

STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2009

On a roll call made by Ms. Morrison, the following members were present:

Present: Russell Chamberland
Jim Cunniff
Penny Dumas
Francesco Froio
Jennifer Morrison
Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Chair

Also Present: Jean Bubon, Town Planner

Ms. Gibson-Quigley called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:30 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Made by Mr. Chamberland to accept the minutes of July 14, 2009 with corrections as noted.

2nd: Ms. Dumas

Discussion: None

Vote: 6 – 0

RALPH WILLMER, VHB – MASTER PLAN

Mr. Willmer of VHB met with the Board to discuss the next steps of the Master Plan process for the Town. He began his discussion by stating that the Master Plan would be a policy document that should have a lifespan of about ten to fifteen years. The Board will want to update the document periodically; for example, when the 2010 Census Data becomes available the document should be updated. The plan should also be re-visited every few years as goals are met; this will result in having a more current document.

Ms. Bubon explained that an Immersion Day will be held on August 24, 2009. On that day, representatives from VHB and RKG will tour the Town with the Town Planner and Ms. Gibson-Quigley. After the tour a Department Head meeting will be held. There will then be a lunch break and then representatives from VHB and RKG will be conducting interviews based upon a list of potential interviewees that they had provided to Ms. Bubon. She noted that the Public House had generously donated the use of a room for the RKG interviews. The VHB interviews will be conducted in Rooms 37 and 55 at Town Hall.

Mr. Willmer stated that the Department Head meeting will be used to provide information to the Department Heads on the planning process and to explain what types of information they may be looking for from various departments as the plan progresses.

Mr. Willmer explained that normally, after the Immersion Day, they would meet with the Steering Committee that same night to kick off the process; in this case, where the Steering Committee had not yet been formed, that kick-off meeting would not happen until sometime in September. The next steps would be to begin data collection and analysis. The Public Visioning Forum would also be held in September. This session is critical to the plan as the Vision informs the goals and objectives, which in turn inform the recommendations. It is the practice of VHB to complete the Land Use element first. The survey would be conducted early on in the process and there would be another Public Forum to wrap up the planning process. The Steering Committee would serve as the sounding board throughout.

Ms. Dumas asked if the Steering Committee would help to guide the survey document. Mr. Willmer stated it would. He indicated that there are standard questions that they know they need to ask, but since they want to make the questions Sturbridge specific, they would work with the Steering Committee on those. VHB, of course, has ideas on how long the survey should be to make it useful and to get a good response rate. The Steering Committee will be helpful with publicity and perhaps even distributing the surveys.

Ms. Gibson-Quigley stated that she had given the Steering Committee a lot of thought and she would like to present her idea to the Board for discussion. She stated that she envisioned a thirteen member Steering Committee. She arrived at that number since there are ten plan elements; she would envision one member per element. She also thought it would be useful for her to have two Co-Vice Chairs. That way the Chair and Co-Vice Chairs could then divide the elements and oversee three each (one would oversee four) to be sure that all the work and coordination is being done as needed. The three would then filter the information back to Mr. Willmer and Ms. Bubon. There would also be sub-groups (i.e. Focus Groups), perhaps 4-5 people per sub-group that would be assigned to each element. The sub-groups would work with that particular Steering Committee member to complete the necessary work and brainstorming. This would allow for a lot of participation.

Ms. Dumas stated that it sounded like a good idea, and she wondered what Mr. Willmer thought. Ms. Gibson-Quigley said that they had discussed this concept and it seemed appropriate for Sturbridge since we anticipate having a lot of people who want to participate. Mr. Willmer agreed stating that this way the Steering Committee members were committing the most time as they would review every element of the plan and they would be the ones making many of the decisions and reporting back to the Planning Board. Members of the Focus Groups would need to make less of a commitment since their heavy workload would be only when their particular element was being discussed and written. These individuals could still help out at meetings or via public relations and outreach activities if they wanted to be more involved.

