

TOWN OF STOW PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the January 6, 2009, Planning Board Meeting.

Present: Planning Board Members: Ernest E. Dodd, Laura Spear, Kathleen Willis, Leonard Golder and Steve Quinn

Associate Member: Lori Clark (Non-Voting Associate)

Planning Coordinator: Karen Kelleher

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

Economic Recovery Bill – “ready-to-go” infrastructure projects

Members discussed an email received from the Lt. Governor’s Office concerning the Economic Recovery Bill, which may be enacted by Inauguration Day. The bill will include significant funding for “ready-to-go” infrastructure projects. The Patrick-Murray Administration has established task forces to pull together a list of projects that might be eligible for federal funding. In order to be considered, projects must be “shovel-ready” within 180 days and must be able to be completed within two years. The deadline for submission is January 8th at 2:00 p.m.

Members noted that the Stow Community Recreational Fields and the School project would be eligible and requested that Karen Kelleher submit applications for both projects. Karen will check with the Town Administrator to see if the Board of Selectmen has taken on this task.

MAGIC Meeting – The Next MAGIC meeting will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2009 in the Town of Lexington, at 7:00 p.m. A speaker from the MA Dept. of Energy Resources will be in attendance to discuss the Green Communities Act and available technical and financial assistance for municipalities for energy initiatives.

Shaw’s Supermarket - DEP Notice of Non-Compliance – Members noted an email from Jack Wallace concerning DEP’s Notice of Non-Compliance with regard to noise generated from a generator in back of Shaw’s. Members wondered if DEP ever issued the Notice. Karen Kelleher will follow up with the Board of Health.

FY2010 Budget – Karen Kelleher updated the Board on the proposed FY2010 Budget:

- Expenses were level funded.
- Salaries were increased to reflect a 3% Cost of Living Increase as recommended by the Town Administrator.
- The Administrative Assistant salary increase, funded from the Master Plan/Engineering/Consultant account in FY09 is included in the FY2010 Planning Board Budget.
- The Master Plan/Engineering/Consultant account is proposed to be replenished by \$10,000.00.
 - Expenses from this account to-date:
 - \$ 2,989.00 - Joanne Drive/ Lundy evaluation for Assabet River Rail
 - \$ 1,259.00 - Laptop computer for use at Planning Board meetings.
 - \$ 1,896.82 – Administrative Assistant salary

Anticipated FY09 Expenses:

\$ 1,911.48 – Administrative Assistant salary

\$ 5,000.00 – Master Plan Consultant

\$ 5,000.00 – Master Plan Expenses (Printing, Advertising, etc.)

Anticipated FY10 projects:

- Master Plan Implementation (Village Districts)
- Legal Review for Zoning Bylaw Amendments related to Master Plan Implementation
- Engineering Consultant

MINUTES

December 18, 2008 – *Ernie Dodd moved to approve minutes of the December 18, 2008 meeting, as amended. The motion was seconded by Steve Quinn and carried by a vote of five in favor (Laura Spear, Kathleen Willis, Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn and Len Golder).*

PUBLIC INPUT - None

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS' UPDATES

The Community Preservation Committee held a meeting on December 22, 2008 at the request of Jim Sauta of the Council on Aging to discuss their interest in the Whitney Homestead for a senior center and the potential to use CPA funds. That discussion never took place, as Jim did not show up for the meeting. G.H. Gledhill met with the Committee to discuss a proposal for additional stonewall restoration. The Committee encouraged him to take a comprehensive look at all of the cemeteries, including stonewalls, gravestones, etc., for potential restoration projects. They also suggested that he consider requesting CPA Administrative funds to survey the needs and estimated costs.

The Community Preservation Committee also discussed Affordable Housing and noted that they have not received any requests from any of the housing committees.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Karen Kelleher updated the Board on ongoing activities in the Planning Department:

Lower Village Water – Bob Maynard of Assabet Water Company stopped by the office today with the Senior Project Manager from Weston and Sampson. Bob sounded very optimistic about the DEP permitting process and hopes to start laying pipe this coming spring. Steve Quinn asked if it is possible to consider and plan for other underground utilities, such as electric, seeing as though they will be working in the right-of-way. It was noted that they should also take into consideration the locations of the proposed roundabouts.

Street Acceptance – Street Acceptance documents continue to be submitted for Cider Mill Road and the remainder of the Wildlife Woods Subdivision roads, in anticipation of an Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article. Karen Kelleher is following up with Inland Survey on the As-Built plans for Kettell Plain Road.

Affordable Housing Issues

Pulte Homes recently closed on a Middle Income Unit at the Arbor Glen Active Adult Neighborhood. Attorney Christine Sheehey, representing Pulte Homes, had questions as to who the monitoring agent for resale would be and if the Town wanted to establish an administrative fee. DHCD typically sets the fee at 2½ % of income. Karen was unable to obtain an answer from any of the Housing Committees, so this particular deed simply stated "to be determined". Karen discussed the issue of the different housing committees and who is

responsible for what with Selectmen Chair Tom Ruggiero and Town Administrator Bill Wrigley. Bill asked Karen to outline her concerns/questions in writing to the housing groups and he will follow through from there.

Highgrove Estates –Rich Harrington of Stamski & McNary, Inc. and his client requested an informal meeting to discuss the Highgrove Estates Subdivision. Members agreed to schedule time at a business meeting.

Whitney Homestead – Karen received an inquiry from someone interested in the Whitney Homestead for a home daycare. Karen explained the bylaw for historic structures and encouraged him to meet with the Board with informal plans before filing a formal application.

