

TOWN OF STOW
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the November 20, 2012 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Steve Quinn, Ernest Dodd, Kathy Sferra, Lori Clark

Absent: Planning Board Member Len Golder

Voting Associate Member: Brian Martinson

Non-Voting Associate Member: Mark Jones

Lori Clark called meeting to order at 7p.m.

Correspondence Update:

Assistant Planner, Jesse Steadman updated the Board on the status of Lower Village comments that had been returned from the previous week's mailings to Lower Village businesses.

Member Updates:

Center School:

Steve Quinn reported that a special type of sod has been installed at Center School and supposed to be useable by spring of 2013.

Stow House of Pizza Light:

Brian Martinson said he is satisfied with the recent corrective action involving the spotlight at the Stow House of Pizza, as supervised by Craig Martin. He reported that even if the spotlight light were to be turned on, its downward directed placement would not shine in the eyes of drivers.

Escrow Meeting Postponement:

Lori Clark updated the Board on the postponed meeting with Syncarpha Solar and Terradyne regarding the terms of the Delaney Street Solar Project Escrow agreement. Lori Clark noted that Town Counsel felt the meeting should have been posted and may have violated open meeting law had it been held.

Ernie Dodd said that when the agreement is made, it needs to be a tri-party agreement for the Planning Board to agree. Steve Quinn commented on the remediation cost estimate, saying that because the remediation would go through a public bidding process, the work would cost much more than if the remediation were done in the private sector.

Coordinator's Report:

Hemenway Subdivision Preliminary Plan:

Jesse Steadman reported that a Preliminary Plan for the Hemenway Subdivision at the 33 and 45 Walcott Street has been submitted and notice for a public hearing on the plan has been submitted for December 11, 2012. Jesse Steadman asked the Board when they would like to set up a sitewalk to visit the property. The Board decided that 2PM on Sunday, November 25, 2012 would be best. Jesse Steadman said he will coordinate with Rich Harrington and Mark White to set up the meeting.

Derby Woods:

Jesse Steadman reported that the Planning Department received a telephone call from George Gallagher of Habitech, requesting the amount of money that Bruce Wheeler agreed to have held back from the bond for Street Trees. Jesse Steadman said they advised him that he should use the amount listed in the bond (\$6,750.00 plus 50%) and also reminded him that the Board will want to hold back funds to ensure issues on encroachments and conveyance of the Open Land are resolved.

Jesse Steadman reported that the current balance on the bond is of \$70,856.00 and that as of this date, the following items remain outstanding:

- Endorsement of the Conservation Restriction
- Transfer of the Open Land to the Town of Stow
- Final inspection of Street Trees

Lori Clark asked if there is an amount the Planning Board would not like the bond to fall below. Ernie Dodd replied that he would not like the bond to fall below \$20,000 because amounts that fall too low do not always offer enough incentive for a developer to finish the required work. Kathy Sferra said that she would like to get a timeline for when the rest of the work will be completed. Ernie Dodd would like to know about the timeline for the Boxborough road sidewalk completion.

Sidewalk Contribution:

Jesse Steadman referred to sidewalk costs that were included in the Planning Board packets for the meeting. He noted that he spoke with Lenny Golder, who wanted the Board to know that Harvard, Sudbury and Lincoln were Towns that could be looked to as examples. Lori Clark said that both Sudbury and Lincoln build their own sidewalks so their situation does not quite relate to Stow's. Mark Jones said that Lincoln no longer does construction on their own roads and now contracts nearly everything out.

Kathy Sferra noticed that the cost numbers from different towns span a large range. Lori Clark replied that when a certified engineer puts a stamp on the sidewalk plan they protect themselves from liability by adding granite curbs and other additions. Lori Clark said that because Towns do not have the same liability concerns, perhaps those concerns are not of the utmost importance when constructing sidewalks. Lori Clark continued, saying they essentially want to price the sidewalks so that it is desirable for a developer to contribute to the sidewalk fund, but not so expensive that they do not consider building.

Ernie Dodd claimed that adding sidewalks along established roads are more expensive than building sidewalk's in conjunction with new roads. Lori Clark added that the board should take into account that public work costs much more to build sidewalks than what can be built by private companies.

Kathy Sferra asked about the cost of private sector sidewalk construction. Lori Clark said that Habitech claimed it was more than \$20 per linear foot. Lori Clark added that having a police detail is a lot more expensive, and part of the sidewalk committee's cost estimates included police detail. Lori Clark said that Acton's numbers are likely a reflection of traffic volumes and police details. Kathy Sferra said that according to the Derby Woods pricing estimates, they were not considering the curb costs.

The Board asked Jesse Steadman and Karen Kelleher to talk with developer's about sidewalk costs with and without police detail. Steve Quinn said he could also get some estimates but it really depends on the site you are working with. Ernie Dodd said that Mike Clayton, with the Highway Department, Bruce Fletcher, Mark White and Sue Carter, the Town's Engineer may also be able to provide some insight.

Brian Martinson asked if there was a need to provide financial incentives for the developer to contribute to the sidewalk fund in lieu of constructing them. Many developers would probably welcome the opportunity to make a full-price sidewalk contribution just to avoid the hassle of constructing them. Lori Clark said the Board just wants to make sure that they are near the actual price.

Mark Jones asked that given the current subdivisions before the Board - what is the current timeline for updating the sidewalk policy. The Board agreed that because it is a policy and no choices have been made by the developers to contribute or build, a decision as to the price can be made any time before the decision to build is made.

Kathy Sferra said that if we are going to ask for estimates the Board needs to be consistent on sidewalk width's.

