



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

PLANNING BOARD

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

MEMBERS

ANGELA IPPOLITO, CHAIR
JEFFREY BLONDER, VICE CHAIR
CLINTON BENCH
GEORGE POTTS
JR YOUNG

STAFF

HELEN KENNEDY, SECRETARY
S. PETER KANE, TOWN PLANNER

APRIL 13, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:07 – 9:35 pm

Location: Swampscott Senior Center, 200 Essex St (rear)

Members Present: A. Ippolito, C. Bench, J. Blonder, JR Young, G. Potts

Others Present: Pete Kane (Town Planner), Ken Shutzer (attorney), Tony Roossien (architect), Walter Jacob (architect), Arthur Cusack (applicant associate), William Quinn (resident), Dr. Vaisman (applicant), Patrick Jones (resident)

Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm by Chair Angela Ippolito.

MEETING MINUTES

There were no comments for the March minutes. Motion to approve minutes made by J. Blonder, seconded by C. Bench and unanimously approved.

PETITION 14-18

GLEN ROAD, LOT 11

Petition of John Connor for special permit to demolish existing structure and build a single-family structure with one-car garage. ZBA has requested Planning Board to comment on the potential single-family structure. Property: Map 23, Lot 53. A. Ippolito emphasized that this is an informal review of the application.

Attorney Shutzer explained that the site plan information was not ready just yet (only the original material for the application). The application doesn't require a site plan special permit but the ZBA asked for Planning Board input due to the uniqueness of the property. The current siting of the proposed home is based on the least amount of need to blast for construction. There exists an old garage from 1936 that doesn't appear to belong to anything. It's been used as storage for years. The current owner is looking to sell the property. The materials for the application include a plot plan and some renderings of a potential home.

The Board then reviewed the plot plan and architectural plans. A. Ippolito then asked questions about what's happening on abutting properties such as home and driveway locations. The only easement that exists on the subject property is a drain easement (by the Town). A. Ippolito then pointed out that the one-way nature of the street doesn't work with the angle of the current driveway. J. Blonder then asked what happens to the abutting property owner for access to their own driveway/garage (since it appears they may go over the subject property).

A. Ippolito asked what abutter feedback has been. Mr. Shutzer stated that immediate abutters would prefer that nothing happen. Primary concern is about blasting. Arthur Cusack (applicant's associate) then explained some of the site issues such as ledge and existing curb cuts. J. Blonder then asked about the proposed deck. It appeared that the plot plan and the house plans have the location of the deck in different places. Mr. Shutzer said they would remove the driveway that's on the east side of the property if the Board desired. There is a question if the ZBA will require keeping it in order to provide additional parking on the property for visitors.

A. Ippolito asked if the board members had any comments. G. Potts asked to clarify what the board is being asked to do. Town Planner Kane stated that the board could provide recommendations to the ZBA about what conditions could be set if they determine it's a buildable lot.

J. Blonder moved to recommend favorable action as long as a landscape plan is provided that marks out the trees and what ones need to be removed; C. Bench seconded; unanimously approved.

PETITION 15-8

52 PHILLIPS BEACH AVENUE

Petition of Mona Sigel for dimensional special permit, site plan special permit, and dimensional variance for relief from zoning bylaw to construct a two-car garage and mudroom to an existing single-family residence. Existing structure and lot are conforming. Relief sought for 10-foot front setback (where 30 feet are required) and to wall off existing garage to provide limited storage space. Property: Map 30, Lot 17.

Attorney Shutzer gave some background on the property. The home is oriented towards the west rather than the front street (Phillips Beach Avenue). He then introduced the architects – Walter Jacob and Tony Roossien.

Mr. Jacob showed photos of the existing home. The front of the house has a nice courtyard (which is the side property). The site is very vegetated. He then showed a site plan (that includes the flood zone overlay). The home has an existing garage at the basement level – that garage is the lowest point of the house and floods very often. He then showed photos of the flooding that's happened in the past.

They are proposing moving the garage out of the basement so it's less vulnerable to flooding. It would be closed off and turned into a standard basement. The pavement in front of that existing garage will then be removed and lawned. The architects had looked at various areas of the property to locate a new ground-level garage. The property is primarily within the flood zone. The one area that is not, which is where they are proposing the garage, is at the true front of the property. By locating the garage in the proposed location, it can also help to hide some of the utility elements currently existing on this side of the house (dog area, generator, back entrance). The garage would be accessed by the side and over a pea stone drive.

C. Bench then pointed out that the issue is that the proposed garage addition is within 10' of the property line where 30' is required. He then said that although the way the home is oriented, that may seem like the side property, but for the general public and neighborhood it is the front yard. A. Ippolito mentioned that they have to be careful about setting a precedent.