The Board, Mr. Willmer and Ms. Bubon discussed ideas for an informational hand-out and application that would be distributed to solicit volunteers. Ms. Bubon indicated that she would complete that by the end of the week and send it along to everyone for review and

comment. Ideally, everything would be distributed prior to the next Planning Board meeting. Various ideas for distributing the information was discussed with consensus being reached on delivering it via email, posting a press release in the various newspapers, posting on the town web site, printing copies to be left at the Senior Center, Library and some retail outlets, and a Saturday morning handout at the Recycling Center. The Police Department will also be asked to post a message on its Message Board directing people to the web-site to obtain an application.

The Board discussed whether or not it should request specific representation from various Boards. Ultimately, the Board decided that it wanted the best people that were able to commit the time required and therefore decided against a specific makeup. However, it was determined that the Committee would be comprised of thirteen members; two would be Planning Board members; of that thirteen Ms. Gibson Quigley would be Chair and two other members would serve as Co-Vice Chairs. The Steering Committee would be recommended by the Planning Board and appointed by the Interim Town Administrator. The Focus Group members would be selected by the Planning Board as well but would not need to be formally appointed since they would be assisting the Committee members. Any Planning Board member wishing to serve on the Steering Committee will have to submit an application. It is hoped that all other Planning Board members will serve on the Focus Group.

SANR – TOM MOSS – MEADOWVIEW LANE

An ANR was submitted by Tom Moss for the combination of Lots 16 & 17A on Meadowview Lane. Ms. Bubon recommended that the Board endorse the plan submitted since it met the requirements.

Motion: Made by Mr. Cunniff to endorse the plan submitted.
2nd: Mr. Chamberland
Discussion: None.
Vote: 6 - 0

THE PRESERVE UPDATE

Ms. Bubon stated that she had been receiving a lot of calls from residents of the Preserve who were concerned that the timeframe for completion was not being met. She explained that the timeframe was perhaps too aggressive given the rainy weather and the fact that they had been waiting for National Grid to come out to the site and approve the lines. National Grid did come out to the site yesterday (July 27th) and during that visit it was noted that there were two issues with the lights as shown on the plan. The first was that there was a light shown somewhat near the end of Audubon Way at the intersection with New Boston Road that was not near any lots, nor was it near the mailbox. Further, the other street connecting to New Boston did not have a similar light located there. The other issue was that there was a light shown within the island at Old Brook Circle. Since the island would be paved and not grass it had to be relocated. She recommended that the light in the cul-de-sac island be moved closest to the Open Space Parcel A since she did not want it to be in front of someone's lot. She was concerned that residents could have reviewed the plans to see there

was no light proposed in front of their home and that the installation of a light could bother them. It was for this same reason that she would recommend that the light on Audubon Way be removed. She again was concerned that relocating the light could bother someone. Additionally, once you got into the development it would be fairly well-lit.

- Motion:** Made by Ms. Morrison to allow the street light shown on Audubon Way closest to New Boston Road (Sheet LL2) to be removed. Additionally, the light shown within the cul-de-sac area on Old Brook Circle (Sheet LL2) shall be relocated and installed in the vicinity of Open Space Parcel A
- 2nd:** Mr. Chamberland
- Discussion:** None
- Vote:** 6 – 0

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Froio advised the Board that he had attended the CMRPC Transportation Improvement Plan meeting. At that meeting they had gone over the budget and CMRPC activities and talked about the process for updating the Regional Transportation Plan, which is done every four years. He stated that the budget is posted on the CMRPC website if anyone wanted to review that.

Ms. Gibson Quigley stated that the School Building Committee had made a great deal of progress with the plans and that they were nearing the deadline for completion. Traffic flow would be changed in the new layout and many green techniques would be utilized in the construction. Ms. Bubon commented that the Owner's Project Manager had contacted her regarding a request by a member for a sidewalk. She stated that she explained that the town was striving to become more walkable and that she thought it was an appropriate location. However, it would narrow the travel lane substantially as there were wetland issues; she suggested that he contact Mr. Morse for input.

NEXT MEETING

August 11, 2009

On a motion made by Ms. Morrison and seconded by Mr. Cunniff, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:20 PM.