

GRANITE AVENUE STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 7pm
Milton Town Hall

Attendees:

Ellen Anselone

Bryan Furze

Cindy Christiansen

Andrea Doherty

Brian Beane

April Lamoureux

Jeanne Schmidt

Bill Clark, Milton Planner

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Andrea Doherty. The committee briefly discussed the site visit that took place on May 11, 2013 at 8am.

Andrea Doherty asked Bill Clark to investigate whether or not the town would be required to purchase the parcel from the state if it was originally taken by eminent domain. Bill Clark agreed to investigate and report back to the committee.

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from April 29, 2013 and multiple edits were recommended. Bill Clark took note of the edits and agreed to edit the minutes as discussed. Bryan Beane made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Andrea Doherty seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

The committee arranged to meet again on June 11, 2013 at 7pm at Milton Town Hall in a room to be determined by Bill Clark at a later date.

Bryan Furze reviewed his analysis of the potential building scenarios under different uses and discussed the criteria that determine buildable area, which are the town's open space and FAR (Floor Area Ratio) requirements. He discussed the potential buildable area using the town's open space and FAR requirements under different zoning scenarios.

Ellen Anselone requested a site plan and Bill Clark agreed to make one available for the next meeting.

Bill Clark reviewed the history of zoning in Milton, the Town's use of Planned Unit Development (PUD), and overlay districts. He confirmed that the Granite Avenue site would require a variance if the zoning was not changed.

Bryan Furze continued his review of building scenarios. He discussed parking requirements for various uses. He concluded that the maximum potential build out at the Granite Avenue site, after considering open space, FAR and parking requirements, would allow for approximately 38,000 sq ft of office or 26,000 sq ft of retail. He did not have the data available to investigate hotel uses.

Ellen Anselone agreed to collect data on hotel uses for discussion at a future meeting.

Cindy Christiansen asked about the potential for daycare uses on the site. Bryan Furze said it was feasible that the site could hold a daycare center of up to 15,000 sq ft with 10,000 sq ft of play area that also meets the town's open space requirements.

Andrea Doherty asked about the potential for new traffic signals on Granite Avenue. Bryan Furze said that the developer would be responsible for installation of new signalization as part of the mitigation.

Jeanne Schmidt asked if a special permit would allow for more than 2.5 stories of development at the site. Bill Clark said that a PUD would allow for 3 stories of development.

Cindy Christiansen mentioned that she saw a recent article about extended stay hotels. Bryan Furze discussed the way in which extended stay hotels are constructed to prohibit exterior entry and requiring central corridors to provide heightened security. There was a discussion of extended stay hotels. Andrea Doherty mentioned that she is not familiar with any hotels being sited in close proximity to single family residential neighborhoods.

Andrea Doherty asked about the possibility of building a solar array on the site and Bryan Furze said the site is not large enough. Jeanne Schmidt asked about the possibility of building first floor retail with apartments on upper stories and Bryan Furze questioned whether the development parcel was large enough to support that type of development.

Bryan Furze discussed tax revenue and commercial property values, and the methodology to determine the potential tax revenue that different development scenarios would bring to the town.

Andrea Doherty discussed neighborhood concerns with traffic. Bill Clark agreed to provide the committee with a copy of a traffic study conducted by graduate students at Northeastern University.

Brian Beane reviewed his understanding of the neighborhood concerns, particularly with respect to hotel uses and the potential for crime. He said the neighbors would not oppose retail uses. Andrea Doherty said that the neighbors would not oppose second story office uses. She mentioned neighborhood concerns about signage.

There was a discussion about the recent Town Meeting response to a proposed zoning change and the challenges of getting a super majority of Town Meeting to approve zoning amendments.

There was a brief discussion about making the Granite Avenue site available for public service uses such as a new fire station or public works yard. The committee agreed to consider not only tax revenue generation but also cost offsets to the town.

The committee discussed the agenda for the next meeting and decided that it will include a continued discussion of potential uses, review of the site plan, tax revenue projections for office, retail, hotel and apartments, and consideration of the cost of public services.

Cindy Christiansen asked about the formation of a report and handed out a copy of a draft template she had created to guide the process. The committee agreed that it was a useful document to utilize moving forward.

The committee also agreed to consider the following uses for the site: retail, retail/office, retail/office/residential, office, residential, hotel, solar, entertainment and medical office.

There was a brief discussion about the potential for a small grocer to locate on this site.

Certain committee members agreed to attend the next meeting with the following additional information:

- Andrea Doherty to collect neighborhood input
- Bryan Furze to collect retail and office revenue projections
- Ellen Anselone to collect hotel data
- Jeanne Schmidt to collect data on apartments
- Cindy Christiansen to continue to fine tune the outline for the report

Brian Beane made a motion to adjourn. Ellen Anselone seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.