Mr. Jacob said that the homeowner did talk to his neighbors and many are okay with the placement, though some were unavailable to speak with. He then showed some sketches of the street perspective of the home with the addition. They are working around the existing trees as well. G. Potts then asked about how much of the front property line area will be encroached on – about 40 linear feet.

Mr. Roossien said that placing this addition at the “front” of the property is bringing the height of the building down. The scale appears lower because this addition is only a single story and will be the closest piece to the street. There’s an entry on the addition but it’s oriented to the front of the home rather than toward the street.

C. Bench then asked to clarify that they are asking to add a new curb cut in addition to keeping the existing one – yes. He also pointed out that at 75 Phillips Beach Ave, there’s an existing garage that’s by the street front as well. P. Kane mentioned the difference however is that at 75 Phillips Beach, it’s an accessory (separate) smaller building by the street where this proposal is adding onto the primary large structure on the property and bringing that primary structure to the street front.

J. Blonder then asked what the Conservation Commission, Fire Dept and DPW comments were. P. Kane went through those comment forms and letters.

A. Ippolito said that normally she would be concerned about setting precedent. But due to the historic nature of the home and the flood zone, this plan makes the most sense. It doesn’t modify the “front” of the home. She recommends keeping it away from the wetlands and keeping the integrity of the home. C. Bench asked if they looked at moving the garage closer to the home (and away from the front setback). Mr. Jacob said doing so would get it very close to the back deck which would diminish its use. JR then asked what’s happening with the existing plantings. Mr. Jacob said they will maintain most of the existing plantings.

C. Bench moved to recommend favorable action to the ZBA. Motion seconded by J. Blonder and unanimously approved.

HUMPHREY STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT

Board was reminded that the final general presentation is this Thursday night. Group talked about the previous two presentations and attendance. There’s a lot of talk about people that will attend the Thursday presentation.

BLOCKSIDGE FIELD PRESENTATION

Patrick Jones, of All Blue Foundation, came before the Board to provide information about the proposed turf field project at the football field in Phillips Park and to answer any questions. A. Ippolito asked how the presentations have been going so far. Mr. Jones explained that the main focus is the financing piece of the project. He then went through how the Capital Improvements Committee and Finance Committee have been looking at the long-term financing of a number of projects such as the drainage and school work along with the field project.

Mr. Jones went through the history of the project. He discussed the previous project proposal and funding. And then how the new nonprofit group (All Blue) has adjusted the plan and looking at the cost/financing.

A main issue from the last time was the crumb rubber. That’s one of the main changes – they’re now proposing Enviro Fill (silicone based). It’s been approved by the Board of Health. They want to make sure the field can be used by all team types and ages. The size allows for regulation games but also can be split for youth sports to run multiple games at the same time. A. Ippolito recommended that they clarify the traffic item for Town Meeting.

This proposal is for a Town-funded turf field, foundation for lighting and stands, drainage, clearing of site elements. The lighting and actual stands would be a second phase and would be raised privately. One fundraising idea is “Pave The Way” which started this past Thanksgiving – people buy bricks for the entry area.

They believe the biggest concerns may be: health (though this is handled with the new fill proposal), drainage due to location in flood zone, maintenance (which will be less than current), scheduling (will still remain with the Recreation Dept). A. Ippolito said that having a large, visible project like this happen will be important for the town and perception. She then asked what P. Kane’s feedback was – that the Town should fund this project as it’s really an infrastructure element for the community and should be invested in.

J. Blonder asked what All Blue is looking for. Mr. Jones said that it would be great to get support from the Planning Board.

J. Blonder moved to support the field turf project; seconded by JR Young; unanimously approved.

ZONING ARTICLE HEARING

Board was reminded that the zoning article hearing will be the night of April 30 in the Senior Center. P. Kane explained that there are three articles to be heard. The process will be that he will be able to provide an overview for each article, Planning Board should then ask questions, Board then should ask if public has comments, and then Board should make a motion on the article. Process will be done separately for each individual article.

CITY OF LYNN CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR 2016-2020

P. Kane told the Board that the City of Lynn is in the process of preparing its Consolidated Plan for Housing and Economic Development for 2016-2020. They are reaching out to neighboring communities to get their thoughts about regional priorities regarding job creation, workforce development, and transportation.

The Board discussed those ideas and came up with a list of items to share with the City of Lynn:

- Info on those topics from the 2004 Community Development Plan
- Info on those topics from the Community Vision Plan
- Note the new focus in town on Humphrey St and how it relates to Lynn (economic and transportation)
- Inform them of the new smart growth zone at the General Glover site and its affordable housing element
- Explain that some in Swampscott may feel that downtown Lynn is like a second downtown to Swampscott. The continued development of downtown Lynn will also support Swampscott residents.

J. Blonder moved to adjourn, C. Bench seconded, unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

S. Peter Kane
Town Planner