

TOWN OF STOW PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the April 3, 2012 Planning Board Meeting.

Present: Planning Board Members: Steve Quinn, Ernest Dodd, Kathy Sferra and Lenny Golder
Absent: Planning Board Member: Lori Clark
Voting Associate Member: Brian Martinson
Planning Coordinator: Karen Kelleher
Administrative Assistant: Kristen Domurad-Guichard

Called to order at 7:15PM.

REVIEW OF CORRESPONDENCE AND MINUTES

Minutes

Lenny Golder moved to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2012 Planning Board meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Kathy Sferra and carried by a vote of the three members present (Lenny Golder, Kathy Sferra and Ernie Dodd).

Lenny Golder moved to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2012 Planning Board meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Kathy Sferra and carried by a vote of the three members present (Lenny Golder, Kathy Sferra and Ernie Dodd).

Correspondence

No correspondence was reviewed.

PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

APPOINTMENTS

Mike Clayton, Superintendent of Streets

Lower Village Traffic Planning

The Board asked Mike to identify issues concerning drainage/street layout in the Lower Village. Mike said there are drainage issues in Lower Village, specifically from the top of the rise on Elm Ridge Road to Melone's gravel pit access road and onward to the Assabet River. He stated this area all drains to the area near Melone's driveway with the exception of a majority of the shopping center parking lot, which drains toward the back of the property. He noted that the whole swamp area and pipe where the drainage ends up at Melone's is under a lot of sediment. He noted there is also a culvert at the Animal Hospital.

Mike envisioned Lower Village drainage improvements to be made first, then followed by surface improvements. He noted a gas line under the east bound lane and other pipes in the west bound lane.

Kathy asked if there was an easement on Melone's property where the drainage was located and asked if there was any way the town could go in there and clean it up.

Mike stated that the pipe is completely under the swamp area and now the ground is higher than the pipe.

Mike stated that he Melone might be willing to help and he may be able to get Mosquito Control to clean out the area. He said even if they get that small area cleaned out it would make a big difference for drainage in Lower Village.

The Board asked Mike if he liked the plan with the left hand turn lanes.

Mike stated that he did not see it really helping people turn left out of Pompositticut Street or Red Acre.

Karen mentioned she discussed with Mike the Board's suggestion of making Pompositticut Street a "no left turn lane" during peak traffic hours.

Brian stated that this may not even be necessary because so few people turn left during rush hour.

Ernie asked Mike what he thought about making the traffic islands permanent. Karen stated that the Board asked Coler and Colantonio if the existing temporary traffic islands were located in the correct place in order to consider making them permanent. Mike stated that the Highway Department could do some work in that area and it wouldn't cost that much to make an improvement.

Ernie noted the improvements proposed at the White Pond Road entrance.

Mike stated that he liked the overall plan but would have to make sure the turn radius was wide enough to accommodate some of the large trucks that turn out of White Pond Road.

Lenny asked about cars turning out of the post office and Elm Ridge Road.

Mike stated that he and Bruce did look at putting in a crosswalk in that location.

Kathy asked in terms of sequence would Mike advocate making the existing temporary islands permanent now or wait to install all at the same time.

Mike said they could go ahead with making the existing temporary islands permanent, but would need to make sure the road width for the proposed traffic islands was appropriate.

Mike stated he could use Chapter 90 funds to make the existing traffic islands permanent, and then go to town meeting for the rest of the money. He said traffic islands won't cost much, it is the labor cost that is high.

He stated that he may be able to get other funding once the Board has a plan.

Mike noted the Board should take into consideration any piping that may cross under a traffic island.

Steve suggested planning for water lines, possibly in the right of way, for the future.

Mike stated that they may be able to include a sleeve.

Ernie asked about widening the end of Samuel Prescott Drive.

Mike stated that they need to figure out the property lines, but would like to make a right turn and left turn exit.

Mike said he could price out the traffic islands once they have a plan.
Brian stated that Bruce Fletcher prepared a sketch of a traffic island for the board.
Karen noted that Board members seemed to want a design that accommodates more vegetation.
Kathy stated that some towns have used an “adopt and island” program and involve local businesses in the landscaping. Kathy noted they could give specs on height and consistency.

Lenny Golder asked Mike his opinion on rumble strips.
Mike stated that speed was not really an issue in the Lower Village and did not see a need for rumble strips.

Karen noted the traffic islands would slow traffic by their design.
Mike stated the only instance he could see using rumble strips would be for around a low traffic island.

Karen stated it is important that Mike and John Morgan of Coler and Colantonio to meet to discuss how to fit drainage improvements into the overall plan.
The Board thanked Mike for his assistance.

REVIEW OF MINUTES Continued...

Steve Quinn moved to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2012 Planning Board meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Kathy Sferra and carried by a vote of four in favor (Steve Quinn, Kathy Sferra, Lenny Golder and Ernie Dodd).

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Sidewalk Donation Account

Karen Kelleher stated that she resolved the sidewalk budget account issue with Julie Costello, Town Accountant. Bill Wrigley, Town Administrator, had asked if the Board could accept the sidewalk donation and deposit it into the general fund, then track how much was deposited and ask for an appropriation at Town Meeting into a sidewalk account. Julie said this process would work.

Karen explained that the accountant will set up a revenue account within the general fund for donations to be deposited. The Planning Board would then submit a warrant article to appropriate the funds into an expense account. .

Jon Witten, Town Counsel stated that it is legal to collect donations and that it was just an accounting issue.

Kathy asked if the Board was now clear to meet with the Board of Selectmen about the walkway prioritization plan.

Karen noted she is still waiting on some added language from Lori, but the issue of the sidewalk account is resolved.

