

STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF
TUESDAY, May 9, 2005

THIS MEETING BEGAN AS A JOINT SESSION WITH THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE DIALOGUE for the FUTURE.

Present for the Planning Board:

Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Chair
Thomas Creamer
James Cunniff
Jennifer Morrison

Present for the Board of Selectmen:

Arnold Wilson, Chairman
William Emrich
David Schmida
Doris Sosik
Harold White

Also present: James Malloy, Town Administrator
Nancy Campbell, Planning Board Clerk

Absent: Lawrence Adams, Town Planner
Thomas Kenney
David Yaskulka

J. Malloy called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The following categories of the Strategic Planning Action Schedule which pertained to Community Development and the Board and the Town Planner were discussed as follows –

Historic Bylaw – Town Planner – work with the Historic Commission to develop a bylaw proposal (ATM 2006) that would require any development that threatened a historic asset to obtain the Commission’s recommendations for the Planning Board. These assets (buildings, foundations, etc.) would be defined in an inventory developed by the Historic Commission. S. Gibson-Quigley suggested the Commission look into Demolition Delay Bylaws.

Commercial and Industrial Building Designs – Town Planner, Planning Board, Design Review and Board of Selectmen (BOS) – develop initiatives to upgrade existing commercial and industrial building designs (design, landscape and signage); should a design consultant be engaged to accomplish this goal, determine the cost and, if appropriate, prepare an article for ATM or could this work be accomplished internally.

Review Current Zoning – BOS, Town Administrator, Planning Board and Town Planner – review the Town’s current zoning and determine the best location to consider re-zoning and development needs of the community in relation to commercial and industrial development. J. Malloy requested that a joint committee be established to begin this proactive re-zoning. He felt the rezoning process for Route 15 had been successful and suggested that this “route” be used again for this goal.

A. Wilson continued the discussion with the following comments –

- A zoning map which suggested 2 to 5 acre parcels, industrial expansion, commercial revamping, suburban residential changes (Big Alum ??) and adding a commercial historic area (Yankee Workshop to Friendly’s)
- Zoning established in the 1960’s was created from a “trade off” with property owners
- Should this goal be taken on by the present group, a committee or a consultant

S. Gibson-Quigley added these comments to the discussion –

- Agreed that the current zoning map should be reviewed
- Supported creating a subcommittee consisting of Board members, other appropriate boards and members of the community (9 to 11 members) to meet monthly

- The Master Plan and the CMRPC Buildout should be included in this review
- The subcommittee should digest this information before hiring a consultant
- Look at issues relative to areas that are under pressure (Route 20)

T. Creamer felt that the 1988 Master Plan and the Strategic Plan reflected similar answers to questions asked of the residents. He added that CMRPC states that a Planning Board should not undertake comprehensive issues unless they are reviewing a type of master plan and made these suggestions –

- What points do the Master Plan and Strategic Plan identify
- Look at overall zoning in a large picture
- Prioritize
- Consider the best use and vision for Sturbridge
- Would like to see residents serve on the subcommittee
- Based on size, the subcommittee could be constructive or destructive

There was discussion relative that the entire Planning Board serve on the subcommittee. J. Cunniff felt that one group should spear the committee. J. Malloy noted that the Planning Board had been the sponsor of the Route 15 article that went before ATM. S. Gibson-Quigley suggested a Planning Board member be the subcommittee chair and that the Town Planner be the professional individual for the subcommittee. It was agreed that the original suggestion of 2 to 3 members from the Planning Board serve and that a report of the subcommittee’s actions should be brought to the Board at its regular meetings.

A. Wilson took suggestions from the Boards to create a subcommittee which were presented as follows –

Ex Officio – Town Planner, Lawrence Adams

- 2 – Board of Selectmen
- 3 – Planning Board
- 2 – General Public (one appointed by Planning Board and one appointed by the BOS)
- 1 – Zoning Board of Appeals
- 1 – Open Space
- 1 – Community Preservation Committee
- 1 – Conservation Commission

J. Cunniff and T. Creamer felt accurate records of this subcommittee were critical and suggested N. Campbell attend meetings to take minutes. A. Wilson would look into funding for this suggestion. J. Malloy stated that other committees nominate a member to take its minutes and suggested the new subcommittee do the same. A. Wilson asked if there were any boards or committees that had been omitted from the list. He recognized:

Carol Goodwin who suggested Board of Health for water and sewer issues – J. Malloy felt these issues could be addressed with input from himself, Greg Morse and water/sewer engineers; and Penny Dumas who questioned the importance of the role of a Zoning Board of Appeals member – J. Malloy felt this Board was dealt with repetitive issues relative to zoning and S. Gibson-Quigley felt it saw issues that did not come before the Planning Board. A. Wilson agreed.

