

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, March 29, 2005

Members present: Joseph Barrell, Andy McClurg, Deborah Emello, Karl Haglund, James Heigham

Also present: Timothy Higgins, Senior Planner

7:02 p.m.: There being a quorum, the meeting was opened by Chairman Joseph Barrell.

General Business:

- The Board approved the minutes from 3/15/2005 (4:0, Karl Haglund not yet arrived).
- Tim Higgins provided a brief update of the Northland Development noting that tree and security fencing is being installed. Pre-construction meetings are being scheduled with department heads and Northland staff

7:05 p.m.: The **Public Hearing on the Historic Accessory Building Preservation zoning (citizen's) petition** was opened with Mr. Heigham reading the notice. Kit Dreier thanked Deborah Emello for her assistance made a brief presentation to the Board. She noted some minor but important improvements to the proposal and asked for the Board's support. This is the final draft.

John Sos, 8 Clifton Street, spoke in opposition to the proposal. He was concerned with the negative impact on him as an abutter to the large barn at 5 Somerset Street which would benefit from the proposal. He was concerned about density and did not want it (the barn) used for residential purposes. Offices, etc. were fine.

Anne Porter, 12 Clifton Street spoke in opposition to the proposal due to the potential impacts to 5 Somerset Street. Residential use of the barn is not preferred and would be too loud.

Sally Alcorn, Pleasant Street neighbor to 5 Somerset Street, spoke in support of the petition. She assisted in drafting the proposal and believes the re-use of historic structure even as homes is acceptable.

Richard Cheek, HDC co-chairman spoke in favor of the by-law as it is now more precise and will not create a "pandora's box" situation. He noted that the proposal is not an automatic approval of the residential re-use of the barn at Somerset Street. Deborah Emello strongly supported this last statement.

Andy McClurg asked for clarification on the flexibility the Special Permit allows. It was agreed that a great deal of discretion is allowed.

Karl Haglund noted the need for the Town to address its historic accessory structures.

James Heigham motioned that the Planning Board not recommend approval of the by-law.

First because of the increase in density and second that he doesn't want to go around the Zoning Board of Appeals. Andy McClurg spoke in agreement with Karl on the need to protect the historic structures (accessory). Deborah Emello suggested a language amendment which was discussed briefly. There was a 3:2 vote (Barrell, Heigham & McClurg in the affirmative and Haglund and Emello opposed to the motion) against recommendation and the Public Hearing was closed.

7:40 p.m. The **Public Hearing on the American Retirement Corporation proposed Design & Site Plan Review (DSPR) approval modification** was opened by the reading of the notice by James Heigham. Special Legal Counsel, Joan Langsam was present and opened discussion by summarizing the decision of the Land Court and its impact on the Planning Board, DSPR decision (12/30/2001). This decision went against the Planning Board and requires the Board to modify its previous decision.

James Heigham read the recommended language changes from a memorandum from Senior Planner, Timothy Higgins dated 3/23/2005. In summary, the John Greco Affordable housing Agreement would be deleted and replaced by a new Agreement drafted by Attorney Peter Alpert and review and approved by Ms. Langsam. Additionally, two pages within the approval letter would be modified including the condition of approval. Mr. Alpert was present on behalf of the American Retirement Corporation and spoke in support of the proposal. With little discussion the Board voted unanimously (5:0) to amend the December 03, 2001 Design & Site Plan Review approval granted to ARC. Tim Higgins will file a modification to DSPR permit with the Town Clerk after making the necessary changes.

7:45 p.m. The **Public Hearing** notice on the **Design & Site Plan Review (DSPR) and Special Permit** proposed modifications was reopened by the reading of the notice by J. Heigham.

Tim Higgins distributed a draft of the most recent changes to the Board noting it was on the OCD web site. He then discussed each one and all were relatively minor. James Heigham motioned to approve the modified document and it was voted 5:0.

Tim Higgins then distributed a draft of the most recent Special Permit by-law changes to the Board. He again noted that the document was on the OCD web site and proceeded to walk the Board through the proposed changes. He noted the changes recommended by Richard Betts have been included as of late today. There was minimal discussion on the document. James Heigham again motioned to approve the Special Permit text with amendments. It was so voted (5:0).

8:05 p.m. **Planning Standards – Trapelo Road/Belmont Street Discussion**

Andy McClurg opened the discussion noting that the Planning Board has been requested to file a report with the Selectmen by April 1st. The latest version of the Standards have been on the web for 1-1/2 weeks. He has made several substantive changes from the March 15 work session.

Mr. McClurg then presented the edits in the “Planning objectives” and “Operational issues” sections from the March 15 draft. He then noted that some significant changes were made in the table concerning the number of travel lanes recommended for each segment. He also added a few paragraphs on the continuing evolution of the design concept in response to concern expressed by Chairman Mary Jo Frisoli from the Traffic Advisory Committee. A discussion ensued.

Mr. McClurg opined that the next step is to get the revised document to the Board of Selectmen who can then act on it and forward it to the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC).

Sue Bass spoke in opposition to the inclusions of the table recommending travel lanes without specific traffic data to support them.

Andy McClurg strongly disagreed noting that the recommendations are planning guidelines and not prejudicial. They are based in the knowledge the Board gathered over the 12 month planning process. This phase of the process is planning driven and the Board of Selectmen has asked for a position from the Planning Board. This is it.

Ann Paulsen spoke on changing state (Mass Highway Department) guidelines. She believes more emphasis should have been placed on slowing down traffic which should be a primary goal. She asked that a bicycle lane be included through the corridor. A lengthy discussion ensued on the inclusion of more specific recommendations such as design speeds. It was agreed that this is a TAC issue to be resolved once more technical data is collected by the consultant.

Rep. Paulsen wanted strong language on reducing speeds as being a goal of the document. It was agreed to add some language concerning “speed” reduction to enhance public safety and accommodating bicycles as two new “Planning Objectives”.

T. Higgins noted that the release of the Request For Qualifications (RFQ) is right on schedule and a Consultant (to work with the TAC on placing the project on the State Transportation Improvement Plan) will be selected within the agreed upon time frame - May/early June.

The Board then voted unanimously to approve the Planning document with the two new bullets and forward it to the Board of Selectmen.

8:50 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.