

TOWN OF STOW  
PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of the November 12, 2013 Planning Board Meeting

Planning Board Members Present: Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Steve Quinn, Len Golder

Voting Associate Member: Mark Jones  
Non-Voting Associate Member: Dan Beaudette

Lori Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

**Correspondence Update:**

**Member Updates:**

Gleasondale Planning Charrette:

Karen Kelleher gave an update on the well attended Gleasondale Charrette at Hale School.

Ernie Dodd said he is not happy with the safety plan at Delaney and is planning to have Syncarpha walk with he, Steve Quinn and Joe Landry. Karen Kelleher said she will be working with Syncarpha to set a date.

**Planner's Report**

*Economic Development Discussion Meeting*

Karen Kelleher reported that she and Jesse met with Selectmen Jim Salvie and a group of residents/business owners (Adam Surreau, Tom Farnsworth, Vicki Carter and Walter Lankau) interested in a Stow Economic Development Committee (EDC). Serena Howlett is also interested in an EDC but was not available for this meeting. All at the meeting agreed there is a need for an EDC, noting that Stow needs to change its image to show that it is welcoming to businesses said Karen Kelleher. She added that those present agreed that a mission statement or list of roles and responsibilities that an EDC could take on should be provided along with a recommendation that the Board of Selectmen appoint an EDC. Suggested action items include statement of high level goals as well as a list of practical action items:

- Preparation of a simple guide on how to do business in Stow
- Create a website presence
- Advocate for businesses, helping through the permitting process and/or enforcement issues
- Liaison to Zoning and Planning Initiatives such as Lower Village and Gleasondale.
- A needs assessment for new businesses to determine what type and where it might be appropriate.

Karen Kelleher and Jesse Steadman agreed that the Planning Department could help out with administrative duties. The Group will meet again on December

### **Town Acceptance of Open Land**

Karen Kelleher reported that she and Jesse met with Conservation Coordinator Kathy Sferra and Selectmen Jim Salve and Tom Ryan about a Land Acceptance policy. It was agreed that the Board of Selectmen should be involved in discussions with regard to ownership and land use plans for PCD Open Land parcels early on and before a Special Permit is issued. It was agreed that meet with the Selectmen agenda to provide an overview of the PCD Bylaw and present where we stand on the Hemenway Farm Open Land discussions, and seek input from the Board of Selectmen.

### **Quirk Property**

Karen Kelleher noted that the auction postponed to November 19 at 11:30 AM.

### **Lower Village RFP**

Karen Kelleher reported that she drafted an RFP for Lower Village Design and Construction Plan and forwarded it to Sue Carter and Craig Martin for input on technical details and to Bill Wrigley for input on the legal details. A copy is in tonight's packet for discussion tonight.

### **Lower Village Water**

Karen Kelleher reported that EOEEA confirmed that the .74 acre mitigation parcel for the portions of Heritage Land and/or Deerfield Lane being reserved for a water supply source is acceptable.

Karen Kelleher said the Town Administrator recommended the creation of an action team consisting of herself, Jon Witten, Kathy Sferra, Bill Wrigley and Rich Presti to develop an initial draft of a lease agreement that the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Selectmen, and others, can review and work from.

Karen Kelleher said the Town Administrator also recommended that the Lower Village Property owners begin discussions with the Conservation Commission relative to gaining site access for the purposes of installing a test well, and any appurtenant costs. The Conservation Commission approved moving forward with well testing on the property at its meeting of 3/5/13. A letter of Agreement between the property owners and conservation commission will be necessary to allow the testing.

### **Gleasondale Charrette**

Karen Kelleher said Saturday's Gleasondale Charrette was very successful. We had a good turnout with good participation. The next step is a ground truthing session to be held early December.

Professor Mullin would like to continue the planning effort with next semester's Landscape Architecture class. The cost is \$7500.00.

We would have to find another funding source because the the project would begin before the May 2014 Town Meeting.

