

**STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF
TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2012**

Ms. Gibson-Quigley called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:30 PM. On a roll call by Ms. Dumas the following members were present:

Present: Russell Chamberland
James Cunniff
Penny Dumas
Heather Hart
Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Chair

Also Present: Jean M. Bubon, Town Planner
Diane Trapasso, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Charlie Blanchard

Ms. Gibson-Quigley opened the meeting and read the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Made by Ms. Dumas to accept the amended minutes of August 14, 2012.
2nd: Ms. Hart
Discussion: None
Vote: 3 – 0 – 2 (Mr. Chamberland & Mr. Cunniff)

**JAY PATEL – INFORMAL DISCUSSION ON ZONING AND POTENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT AT THE CORNER OF NEW BOSTON ROAD AND ROUTE
20**

Mr. Patel and Mr. Jacobs of Glickman Kovago & Company spoke about the project. Mr. Patel stated that he has been working on this project for many years and because of the economic down turn and the devastation of the tornado, there have been many set backs.

Mr. Patel had drawn up a conceptual plan of the property at the corner of Route 20 and New Boston Road. To make the property more economically feasible he would like to rezone the portion of land that is suburban residential to commercial, so that the entire parcel (approx. 8 acres) will be in the Commercial Zone. In addition to his hotel, Mr. Patel showed two pad sites on the conceptual plan, one for a casual restaurant and the other a bank.

Mr. Patel stated that he is bringing forth this conceptual plan to the Board because he would like the Board to be the petitioner for the zoning change.

The Board had the following concerns and questions:

- Relocate the gas line - Mr. Patel stated that even without the zone change the gas line needs to be relocated and he is in contact with the gas company
- What if the parcel is rezoned all commercial and Mr. Patel decides to sell the property – Mr. Patel stated that he would not sell the property – he is committed to the Town of Sturbridge and wants this property to be the Gateway for Sturbridge
- May work against the Master Plan - Sturbridge Heritage Partnership states having view of Cedar Lake – this project blocks the view. However, the Master Plan also suggests reviewing the depths of Commercial zones to extend parcels beyond 300 feet.
- The parcel being all commercial what could happen – big box – Mr. Jacob stated that this site could not support a big box store
- Dangerous intersection – Mr. Patel stated that he is working with the Town and MassDOT about a traffic light – The Master Plan suggests a round-about
- Is there access to the lake – Mr. Patel stated that there is no access to the lake because of the wetlands
- Are setbacks and the wetlands buffers are they different in commercial and residential – Ms. Bubon stated that the buffers are the same in both zones
- Which should be first rezoning or submit a conceptual site plan – Mr. Patel stated that financially to rezone the property would be better
- Sewer discharge – Mr. Patel stated that he still has enough from before but will have to ask for more because of the expansion

Ms. Bubon stated that this is only a conceptual plan and that the site plan would change dramatically. She would like to see the plan reversed with the hotel in front and parking in the back. Ms. Bubon stated that the Master Plan notes that this area is the Gateway to Sturbridge. Design standards will play an important part in this project and enhancing the landscape will be a joint effort with MassDOT.

Ms. Bubon stated that the way to approach this change in rezoning the parcel would to have a sub-committee identify all the major issues and work with the neighborhood, the Town and Conservation.

Ms. Bubon suggested that the way to approach this change in rezoning the parcel would be to have a sub-committee identify all the major issues and work with the neighborhood, the Town and Conservation. Ms. Bubon stated that perhaps this sub-committee could see if a Gateway Overlay District would be a better option.

Motion: Made by Ms. Dumas to form a sub-committee to study, review and make appropriate recommendations for this parcel at Route 20 and New Boston Road concerning zoning by October 30, 2012. To choose one of the following approaches:

- Gateway Overlay District
 - Mr. Patel's plan
 - Mr. Patel petitions himself for a zoning change
- 2nd: Mr. Chamberland
- Discussion:** None
- Vote:** 5 – 0

The members of this sub-committee are the following:

- Mr. Cunniff
- Ms. Dumas
- Ms. Hart

Mr. Jacobs stated that he would be available to this sub-committee for any questions regarding commercial viability.

TOWN PLANNER UPDATE

Blackington, LLC - Ms. Bubon stated that a Memorandum of Understanding had been drafted and signed by the Interim Building Inspector, Fire Chief, Town Administrator, Town Planner and property owner relative to improvements of this building. The agreement will allow the antique shop to open prior to installation of the sprinkler system subject to certain conditions. The sprinkler system must be installed within 60 days or the tenant will need to vacate.

CT District Update

- RFP & Working Group – Final versions have been provided to Mr. Suhoski for final review and approval and advertising
- The River Access Sub-Committee – met last Wednesday and Mr. Rubin, owner of the Millyard will work with the Town and Conservation to open up parking on his property – Recreation committee is changing the design of their ballfields and more parking will be available
- The Parking Lot & Pocket Park Sub –Committee – meeting August 29, 2012, Wednesday at 8:00 PM

Sturbridge Coffee House – Ms. Bubon met with Mr. Simarco of Interim Holdings, LLC and discussed the areas of non-compliance. He has been contracting with the appropriate parties to complete the work and we have developed an order of improvements to be completed. As there are talks underway for potential changes of use for the buildings, there are a couple of items that are placed on hold pending the outcome of those discussions.

Whittemore Woods – Ms. Bubon stated that she received an email from Jann Holland of Turner Lane Homeowner's Association. The email indicates that they understand that the

funds being held will not be sufficient to complete everything so that the development can be accepted and that the roads will remain private unless the Association completes the final work and petitions for acceptance. Ms. Bubon has a general agreement from Mr. Swiacki and the Homeowner's Association to proceed with the next step in this process.

Motion: Made by Ms. Dumas to proceed with the step in this process, to authorize Ms. Bubon to have the BOS to expend the funds in escrow and have Kopelman & Paige finalize the paperwork for Whittemore Woods.

2nd: Mr. Cunniff

Discussion: None

Vote: 5 - 0

C – 13 – regional meeting will be held at the Publick House on September 11, 2012

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS

Regep Lane – street acceptance – Special Town meeting – Jalbert Engineering finished the work – Ms. Bubon will check on the status. The Planning Board will need to approve the street acceptance, and the BOS will put it on the warrant and hold a public hearing.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting date is September 11, 2012 at the Publick House

On a motion made by Mr. Cunniff and seconded by Ms. Hart and voted 5 – 0, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.