The Board asked that the sidewalk policy issue be put back on the agenda in a few weeks when Planning staff are in receipt of some estimates.

Gleasondale Mill Grant Opportunity:

Jesse Steadman reported that the Planning Department had previously applied to UMass for participation in their studio project to work with graduate students on the first stages of a master plan for our Gleasondale Village area. They instead selected the town of Ware.

Jesse Steadman reported that Karen Kelleher received a call from Bob Mitchell of UMass advising that they may be offering another program in the spring. Dr. John Mullen in the Planning Department at UMass and was very intrigued about Stow's request because of the Mill's historical significance and his involvement with the Clock Tower renovations in Maynard. Bob Mitchell asked Karen Kelleher to send a list of potential tasks that the studio team could work on.

Jesse Steadman said the Cost to the town is typically \$5,000.00 but can sometimes be reduced depending on school budget or funds from other contributors. If the Town is interested, Karen Kelleher has said will need to look for a funding source claimed Jesse Steadman. Jesse Steadman added that the Planning Board's Engineering/ Consultant/ Master Plan account is down to \$2,847.92. He continued, saying we could look for additional funds from our operating budget and ask the Selectmen if they have funds in their engineering/consultant account.

Jesse Steadman reported that Karen Kelleher and he thought that assistance with market analysis/feasibility studies/adaptive reuse could help the planning effort get off the ground.

Steve Quinn said \$5000 is not much of a grant but still a lot cheaper than hiring a consultant to do the work. Kathy Sferra said it could get some good ideas on the table as the process moves forward.

Kathy Sferra also said we could look into using CPC administrative funds for doing a study related to historic preservation. She said that in the past, design work and feasibility studies were allowed to be considered. Kathy Sferra said the Finance Committee may be able to shed some light on funding opportunities. Mark Jones asked if it would be worth pursuing other planning and design projects. Steve Quinn said that based on his knowledge of the issues, perhaps John Mullen could give us some insight into the possibilities at the mill to help direct the Planning Department's effort. Kathy Sferra recommended that Planning staff probably talk to the Stow Historic Commission, as well as John Mullen about the possibilities of the project if we could get the money.

Ernie said the Town of Stow would have no problem extending the water resource protection district but would like to be able tie into Hudson sewer lines. Ernie Dodd said that the DEP may be able to put pressure on Hudson to do so, or the state could feel obligated to send some money their way to help out with such an initiative. Mark Jones said it may be a good idea for Bill Wrigley to give some feedback on the issue regarding Hudson water.

Lori Clark asked if the student project could include the water aspect. Kathy Sferra said it would likely have to if feasibility were to be the goal. Steve Quinn said the students could likely come up with usage numbers. Steve Quinn added that anything over 10,000 gallons per day will need to have a water supply or wastewater treatment plant. Jesse Steadman added that public meetings and technical figures were probably the areas that the students would be most appropriately prepared for, as well as the deliverables the Town could save money on. He said that municipal issues, such as navigating the relationships between Towns did not work as well in his experience as a student.

Kathy Sferra said that even if the students wanted to do a public meeting it could start some good conversations. Steve Quinn said that the town should want to look into this considering the mill's historic importance in the Town.

323 Great Road:

Jesse Steadman said that after some discussion at the last meeting he and Karen Kelleher think it would be a good idea to discuss the potential of 323 Great Road for Town purchase. Given the location in the center of town, Planning staff believe the Town should seriously consider purchasing the property for a variety of municipal uses, including:

- Well for municipal building given the proposal for an expanded fire station (we have current need to improve the existing well and the fire station, the Town Hall and Church will also be needing a sprinkler system.
- Siting of Affordable Housing
- Open Space along Ministers Pond
- Parking
- Etc.

Jesse Steadman asked whether the Planning Board wants to forward a memo to the Selectmen encouraging them to pursue the parcel? Jesse Steadman said we could include some mapping on potential well locations or other data to help illustrate opportunities.

Lori Clark said that for \$300,000 323 Great Road could be a bargain for a new firehouse location. (did you get her comments on this sentence?) She continued, saying that essentially it is a Town center property that is not that expensive. Kathy Sferra added that the Selectmen will likely be regrouping to figure out how to go forward after the failure of the capital projects at Town Meeting, and perhaps even creating one master committee to prioritize the projects. Steve Quinn thinks that Town ownership of the parcel could offer opportunities to eliminate the need for onsite housing during possible fire station construction, as well as potentially reducing a substantial amount of money off of the fire station costs. Such a decision, continued Steve Quinn could free up the old fire station for use by the Highway Department.

Lori Clark said it sounds like the Board is in favor of the memo. The Board discussed the contents of the memo, agreeing that 323 Great Road is:

- A unique 8 acre property in the center of town
- The price is right for purchase
- Staff should prepare a list of the potential uses that could be considered for parcel.

The Planning Board agreed to have Planning Staff draft a memo for next week that CC's Bill Wrigley.

Lower Village Planning Forum:

Specific points to over in Introduction:

- Introduce Board Members and Jesse Steadman
- Explain contents of the evening including question and answer sessions.
- Set up a slide with how questions and logistics were going to be handled throughout the meeting.

Question Stations:

Comments on the Conceptual traffic plan by Coler and Colantonio – Steve Quinn

What did you hear that you like? – Kathy Sferra

What are your concerns? – Ernie Dodd

What Questions do you have? – Jesse Steadman

What kinds of businesses would you like to see in Lower Village? – Lori Clark

It was decided that the above language would be added to the presentation along with:

- A presentation handout with several slides on a page.
- A sign in sheet
- An OK for the presentation to be televised

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Jesse Steadman