STOW COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITY

Len Golder recused himself from this discussion, as he is an abutter.

Members reviewed the revised Stow Community Recreational Facility Plan for compliance with the Site Plan Approval Decision and found that Sheet C5 of the Plan does not comply with the Site Plan Approval Decision as follows:

- Reference “see note 2” in the note “Shallow CCB across existing 9’ path to provide vehicle access to leased parcel” should be moved. It appears this note should apply to the path to the storage shed.
- The sign at the entrance “Welcome to Snow Field no Dogs Allowed” should be changed to “Welcome to Snow Field no **Animals** Allowed”

Ernie Dodd moved to endorse the plan upon receipt of a revised plan with modifications as discussed. The motion was seconded by Steve Quinn and carried by a vote of four members (Laura Spear, Kathleen Willis, Ernie Dodd and Steve Quinn).

ARBOR GLEN ACTIVE ADULT NEIGHBORHOOD

Walking/Bike Path Redline Plan Change

Mark Mastroianni of Pulte Homes met with the Board to discuss the proposed Plan Modification, showing a revised walking/bike path, as requested by the Conservation Commission.

Laura Spear explained that the Planning Board originally thought the area where the proposed walking path is located was not to be farmed. It turns out that the area will be farmed, and the Conservation Commission requested that no trails be located in that particular area.

Mark Mastroianni presented a plan showing the elimination of the trails going through the field. The original plan showed a trail from the access road to the septic system through the fields. The Planning Board had suggested that the trail be relocated to the other side of the septic area and then connect to the perimeter trail, which would locate the trail behind three of the units. Mark Mastroianni said that Pulte Homes wants to discourage trails close to people’s back yard. Laura Spear noted that she is concerned that people will tend to use the access road to the septic area and continue through to the farmland. Mark Mastroianni said he thinks people will use the perimeter trail. He also noted that it is important to Pulte Homes that the trail not be located near the units, as they are struggling with the project, and don’t want to do anything that will slightly deter a sale.

Kathleen Willis said she thinks the plan, as proposed by Pulte Homes, makes sense. Laura Spear asked if there is a possibility of keeping the option open for the trail. She doesn’t want to disrupt the farmland and is concerned about the potential to trespass from the septic area access way. Ernie Dodd said the Board could work with the Condominium Association in the

future. He feels there are plenty of trails throughout the property and they do connect and are not that far out of the way.

Ernie Dodd moved to accept the redline plan change, not requiring a Public Hearing, as shown on the marked up plan dated October 22, 2008 entitled "Proposed Plan Modification, Revised Walking/Bike Path". The motion was seconded by Kathleen Willis and carried by a vote of four in favor (Kathleen Willis, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder and Steve Quinn) and one abstention (Laura Spear).

Update on sales

Mark Mastroianni updated the Board on development progress. They have sold and occupied 20 units through 2008 and sold 10 more for occupancy in 2009. They do have quite a few spec units due to cancellation rates. The goal is to complete the horseshoe section to sell in 2010.

Mark Mastroianni said that affordable units in age-restricted developments are problematic. They don't serve the intention of affordable housing. The idea is to put people in housing that don't have income. Affordable age restricted buyers have cash from sale of home. They have sold affordable units here, but that is because there are so few. He also noted that the Middle Income units are also difficult to sell. They ended up discounting the middle-income units to \$199,000.00 to the low \$200,000.00 because the market rate units were discounted due to the current economy.

Security gate to prevent access to drumlin

Laura Spear advised that the State Fire Marshall, Steve Coan, lives across the street from the Arbor Glen Development and is concerned about trespass to the hill. The Board asked that Pulte Homes install a gate to prevent unauthorized access. Mark Mastroianni said he did ask and was told by Pulte Homes that their response was they did not want to install the gate and suggested that Mr. Coan call the Police. Ernie Dodd said he feels that a gate should be put up. Laura suggested that they use something as simple as a chain across the access road as a deterrent. Mark Mastroianni agreed to ask again.

Lights

Kathleen Willis asked if there are permanent lights on the hill and if so, noted that they should not be lit all of the time.

Kathleen also asked them to provide the type of fixture they used for the units so that the Planning Board and its Lighting Sub-Committee can use it as a good example.

Site Plan

Mark Mastroianni noted a point about the site plan that the Board should take into consideration on future developments. The site plan ended up with no sidewalks and 18' roadways and 8' long driveways. Residents are having difficulty driving on the narrow roads, especially with the length of the driveways. If there is parking on the street it is difficult to get by. Laura Spear noted that there was an area designated for guest parking. Board Members said it is good to know the issues residents are faced with.

SMALL TOWN ROAD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (STRAP)

Members discussed a letter from Greenman – Pedersen, Inc (GPI) concerning the Small Town Road Assistance Grant and agreed that it is worth pursuing as a possible funding source for the proposed Roundabout at the Great Road/Pompositticut Street/Red Acre Road Intersection. Karen Kelleher will contact GPI to set up a meeting to discuss the possibility for assistance in preparing the project application, as offered in their letter. Karen will also inform the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

LOWER VILLAGE LLC, 124 GREAT ROAD – CAR WASH PROPOSAL

The Planning Board would like to talk to the Board of Health (or a representative and the Health Agent) about the proposed car wash at the former Mobil Station site so they will have a better understanding of the status of the ongoing clean-up on the site and any concerns about the proposed use in that regard.

Karen Kelleher will coordinate a meeting with the Board of Health and also follow up with the applicant to schedule a site walk.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kelleher
Planning Coordinator