### **Gleasondale Water**

Karen Kelleher reported that she and Jesse met with Michelle Ciccolo and Kerin Shea of the Town of Hudson Community Development Department and Anthony Marques of the Department of Public Works about the potential of working together on a public water supply to serve Gleasondale that would be beneficial to both Towns. The Town of Hudson is in need of an additional well site said Karen Kelleher. She said the group discussed the potential for the Town of Hudson to locate a municipal well on Stow Town-owned land (known as the Kane Well Site) provided that they agree to serve Gleasondale. There seemed to be some interest on the part of Hudson, provided that there would be a benefit to them. Some questions that came up:

- Quantity and Quality of water.
- Potential buildout for Gleasondale (properties that abut the water line cannot be excluded).
- Would the property remain under the ownership of Stow or be conveyed to Hudson?

The Town of Hudson recently applied for a grant to evaluate potential well sites. Michelle Ciccolo noted that, if awarded, they could potentially evaluate the Kane Well site for water. Karen Kelleher noted that if the two towns cannot work something out, the property could potentially be made available to the Mill if and when it is redeveloped.

### **GIS**

Karen Kelleher reported that Jill Kern continues to volunteer her time in developing GIS data layers for the Planning and other Departments. She is currently working on a drainage layer, which will be helpful for the Highway Department. The Fire Chief is excited about the potential for GIS data layers for the Fire Department. He will be stopping by the office to meet with Jill in the next couple of weeks.

In the next budget cycle, Karen would like to propose to the Town Administrator the idea of a part time GIS person to work on a variety of opportunities to benefit and improve productivity of all departments, as well as providing information to citizens.

- Planning:  
Developing new GIS data layers and preparing specialized maps relating to specific Planning initiatives (e.g. Sidewalks and Sidewalk Priorities, Trails and Trail Priorities)
- Conservation:  
Mapping invasive species found; updating and maintaining inventory of Open Space parcels, developing maps of Open Space for public display and also as part of baseline documentation; developing updated trail maps for posting at trailheads
- Highway:  
Improving Department productivity by mapping all Drainage data (manhole, catch basin, pipe) from various As-Built plans in the Planning Departments file drawers

- Fire:  
Identifying the location of all features relating to firefighting, to assist FD in locating nearest water resources for a given location

### **First parish Church**

Bill Wrigley is reviewing a proposed agreement for water. Once we have a draft agreement, a meeting will be scheduled with representatives from the church.

### **Joint Appointment with the Board of Selectmen of Planning Board Member**

The Board moved from the third floor to the second floor Selectmen Meeting room. Lori Clark described the reason for the Planning Board vacancy, stating the appointment would last until the election next year. Mark Jones described his interest in the Planning Board and status as a Voting Associate Member for the last several months. Mark Jones said that he has worked as an accountant and financial planner for several years. James Salvie asked if Mark Jones intended to run when the term was up. Mark Jones said yes. Len Golder said he strongly and enthusiastically supports Mark Jones' appointment to the Board. Ernie Dodd said Mark Jones understands the bylaw and fits in with the makeup of the Planning Board. Tom Ryan asked if Mark was the only one who stepped forward? Lori Clark confirmed.

James Salvie moved to appoint Mark Jones to fill the remainder of an unexpired Planning Board term until the next election.

Tom Ryan seconded.

**Joint VOTE: (9-0) Unanimously in favor. (Don Hawkes, Gary Bernklow, Charlie Kern, Tom Ryan, James Salvie, Len Golder, Ernie Dodd, Lori Clark, Steve Quinn)**

### **Adams Drive Conceptual Planned Conservation Development Plan**

The Planning Board discussed the conceptual plan submitted by John Anderson for a four lot Planned Conservation Development off Adams Drive. Jesse Steadman explained that the bylaw allows for a Planned Conservation Development to be constructed without the construction of a new road. He also pointed out that the Planning Board has the ability, as stated in Section 8.5.7.4 of the Stow Zoning Bylaw to allow for setbacks less than the stated 100' from an existing way if doing so promotes the intent of the bylaw. Jesse Steadman explained that this parcel is the former site of the Assabet Water Company's public water supply that contains infrastructure that has been noted as potentially significant for providing fire safety in the neighborhood.

