get valves and other items for the new hydrants that are being put in during the project.

Sean Stanton requested that the Town changes St. James Place to Taconic Ave throughout and asked Kevin O'Donnell to find out the process to change the name for the future. (Not in the project documents)

Kevin O'Donnell said that he was surprised to see a comment about the need to evaluate for a full depth reconstruction.

Sean Stanton replied that they don't want to open the street and find out that it needs to be replaced.

8) Rotary Way – Main at Elm St. – there is a signal but not a crosswalk.

Deb Phillips replied that she would like both crosswalks; Rotary Way and Elm St.

Sean Stanton said that he agrees and suggested that it be put on the North side instead of the South.

Rob Hoogs replied that parking will be lost if this is done.

Stephen Bannon said that one is not needed at Berkshire Bank; too much parking will be lost.

Alana Chernila said she j-walks a lot between Berkshire Bank and the Mason library. She said that there is traffic and people don't want to go all the way to the Post Office crosswalk.

MOTION: Deb Phillips to justify the crosswalk at Rotary Way and add one north of the Elm St. intersection.

SECOND: Alana Chernila

VOTE: 4-1 Stephen Bannon against

There was discussion about the possibility of tanks being buried underground and Rob Hoogs asked if anyone on the Board knew of any.

Andrew Blechman said that there may be one under Hong Kong Buffet.

Jon Dietrich replied that they will have to find out if there is contamination there and have a plan.

Kevin O'Donnell said that they would have to create a mediation plan and he will trace the status back through all of the owners.

Rob Hoogs reminded the Board that they will need to obtain permanent sidewalk easements.

Rob Hoogs also suggested that Kevin O'Donnell ask Town Counsel as to whose responsibility will be if they find an underground tank.

Andrew Blechman requested more trees be put in between Rosseter and Cottage Streets. He described the area as 'borderline ugly' and asked that bump outs and trees be put back. He said that this is the time to extend downtown and carry the theme down Main St.

Alana Chernila responded that she spoke to the businesses in that area and they all preferred more parking over trees.

Rob Hoogs said that they are encouraging those business owners to plant their own trees.

Andrew Blechman said, for the record, that the Board is making a serious error in that part of Town.

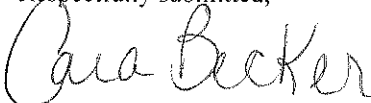
Rob Hoogs said that they will put a tree in if a parking spot is lost at the drug store.

3. Discuss Next Steps

4. Adjournment

On a motion by Stephen Bannon, seconded by Deb Phillips, the Board adjourned its meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary