

TOWN OF STOW
Lower Village Sub-Committee

Minutes of the May 17, 2006, Lower Village Sub-Committee Meeting.

Present: Committee Members: Don McPherson, Russ Willis, Karen Kelleher, Laura Spear and Barbara Sipler

Associate Member: Phil Moseley

Also Present – Pam Kurtzer, 63 Pompositticut Street
Brian Martinson, 43 Pompositticut Street
Mark Conley, Linear Retail Properties, LLC
Peter Mills, Gates Lane
Jim Basford, Family Federal Savings
Nancy Arsenault, The Stow Paper

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM.

May 13, 2006 Lower Village Spring Festival

Members discussed the Lower Village Spring Festival noting that despite the rain, it was a great success for the Garden Club Plant Sale and the Traffic Study Presentation. Some of the stores in the Shopping Center held sidewalk sales.

Don McPherson thanked Jim Basford of Family Federal Savings Bank for his help in organizing the festival.

Members agreed that the Lower Village Festival should be an annual event in conjunction with the Garden Club Plant Sale. It was noted that the event name should be changed to something other than "Spring Festival" so it will not be confused with the annual Town SpringFest event.

Things to consider for the next event

Pedestrian Traffic – Need for a better way to accommodate pedestrian crossings. The cones placed at the crosswalks were placed late and were knocked down by vehicular traffic. One of the cones ended up in Stow Center. It was suggested having a police detail during the event.

May 13, 2006 Traffic Study Presentation

Members noted that the concept of modern roundabouts was pretty well received. Many noted that there is a need for bike lanes and sidewalks along Pompositticut Street and Great Road to the Town Line. It was noted that Great Road right of way is too narrow to support bike lanes plus the Lower Village Committee's sidewalk treatment.

Members agreed to add a note to the plan to extend sidewalks from Lower Village along Pompositticut Street and Great Road to the Maynard Town Line. It was also suggested that the sidewalks be constructed at the same time the sewer line from Maynard to the Shopping Center is installed.

Public Input

Pam Kurtzer noted that it is her understanding that the Committee gave the Consultant a directive to consider alternatives other than a traffic signal. Laura Spear explained that the Consultant was asked to consider ALL options, including a traffic signal. Pam Kurtzer said it is hard to understand how a roundabout will be effective especially when it won't be done for 15 years. Russ Willis noted that the reference to 15-years was not for construction of the

roundabout. The consultant was referring to traffic count estimates for the next 15 years. He further noted that, if funds are available, the roundabout could be constructed sooner.

Pam Kurtzer asked if there is an interim solution. Don McPherson said that one solution could be to install medians, which would help with pedestrian traffic and vehicular turns.

Pam Kurtzer asked about the possibility of having an officer directing traffic during peak hours. Don McPherson responded yes, it is possible and you would have to go to the Board of Selectmen with a request.

Brian Martinson noted that the anticipated cost of \$1.4 million to \$1.6 million is a lot of money and asked if there are some interim measures that make sense. He is concerned about pedestrian safety. Many people walk from Pompositticut Street to the Shopping Center and it is very dangerous, especially at the corner of Pompositticut Street and Route 117. He also asked why the Committee supports a roundabout rather than a traffic light.

Peter Mills noted that roundabouts are popular in other countries and work well to facilitate traffic flow. He also noted that the one in Concord does not work well. Members explained that the one in Concord is a rotary, which is different than a modern roundabout. A modern roundabout forces traffic to slow down before entering.

Don McPherson noted that the roundabout on the west end would involve private property and the Town would need to work with the property owner.

Pam Kurtzer said that she called Karen Kelleher about the small island at Pompositticut Street and Route 117 that is not being taken care of like others in Town. She is concerned that it is ugly and said she is willing to work on landscaping the island, if someone could remove the existing shrubs. She spoke with Betty Cormier of the Garden Club who said they helped on other islands throughout Town, but does not have the capability of maintaining them. Karen Kelleher agreed to contact the Highway Department to see if they would be willing to remove the shrubs so that the neighbors can landscape the island.

Pam Kurtzer asked if the Consultant considered bike lanes in its study. Members responded that a separate bike lane was not considered because the Great Road right of way is too narrow to support bike lanes plus the Lower Village Committee's sidewalk treatment.

Time Line

Don McPherson noted that the Committee discussed a time line at the last meeting, which includes a request for engineering funds for the first roundabout (east end of 117) at a Fall Town Meeting and then a Spring 2007 Town Meeting for construction funds. The Committee will also try to seek grant monies.

Nancy Arsenault asked if the Committee will present only one alternative to Town Meeting. Don McPherson responded that, prior to Town Meeting, the Committee will present the report to Joint Boards and will also hold a public forum. Laura Spear noted it would be helpful to show the pros and cons of all the solutions considered.

Members agreed to aim for the following schedule:

June, 2006 – Joint Boards Meeting

Fall, 2006 – Public Forum (one during the day and one in the evening)

Fall, 2006 – Town Meeting to request engineering funds

Spring, 2007 – Town Meeting to request construction funds

It was noted that additional funds would be necessary in order to have the consultant present at the Joint Boards Meeting and the Fall Public Forum and Town Meeting. Karen Kelleher will obtain cost estimates from the Consultant and seek approval from the Planning Board for funds from the Consultant account.

NOTICE TO ELM RIDGE ROAD PROPERTY OWNER

Don McPherson agreed to draft a letter to the Elm Ridge Road property owner advising that the westerly roundabout is proposed and that traffic improvements may impact their property. Karen Kelleher recommended that the Committee should also invite the property owner to a meeting to discuss the plan.

STREET BOUNDS

Karen Kelleher reported that the Shoemakers have been informed that the survey has been completed and the Highway Department will be placing bounds within the next few weeks.

FAXON FARM FENCES

Post and Rail Fence Location

Karen reported that the Faxon Farm Developers agreed to construct a post and rail fence in a location in the Lower Village and is waiting for input from the Town as to the location. Alternatively, the Developer agreed to donate funds to be used by the Town at a future date for that specific purpose. Members agreed to recommend that the Planning Board accept the funds in lieu of installation of the fence because it is premature to install the fence until the overall traffic study plan is established.

Picket Fence Location

Laura Spear reported that some of the Planning Board Members held a site visit to view the location of the Picket Fence at Faxon Farm. She feels that the existing location is acceptable.

LOWER VILLAGE MAP

Barbara Sipler reported that she emailed Town Square Graphics and requested information to be mailed. She will provide the information to Karen Kelleher.

MINUTES

May 10, 2006 – Russ Willis moved to accept Minutes of the May 10, 2006 meeting. The motion was seconded by Barbara Sipler and carried by a vote of four in favor (Don McPherson, Russ Willis, Karen Kelleher and Barbara Sipler) and one abstention (Laura Spear).

May 13, 2006 – Russ Willis moved to accept Minutes of the May 13, 2006 meeting. The motion was seconded by Barbara Sipler and carried by a vote of four in favor (Don McPherson, Russ Willis, Karen Kelleher and Barbara Sipler) and one abstention (Laura Spear).

SHOPPING CENTER SEWER AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF MAYNARD

Karen Kelleher reported that Maynard Town Meeting approved a Sewer Agreement with the Stow Shopping Center.

Mark Conley of Linear Retail was present and confirmed that the Town Meeting vote passed by a vote of 99 to 63. Linear Retail is very happy with the results noting that they will have more flexibility for potential tenants. He presented a conceptual plan showing potential locations for the sewer lines.

Laura Spear noted that the Planning Board talked about the need for infrastructure in Lower Village in order to make the proposed mixed use zoning feasible.

It was agreed to add this subject on the next agenda (June 7, 2006) for further discussion. Mark Conley agreed to attend the meeting of June 7, 2006.

Peter Mills asked if the sewer deal is for the shopping center alone. Mark Conley said they have a commitment to the Town of Maynard that the connection will be for the Shopping Center only. They also made a commitment to DEP that, within 18 months, they will either tie into the Maynard Sewer System or construct a new one. He said that Maynard is sensitive to the fact that it be limited to the Shopping Center.

Peter Mills noted that the State is more favorable to dense residential development on properties that have infrastructure and asked if there is anything in the agreement to prevent a dense residential development. Mark Conley said the agreement will include language to prevent residential development of the property. He also noted that Linear Retail has no plans for mixed-use development or adding a second story to the building. They only anticipate upgrades to their retail tenants and will also have the potential for a restaurant.

Don McPherson noted that the Committee will be discussing this issue in more detail at the next meeting and suggested that Peter Mills hold his questions until then, or that he talk to the property owner off line. Peter Mills said he will wait until the next meeting because the discussion should be part of the public record.

JUNE 7, 2006 AGENDA

- Mark Conley, Linear Retail Properties, LLC – Stow Shopping Center Sewer Connection to the Town of Maynard
- Water/Sewer for the Lower Village

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kelleher
Member