

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, March 8, 2004

Community Meeting Room, Chenery Middle School

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

Also present: Tim Higgins-Senior Planner
Jeffrey Wheeler-Planning Coordinator

9:35 p.m. After ending a joint public hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Board formally convened with all members present.

James Heigham read the Public Hearing notice for the proposed changes to the zoning by-laws and map.

Flood Plain Amendments: Jeffrey Wheeler began the discussion by reading the first proposal to amend various provisions of the Flood Plain by-law. These changes were recommended by the Department of Environmental Protection when they performed a review of the By-Laws to ensure compliance with the federal standards.

Deborah Emello asked that the term “development” remain in the original definition section. This was agreed to and the Board voted 5:0 to recommend approval of the revisions.

Inclusionary Housing Amendments; Jeffrey Wheeler read the two proposed changes to the Inclusionary Housing by-law. He explained that the Town’s housing consultant recommended the changes so the Town can count the affordable units pursuant to the state’s Chapter 40B requirements. There were no comments and the Board voted 5:0 to recommend approval of the revisions.

Non-Conformance Amendments: Tim Higgins noted that the proposed changes to Section 1.5. Non-conformance was extensive that the Section is to be deleted and replaced in its entirety. He explained the cooperative but lengthy process of agreeing to the changes with the Zoning Board of Appeals, Tom Gatzunis, Jeffrey Wheeler and himself. There was a question about the removal of the 10% addition to a dwelling in the case of a fire from Henry Kazarian. The new text is more restrictive and the ZBA believed that was more in keeping with the statute. A brief discussion ensued. The Planning Board then voted 5:0 to recommend approval of the revisions.

B Street Re-Zoning: Tim Higgins presented the proposal to change the zoning of a portion of the Highway Department Yard, #18 B Street and #30 C Street from General Business (B) to General Residence (R). This petition resulted from the affordable housing on B Street. The site of one of the units is in the Business district where housing is not allowed. The two abutting residences were included since the zone line splits their lots. All would become residentially zoned. Sue Bass asked if the 2 residents were

notified of the proposal. They were not but will be. The Board then voted 5:0 to recommend approval of the revisions.

Waverley Square Re-Zoning: Tim Higgins presented the proposals to amend zoning around Waverly Square. The genesis of this proposal is the Town's need to sell the Waverley Square Fire Station which is currently zoned for single and two-family use (General Residence district). He discussed two options; (1) expanding the LBI zone from Waverly Square to the Fire Station or (2) creating a new "Transition Zone" as proposed in the Economic Development Plan. He distributed copies of the text within the Plan (page 28) referring to Transition Zones.

He explained the two options in detail and the need to discuss the issue to generate consensus. He also apprised the Board of the progress the Waverly Square Fire Station Re-Use Steering Committee is making in their effort to recommend a new use of the structure. Henry Kazerian spoke in opposition to increasing density in Waverly Square. He doesn't want "Cluster Zoning". A discussion centered on the Transition Zoning proposal.

Would properties not located on Trapelo Road be included in the rezoning? Frontage lots are preferred so as to keep residential uses along Waverly Street for example. Sue Bass spoke in opposition to any rezoning and wants numerous meetings to be held with everyone invited, (residents, interested parties & Town Meeting members) to discuss at length.

Karl Haglund noted that the Board is here tonight as a result of the Fire Station re-use issue. Otherwise we wouldn't be discussing this petition at this time.

Carolyn Bishop stated that the process is back-words. No zoning should be done until a use is chosen. Joseph Barrell disagreed saying a developer will not buy it without zoning in place. The current zoning only allows a two-family use which is not enough value to make the building attractive to a potential buyer.

Lydia Ogilby and a guest from the BHDC were present. Ms Ogilby wants to change the zoning just for the station. It was explained that this cannot happen as it would be "spot zoning". They want the building preserved and restored. Tax credits would be available for developers if it were placed on the National Register.

Tim Higgins explained the reasoning behind the need for higher density in Waverley Square and the other commercial areas. It is well known in the planning/development filed that additional residents are a critical component of revitalizing business districts. These urban residents generally use available public transportation, shop at the local stores, patronize the businesses and enliven the commercial areas. Mr. Kazerian strongly disagreed with this position and rejects higher density.

The hearing on the zoning was continued to March 30 at a time to be determined.

10:40 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

