

STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF
TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2006

Present: Thomas Kenney
Thomas Creamer
Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Chair
James Cunniff
Russell Chamberland
Bruce Smith

Absent: Jennifer Morrison

Also Present: Jean Bubon, Town Planner

S. Gibson-Quigley called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. The draft minutes from Tuesday, 10 January 2006 were approved.

Motion: to accept the draft minutes of 10 January 2006, by J. Cunniff
2nd: R. Chamberland
Discussion: None
Vote: In favor: T. Creamer, S. Gibson-Quigley, J. Cunniff, R. Chamberland, B. Smith.
Abstain: T. Kenney

SANR's

- Mystic Builders, Westwood Drive – Raymond Desautel's plan shows the creation of three (3) lots. All of the lots comply with the minimum 125' frontage and $\frac{3}{4}$ Ac. in area. He noted that nothing is being landlocked. The remaining land also has in excess of the required frontage and area. J. Bubon recommended that the Board endorse the plan. Approved.

DRAPER WOODS – APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT FROM CIESLA CONSTRUCTION

S. Gibson-Quigley stated that they are requesting approval for the release of funds from the Lender's Agreement for payment to Ciesla Construction. Mr. Morse is recommending the release of \$74, 575.18, but that no contingency be released until the project progresses to near completion. J. Bubon referred to Form P Inspection Form for the correct release amount. She also referred to G. Morse's memo dated 23 January 2006, in which Mr. Morse stated that he would like it noted that during the post installation inspection, he found the first crossing to be somewhat narrow. He felt that it was not currently of major concern, but additional errors may jeopardize the acceptance. She also stated that Mrs. Kippenberger, Conservation Agent said that the Conservation Commission prefers the narrower crossing. Mr. Rabbitt had come into the Planning

Office this afternoon and requested that the Board take a vote for the record that the narrow crossing is acceptable before he releases the payment to Mr. Ciesla.

Mr. Rabbitt, Draper Woods clarified for the Board that the field conditions of the crossing difference is only 6". It's supposed to be 42" wide and is 41 1/2". The road width stays the same; the grass strips on either side will each be 3" narrower. He is requesting the Board's endorsement of the narrower crossing to avoid potential issues with future Boards.

Motion: to acknowledge that the crossing is 6" narrower, and that the Board is satisfied the road meets the road requirements, by T. Creamer

2nd: B. Smith

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

S. Gibson-Quigley asked if Mr. Rabbit is satisfied with Mr. Morse's recommendations to release \$74, 575.18. Mr. Rabbitt stated that he is.

Motion: to authorize the release of \$74,575.18 be released from the Lender's Agreement for payment to Ciesla Construction, by T. Kenney

2nd: J. Cunniff

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

PLANNER'S UPDATE – JEAN BUBON

- Updated the Board on the CMRPC seminar on The Commonwealth's Smart Growth Toolkit and Capacity Building Resources
- Informed the Board that there will be a Budget Meeting on Saturday A.M. The meeting will include discussions on personnel salaries. Arnold Wilson, Selectman stated that there was a possibility the Budget meeting may be cancelled. The Finance Committee would make its decision this evening.
- Citizen Planner Training Collaborative to be held on 18 March 2006. She will be unable to attend, but feels it would be worthwhile for the Board members to attend if possible. T. Creamer suggested each Board member who is able, to attend different workshops and then share what they have learned.
- Proposed changes to the Subdivision Regulations-she would like Board members to review the proposed amendments to the regulations drafted by Kopelman & Paige. The amendments relate to the manner in which the surety is reduced and/or released. She would like the Board to schedule a hearing date at the next meeting. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that when they release part of a surety they should hold some back through the winter per G. Morse's request. This should officially be stated in the regulations.

- S. Gibson-Quigley commended and thanked Mrs. Bubon for her organization and thoroughness in all her work, particularly when preparing her reports, and assisting the Board in it's preparations for meetings.
- J. Bubon would like to update and refresh the website with new pictures and provide more information for residents. She informed the Board that GIS will be available on the website soon. T. Creamer asked if there was a live update or Planner's mailbox to answer frequently asked questions. He felt an FAQ section would be very helpful. S. Gibson-Quigley would like to see photos and/or maps of current projects or developments available for public viewing on the website. J. Bubon would also like to scan applications in for public viewing as well.