The Planning Board discussed the conceptual plan in terms of the overall need for it to fit into the existing pattern of development in the neighborhood, including lot sizes and setbacks from the road. Steve Quinn said having a fire suppression source at that location would be great asset to Stow. Ernie Dodd said that any proposal should not detract from neighborhood. Lori Clark added that the existing neighborhood is an established one, and any new development should fit in with surroundings, including houses that are set back as far as possible, regardless of whether the Planning Board has the ability to grant any waivers. Ernie Dodd said a common septic system may make it easier to accommodate setbacks. The Board discussed the odd lot shape of one lot that connects with a septic

system far from the dwelling, believing it to be an unacceptable design. Lori Clark said there should be defined access to the water tanks on the site rather than through the use of an easement. The Board agreed that in order to make a real determination on the quality of the conceptual plan they need to see the whole plot plan, rather than just a portion. Ernie Dodd said it would be helpful to see the wetland delineation. The Board agreed that although fire suppression potential offers a public benefit, that benefit can be outweighed if it is not in keeping with the neighborhood. The Planning Board agreed it will be hard for the neighborhood to accept the new development.

### **First Parish Church Site Plan Approval Amendment of Required Parking Spaces**

Steve Quinn said that the buffer to the neighbors is more valuable than the additional parking since the addition will not likely require the need for more spaces. Ernie Dodd said they would need a public hearing with the abutters notified to move forward with this request.

Lori Clark remarked about the reasons behind the amendment, saying that in regards to a financial hardship in providing the spaces, it should have been apparent what the inherent costs would be when the plans were drawn. If the proposal is for parking on or near the lot lines, then the abutters should have a chance to weigh in through a public hearing for a modification to the Site Plan said Lori Clark. Ernie Dodd said he would at least like some more trees at the edges where the parking is proposed. Karen Kelleher said unlike the original decision, which found that the spaces would be allowed along the lot line because they were pre-existing, these proposed spaces would be new ones and therefore may require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ernie Dodd said that the Planning Board first must vote on a plan, and then if they approve that plan, the Church can request a variance.

### **Board of Selectmen License Renewals:**

No input from Planning Board

### **Lower Village Request for Qualifications/Proposals**

Karen Kelleher said she forwarded the RFP to Craig Martin, Sue Carter and Bill Wrigley for input. Steve Quinn said it may not hurt to be too detailed. However, he points out that it may cause other items outside of the scope to be an additional price. Steve Quinn said it will be good to get the input of the other's that have seen a lot of RFP's.

Lori Clark said that in the past consultants have created and amended plans without adequate input from the Board. Lori Clark said that aligning on needs and wants early on can help the Board narrow their expectations for Lower Village.

Lori Clark said that language in the RFP can leave it open to suggestions and changes that makes it more efficient and effective.

The Board agreed that they need to have a meeting to get back up to speed on the current conceptual plans and begin to align on where to go next.

## **Gleasondale**

Lori Clark said that there are sufficient issues in Gleasondale that need to be worked out before the Town gets into architectural renderings. The Board discussed what other next steps the students could take.

### **Municipal Disclosure of Conflict of Interest:**

The Planning Board discussed the conflict of interest of Jesse Steadman proposing to enter into a contract with the Conservation Commission to use land for the purpose of commercial agriculture.

*Ernie Dodd motioned that there is no conflict of interest in working for the Planning Board and growing an agricultural product on Conservation Commission owned land.*

Steve Quinn seconded.

**VOTED: 4-0 Unanimously in favor. (Lori Clark, Ernie Dodd, Len Golder, Steve Quinn)**

The Board discussed next steps in the schedule.

In December the Planning Board will work on the Lower Village RFP.

In January the Board will revisit Natural Resource Protection Zoning and finalizing the Medical Marijuana Bylaw.

*Ernie Dodd motioned to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the status of the 323 Great Road Purchase and Negotiations on access to the property with First Parish Church, with adjournment afterward.*

Steve Quinn seconded.

**Roll Call VOTE: Unanimous (Lori Clark – Yea; Ernie Dodd – Yea, Len Golder – Yea; Steve Quinn – Yea)**