Motion: to establish a subcommittee to review the zoning map for Sturbridge which would consist of eleven members: 3 – Planning Board; 2 – Board of Selectmen; 2 – General Public (one appointed by Planning Board and one appointed by the BOS); 1 – Zoning Board of Appeals; 1 – Open Space Committee; 1 – Conservation Commission and 1 – Community Preservation Committee (CPC), the later four to be appointed by their own committee and that L. Adams be the ex officio, by S. Gibson-Quigley

2nd: J. Cunniff

Discussion: None

Vote: All in Favor

A. Wilson conducted discussion for organization of the established subcommittee –

- J. Malloy would notify the respective boards and committees requesting names of appointed members that will be serving on the subcommittee.
- S. Gibson-Quigley would set the first meeting date (early June).
- It was agreed that the two General Public members should not be members of any other committee – J. Malloy would advertise for candidates and forward the list to the Planning Board and the BOS.
- Meet once a month; submit an update report on a quarterly schedule and anticipate an eighteen month window to prepare a proposal for ATM 2007;
- All members should have copies of the 1988 Master Plan, the Strategic Plan and the Open Space Plan – all Planning Board members had copies; J. Malloy would provide the BOS with copies as needed.

Other topics of discussion –

- Design Review – standards of design for signs; review the Design Review Handbook drafted by L. Adams
- Open Space Committee – create a subcommittee to discuss including open space and trail development into the rezoning and zoning density; C. Goodwin would ask the Committee for a representative to such a subcommittee; an understanding of “what open space is” is so developers and boards are “on the same page”;
- Water and Sewer – develop a policy for future water and sewer hook ups to help with rezoning issues; A. Wilson will be scheduling this topic for discussion; J. Cunniff would like to look at the buildout for water and sewer and questioned if there should there be restrictions. J. Malloy noted that Tighe & Bond was presently reviewing the Town’s sewer treatment plant.
- Old Sturbridge Village (OSV) – Beverly Shepard had been looking to meet with the BOS on the future of OSV and would like Planning Board members to attend. S. Gibson-Quigley commented that, given the outcome of the article to rezone the Main Street property at ATM 2005, she was willing and had offered B. Shepard the suggestion of bringing the issue forward at a Special Town Meeting (STM). Members felt such an article on a STM agenda might encourage attendance and that since OSV had worked with the Board in good faith, it owned OSV this opportunity. S. Gibson-Quigley asked when such a STM could be scheduled. J. Malloy felt the issue could be brought forward along with a CPC matter in August.

THIS JOINT SESSION OF THE PLANNING BOARD’S MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7:36 PM.

The Board took a ten minute recess.

S. Gibson-Quigley called the Planning Board meeting to order at 7:45 PM and read the agenda. She noted that in the absence of L. Adams and supporting materials the Board would review the draft minutes of April 12, 2005, take up the ANR and postpone the remaining business to its next meeting.

Motion: to accept the draft minutes of April 12, 2005, as presented, by T. Creamer
2nd: J. Morrison
Discussion: None
Vote: All in favor

ANR’S

Menard – Allen Road – Para Survey – 2 lots – Mr. Menard was present and noted the lot was being divided to sell the lots to his sons – Approved 2

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Postponed to the Board’s May 24th meeting were the following items –

- Country Creamery and Homestyle Deli – Site Plan Review Waiver Request

- Steve’s Collision – Site Plan Review
- Zoning Subcommittee selection – Selection could be made from a full board since the BOS appointment of a new member was scheduled for May 16th.
- OSV Rezoning Discussion – S. Gibson-Quigley will ask L. Adams to carry this issue forward as a Planning Board matter by adding it to the Board’s agenda; should the Board stay with Commercial Tourist or should it look at Historic Commercial.
- Allen Homestead – S. Gibson-Quigley will ask L. Adams to schedule the monthly update on this subdivision
- Wetteland Tea Room Expansion – S. Gibson-Quigley commented that any expansion would need Site Plan Review.
- A Class Moving Company at RRI – Board members and the Planning Office had been clear that any changes to this site would need Site Plan Review.

J. Cunniff noted -

- 1) There had been a site modification to the Farquhar Road plan –housing had been moved to one side of the roadway and a unit had been eliminated;
- 2) In an unofficial presentation of the Blue & Gold Development (Hall Road) plan, all variance requests were eliminated and the open space parcel had been reconfigured making it a much improved project.

S. Gibson-Quigley stated the Board would be reviewing these projects on May 24th and submitting reports to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Motion: to adjourn, by J. Morrison
2nd: T. Creamer
Discussion: None
Vote: All in Favor

Adjournment at 8:00 PM