PUBLIC HEARING-WOODBOROUGH FARMS PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION PLAN OFF 224 BROOKFIELD ROAD

S. Gibson-Quigley opened the Public Hearing at 7:33 p.m. T. Kenney read the legal notice. S. Gibson-Quigley read the request to formally withdraw the preliminary plans. Jim Boulette, representing Woodborough Farms, stated that based on the report they received from Ms. Bubon last Thursday, they needed to revise the plans. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that there were a significant number of issues raised in the report. T. Creamer stated that Ms. Bubon's plan review was the most thorough and professionally developed review he has seen since he has been on the Board. The document is so well prepared that it does service to both the Town and the proponent by allowing the Board to work in a professional manner. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that the issues that were brought up in this report are the same issues that came before them this summer. Their concern is that the site is being overdeveloped. Mr. Boulette responded that they would be reducing the number of lots and are researching other changes. Joni Light (222 Brookfield Rd.), an abutter to the site, stated that there were issues with the wetlands and conservation. She is trying to get it declared as wetlands with the Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. R. Chamberland questioned what the crossing on the lot was for. Mr. Boulette replied that it is the sewer hookup for the existing farmhouse at 224 Brookfield Rd. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that there was an allotment for one (1) tie-in to the sewer; they cannot get anymore. She confirmed this with Mr. Wilson; he agreed.

Motion: to close the Public Hearing, by T. Creamer
2nd: B. Smith
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

S. Gibson-Quigley stated that J. Bubon requested that the Board does not waive the fees for re-submittal due to the time taken to prepare for this Public Hearing. T. Creamer asked if there were any penalties to the Board if they are allowed to withdraw. J. Bubon answered no.

Motion: to allow withdrawal of the Application for Woodborough Farms Preliminary Subdivision plans off 224 Brookfield Road; fees will not be waived upon resubmittal, by J. Cunniff.

2nd: T. Creamer

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

TOM RICHERT - INFORMAL PRESENTATION - TUSCAN RIVER AT KELLY FARM

S. Gibson-Quigley stated that Mr. Richert would just be making a presentation. No action or votes would be required by the Board; Tuscan River was only looking for their reaction. Tom Richert stated that they were looking to develop an entertainment park in Sturbridge that would be the first of a network of parks which project the image of high quality, wholesome fun. There will be a mix of uses including entertainment, a movie theater, restaurants, and rides that people of all ages can enjoy. The restaurants will not be fast food; they will have table service, but will not be high end. The retail shops will have a leisure orientation such as a bookstore or recreational outfitters, not grocery or home-improvement stores. Architecturally the buildings will be centered on different activities and each other, not on parking like in strip malls.

T. Creamer asked if this was in the Planned Unit Business District. Gary Galonek, property owner, replied that it is in the Special Use District, and PUBD is allowed in that district. S. Gibson-Quigley mentioned that septic/sewage would present a problem. T. Richert stated that they were looking at both their own sewage treatment plant and hooking up to the existing line as well. They would prefer to use town water rather than drilling wells.

T. Creamer wanted to know how many theaters there would be. T. Richert replied that they were looking at eight (8), but that the theater companies would like to see capabilities of up to sixteen (16). T. Creamer stated that if you were to look at the complete build out of Sturbridge, which would be about 24,000, he doesn't see the town supporting sixteen (16) theaters. T. Richert was surprised it was sixteen (16) as well. However, this would be a destination that would bring people from outside of Sturbridge.

T. Creamer questioned what the difference was between the outdoor central park theme versus the indoor amusements. T. Richert responded that the indoor theme park would include miniature golf courses, a bumper boat pond, climbing walls and simulation rides, whereas the outdoor park would have small rides and a ferris wheel. T. Creamer asked what type of restaurants they are proposing. T. Richert stated that they were looking at ones like Chili's, but would also consider interested local restaurateurs. T. Creamer asked what kind of outfitter stores they were proposing. T. Richert responded stores like L.L. Bean or E.M.S. S. Gibson-Quigley asked how much of the space would be devoted to leisure and how much was for retail, as retail is not listed as an allowable use. She also wanted to know how important the retail shops would be to the overall plan. T. Richert said that in terms of square feet it would be 3 to 1. The three (3) feet would correlate to the outdoor/indoor park areas, and the movie theater.

S. Gibson-Quigley asked what they meant by canopy. T. Richert answered that it was a fabric covering over a steel frame. It would be similar to what the DPW would use to cover sand, but much nicer looking. T. Creamer stated that in a town as historic as Sturbridge, they should come up with a better design than a canopy.

The Board discussed possible traffic impact. T. Kenney referred to the 1/06/06 e-mail sent by Gary Galonek to J. Bubon regarding the issue of Allowed Accessory Uses. Mr. Kenney felt that it would be great to have restaurants and retail shops that would draw people away from the general infrastructure of town. S. Gibson-Quigley reminded people that in Old Sturbridge Village's heyday there were 8,000 to 10,000 people a day and the town was able to handle it.

Gary Galonek stated that they were talking with Old Sturbridge Village. They tried to give the piggery to Old Sturbridge Village, but did not want it unless it came with endowments. They have come up with an idea to restore the piggery to add a historic dimension to the project.

T. Creamer stated that with easy access from I84 there would be a potential for 100,000 cars coming into town. He suggested that a traffic study be done to assess the traffic flow onto routes 131 and 20. They may need to come up with an alternative to manage the increased traffic. J. Cunniff agrees. T. Kenney questioned what the definition of accessory use is. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that they needed to be clear on the definition of accessory use, and be aware that there are other areas in town that people would like to put accessory uses in place. G. Galonek proposed that they build the park in phases. Phase I would be the restaurants and entertainment with Phase II for retail as defined by the town. T. Creamer felt that they could make wiser decisions if Tuscan River had definitive stores that the Board could accept or deny. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that they were not opposed to the idea of retail, but they need to figure out what would be best for the town.