Karen stated that she received a call from Bruce Fletcher, today who informed her that he negotiated a price for the walkway on Great Road to Old Bolton Road and would have money left over. Bruce and Mike proposed they use the remaining sidewalk funds to create a sidewalk along Library Hill Road from Great Road. Karen said Bruce needed an answer today, as Century Paving was planning on moving their crew. Karen contacted both Ernie and Lori who were in support of using the remaining sidewalk funds for this section.

The Highway Department is contracting with Century Paving for the remaining work on Library Hill Road, separately from the Bid awarded to Century Paving by the Planning Department.

Karen stated that Lori's only concern was taking up any land from the common. Lori noted the Walkway Committee received a lot of push back regarding this issue.

Karen stated that Bruce stated that they would be working mostly in the right of way and would only need to cut into the common a small amount around the corner where the utility box is located.

Karen noted that a crosswalk will be provided on Great Road so that Gleasondale Road pedestrians may cross Great Road to the Library without having to cross Gleasondale Road first in order to get to the other side of Great Road.

Karen said this will pull things together for the town center.

Steve asked if the sidewalk along Old Bolton Road made it to the recreation fields.

Karen stated that Century Paving went the entire distance of the plan prepared by Places Associates.

Timeline for Lower Village Planning – Zoning

Karen suggested the Board should come up with a timeline to discuss zoning objectives so we will be prepared for when the Presti and Steinberg (Beef & Ale) property are proposed for redevelopment.

Ernie stated that the Board should go through the allowed uses again.

Karen noted it is also important to involve the property owners to get an idea of whether the uses the Board are talking about are realistic from a marketing standpoint. Kathy stated that she prepared an outline of things she felt the Board should get done and would type this up for the Board:

Define the study area, create a working map, look at what has been done before (MAPC study, previous zoning, Master Plan Surveys, Review of existing zoning, what the Board would like to see and what build out would look like, potential barriers, list of appropriate uses and discuss this with key business owners. She stated she would also like to do a calculation of the number of parking spaces.

Karen noted a lot of these things had been done but the Board just needs to regroup and pull it all together.

Ernie said they need to get the Selectmen on board, especially for water.

Kathy stated that the Community Preservation Committee met with Pilot Grove. Pilot Grove indicated they could provide their own water from Pilot Grove so they were not depending on the Deerfield Lane open space parcel for water, so it really is just Lower Village.

It was noted that Rich Presti had considered a well site on his property.

Karen noted she heard Kostas of Stow House of Pizza that Rich Presti was not interested in sharing water.

Steve stated that he felt hooking up with Maynard's water line made the most sense and thought the idea should be presented differently to Maynard residents. He noted they may get more commercial users by hooking up with Stow businesses.

Steve also noted that the town could potentially make a capital investment. He noted the town will be spending more and more money on water for the schools and town buildings in the near future.

Board members questioned the cost of connecting a line to Maynard and that it would be financially burdensome for businesses.

Karen noted that in terms of defining the area of Lower Village, MAPC conducted a study that included a transition zone to a mixed use business district. There was a lot of push back from residents about this and, due to the resistance, the Board opted to concentrate only on the existing business district at this time

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Karen reported on the ongoing activities in the Planning Department.

Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC)

Karen reported that the MAGIC meeting would be held in Stow on Thursday April 5, 2012 at 7PM. She said it would be good if Planning Board members were able to attend. Kathy Sferra said she plans to attend.

Suburban Mobility Working Group

Karen stated that the Suburban Mobility Working Group is working on shared transportation services for the MAGIC region, sharing Council on Aging vans, shuttles to Clock Tower Place, possibly using school buses on off hours, etc.

Karen said there is a survey posted on the Town's and hard copies in the Planning Office, Council on Aging and the Library. A notice was also sent to the Stow Independent. Will also Karen noted other towns are handing out the same survey; they hope to get feedback on transportation needs.

Karen will be contacting Bose corporation to send the survey out.

Ace Hardware

Karen stated that Kevin Whalen of Ace Hardware agreed to meet Planning Board members for a site walk on April 10th at 6:15 PM.

Highgrove Estates

Karen stated that Highgrove Estates requested an appointment with the Board to discuss a performance bond. Karen informed him he first needs to come up with an estimate and then run that by Sue Carter. He will most likely be on the agenda for next week.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS' UPDATE continued....

Rebel Run at Honey Pot Hill Orchards

Kathy Sferra stated that she found out about a running race called a rebel run, which Honey Pot would be hosting next year. She said it is a three day event including camping, BBQ, beer party

etc. She was wondering if they needed permits so she forwarded the information to one of the Selectmen who then talked to Bill Wrigley.

Bill is aware of the event and the event hosts are already started in the permitting process.

Kathy stated she was a little concerned because camping isn't allowed in the Residential Zoning district, as well as concern for Board of Health issues such as water and sanitary needs.

Karen Kelleher wondered if they should be required to submit a site plan, given the fact that this is a commercial event not related to agriculture.

Ernie Dodd noted that it should be up to the Board of Selectmen as it is a one-time event.

Elementary School Building Committee (ESBC)

Steve reported that the open house event last weekend went very well, there were approximately 600 people that went through the building. They plan to host another open house the end of summer/beginning of fall once the entire project is finished. They are on schedule and their substantial completion date is in mid-June.

Public Records Request

Karen stated that the public records request might require a reserve fund transfer for printing, as it was an unexpected item.

Karen will check to see if the person requesting the records can pay the Nashoba Blue Printers directly.

Finance Committee

Karen stated that, although the Capital Planning Committee did not vote, they all seemed supportive of the Planning Board's request for the large format copier/printer.

Derby Woods I

Karen reported that she received a call about construction debris and contacted Dave Coia, who confirmed that it would be cleaned up.

Dave is still working with Nashoba Paving to schedule sidewalk construction.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristen Domurad-Guichard