B. Smith asked if there would be any entertainment for the elderly. T. Richert stated that the rides are for all ages, as is miniature golf. G. Galonek informed the Board that according to their focus group, the elderly would like to have things close by to do. The noise factor is being taken into consideration. S. Gibson-Quigley asked how close to the campground the park would be. G. Galonek responded that part of the campground is actually on his property. R. Chamberland stated that there are two accesses roads for the elderly housing units and questioned if this would block off one of them, particularly Kelly Road. T. Richert and G. Galonek both agreed that they would not block off the Kelly Road entrance. They would maintain the access road. They could move the access road, but they still are required to provide access. R. Chamberland asked if there would be a problem with them putting in another on site system. J. Richert said no.

S. Gibson-Quigley asked if this park would compete with other entertainment areas. J. Richert said no, that they were trying to take the experience one might find in other areas such as The Pier in Chicago and size it for a town like Sturbridge. S. Gibson-Quigley

stated that Sturbridge is seen as a tourist destination and the townspeople have expressed the desire for an entertainment area. However, logistically there are things to work out like sewer and traffic flow.

S. Gibson-Quigley opened up the discussion to comments from the public.

Paula Raposa, 41 Glendale Road – Asked how the Board knows that this is what the townspeople want. She asked if the town has done a survey. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that a survey was done as part of the Master Plan for Sturbridge and as part of the Dialogue. T. Creamer stated that the 1988 Master Plan and the Dialogue for the Future are almost identical in what they show the townspeople want to see for growth. There is a need to balance the town's needs. There needs to be a balance between the needs of businesses and residents. J. Bubon informed the public that the Dialogue for the Future is on the Sturbridge website and available in the Town Clerk's office. P. Raposa stated that she sees the town as moving from a lovely rural community to plowing down natural habitats and putting up structures. S. Gibson-Quigley responded that there are many residents who are unhappy with the developments, but they have not supported the Board with alternative planning tools to control the growth. T. Creamer stated that he did not leave a city to move to another city. The Planning Board will not support building that is detrimental to the town. G. Galonek mentioned that the Route 15 Corridor Study would be a good document to research. T. Kenney stated that there is a hodgepodge of buildings and businesses all down Route 20. There is a correlation between the Route 20 and Route 15 studies. S. Gibson-Quigley said that the Central Mass Regional Planning Study would also be worthwhile to look at. She also stated that people have a right to do what they want with their private property. P. Raposa questioned if the town has the ability to care for whatever structures are being put up. She has noticed a dramatic increase in litter as the town grows in buildings and residents.

S. Gibson-Quigley stated that the major issues are traffic, sewer and to define accessory uses. She asked if this was the feedback Tuscan River was looking for. J. Bubon quoted the Zoning Bylaws on page three (3) and informed the Board that she did have a brief discussion with Tuscan River about the carousel, ferris wheel, and other rides. They are not listed as a permitted use, so this would need to be studied further.

G. Galonek asked the Board if they should pursue a Site Plan Review or Water and Sewer first. J. Cunniff and S. Gibson-Quigley both replied that they should work out the water and sewer issues first because that would determine what they can and can't do on the site. She also stated that they should consider the conservation/environmental impacts and the cost to income ratio to the town. T. Creamer thanked T. Richert and G. Galonek for coming before the Board with preliminary plans in an effort to cooperate with the town and its needs.

Arnold Wilson, 21 Cedar Street – The Design Review committee had asked J. Bubon to research the Design Review Bylaw as it's time to bring it up at the Annual Town Meeting. J. Bubon thought it was too late to submit any changes, as they needed to be in by 15 January. T. Kenney stated that the Design Review Committee has no ability to

enforce the bylaws. T. Chamberland disagreed with Mr. Kenney stating that the Zoning Officer is not enforcing compliance. T. Kenney stated that it was his understanding that the Design Review Committee does not have the authority to request that the Zoning Officer take action. The DRC needs to work with the Planning and Zoning Boards and the Zoning Officer to come up with a more effective process. S. Gibson-Quigley suggested they review past and present processes, look at the language and figure out what needs to be changed. Mr. Wilson asked them to move forward with this. T. Creamer would like to see the Boards work together on issues. S. Gibson-Quigley stated that the Boards are trying to do a better job. Mrs. Bubon is moving in that direction. She expressed disappointment that the Finance Committee meeting might be cancelled as she was looking forward to hearing the departmental update. She also would like to have more discussions take place and liaisons at each other's meetings.

Motion: to adjourn, by J. Cunniff
2nd: T. Kenney
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

Adjourned: 8:50 P.M.

Next Meeting: 14 February 2006