



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

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Approved 9.5.19

**Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2019**

Members in attendance: Kerri Martinek, Chair; Amy Poretsky, Vice Chair; Michelle Gillespie; Millie Milton

Members excused: Anthony Ziton

Others in attendance: Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Fred Litchfield, Town Engineer; Mike Sullivan, Connorstone Engineering; Ron & Kevin Aspero; Jason Perreault, 27 Treetop Circle; Henry Squillante, 72 Crestwood Drive; Gib Chase, 6 Kimball Lane; Lisa Maselli, 13A Maple Street

Chair Kerri Martinek called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Preliminary discussion with Ron Aspero, Owner/President, Shrewsbury Homes Inc. RE: Development of 0 Hudson Street (Map 30 Parcel 54, 5.6 ac)

Mike Sullivan from Connorstone Engineering introduced Ron Aspero and his son, who are appearing before the board informally to discuss their project proposed for the 5.6 acre parcel located on Hudson Street that is surrounded by MWRA and Commonwealth water resources. He noted that there is an easement to the rear of the property as well as wetlands. He also indicated that no soil testing has been done and the plans are very conceptual at this point. He stated that the applicant has three plans to present; two of which are allowed by right and one that will require some considerations from the board.

Mr. Sullivan explained that the parcel is located in the Residential C (RC) zone, which requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet and 100 feet of frontage for a single family home. He noted that the first concept, a 6-lot subdivision, proposes a 350-foot cul-de-sac with 6 lots all having the requisite frontage and area.

Mr. Sullivan mentioned that the second proposal involves 4 ANR lots ranging in size from 51,000 to 80,000 square feet.

In discussing the third proposal, Mr. Sullivan mentioned that this is the plan preferred by the applicant and will involve 3 ANR lots and 1 lot with a duplex. He noted that the 3 ANR lots will range in size from 26,000 to 31,000 square feet and will all have the requisite 100 feet of frontage. He discussed the minimum requirements for the duplex, which are 30,000 square feet in area and a 150-foot lot width, and noted that the lot only has 133 feet of frontage so will require a waiver. He explained that, if approved, the applicant is proposing to donate approximately 2.5 to 3 acres to the town as open space. He also mentioned that the applicant is seeking to build a duplex because his partner would like to use it as residences for himself and one of his children.

Ron Aspero stated that he has lived in town for 20 years and has worked here for over 35. He noted that most of the development he has done in town was home construction in the Green Street and Ball Hill areas. He mentioned that, when he lived in that area, he had donated 7 acres of land to the town for the Mount Pisgah area. He also stated that he had contributed to work done on the buildings on the Route 135 soccer fields, had been a member of the Lion's Club, and previously served on the Design Review Committee. He expressed his desire to do a project that will be good for the area and voiced a preference not to do a subdivision, even though it is allowed by right, because it will involve a fair amount of soil removal and clear cutting. He suggested that board members can see how he approaches development by looking at the manner in which Green Street was developed, and asked the board to consider his third proposal.

Ms. Gillespie stated that she is not sure about the added value to the town of the proposed land donation. Ms. Joubert noted that the parcel does not abut conservation land or any other town-owned parcel. Ms. Gillespie mentioned that the town already has quite a few parcels that they may eventually need to evaluate to determine what to get rid of and reiterated her opinion that the proposed donation does not add value.

Ms. Gillespie voiced a preference for the cul-de-sac design. Mr. Sullivan stated that the 250 feet of road required for that proposal will result in a great deal of clear cutting. Ms. Gillespie voiced her opinion that it would be much more attractive.

In response to a question about the size of the homes, Mr. Aspero noted that the single family homes will be approximately 2600 to 2800 square feet and the duplex units will each be 2200 square feet. Ms. Poretsky suggested that the rear of the property may be in the flood lands and asked if the applicant has been before the Conservation Commission. Mr. Sullivan reiterated that no engineering work has yet been done and this appearance before the Planning Board is the first step. Ms. Joubert explained that, from time to time, the Planning Board has allowed people to appear informally before spending a lot of time and money on engineering. She confirmed that there are no plans yet and there has been no staff review.

Ms. Martinek noted that she has not seen any plans and has no opinion to offer at this time. She also noted that Mr. Ziton is not in attendance and not available to provide his input. Mr. Sullivan explained that the applicant's main question is about the duplex since in his opinion it has been a bone of contention with this board in recent months, so he is interested in ascertaining if a duplex seems appropriate to the board before going in a direction that will not be productive. He emphasized that the applicant is not looking for a vote, but would seek opinions from board members to provide some sort of direction. Ms. Martinek reiterated that she has no opinion to offer at this time and does not have enough information. Ms. Poretsky agreed, and stated that she wasn't voting but if they wanted to play it safe they could choose the development of 4 ANR lots as that is what is allowed by right.

A gentleman in the audience expressed concerns about the distance of the homes from the river and wetlands. Mr. Sullivan noted that there are wetlands on the property and voiced his opinion that the land donation is of value from an emergency management standpoint.

Another audience member asked if the cul-de-sac development will encroach in or near the wetland. Mr. Sullivan confirmed that it will not and he also explained that the applicant will be required to maintain minimum setbacks from both the river and the wetland.

Ms. Martinek stated that the board is not prepared to give a specific opinion and suggested that the applicant do their own risk/reward assessment and decide which direction they want to go.

Consideration of Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting of June 18, 2019 – Michelle Gillespie made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of June 18, 2019 as amended. Amy Poretsky seconded; motion carries by unanimous vote.

Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen of June 17, 2019 – Ms. Martinek stated that she had not yet had a chance to review the minutes as they were just received. Ms. Joubert informed board members that the Board of Selectmen did approve the Minutes at their meeting last night. She suggested that the Planning Board can address them at their next meeting but expressed uncertainty about how any requested edits would be addressed given the Board of Selectmen's approval. Ms. Gillespie commented that the Minutes were quite brief, especially given the lengthy discussion that took place. Ms. Poretsky also expressed concern and noted that she did not recall saying that Mr. Blanchette would not be a good choice because of the relationship between the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Ms. Martinek asked about the typical process for editing joint minutes, and suggested that the board delay their review until the next meeting at which time she hopes to get a better understanding of that process. Ms. Joubert agreed to discuss the issue with the Town Administrator.

Consideration of the Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen of June 17, 2019 were deferred to the board's next meeting.

Master Plan Steering Committee Update – Ms. Martinek noted that Ms. Gillespie and Ms. Poretsky have served as Planning Board representatives on the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) and she asked Ms. Gillespie to lead the board in the discussion. She suggested that the discussion should focus on highlights for each section or critical debates that might have come up with the MPSC, any anticipated impacts on the Planning Board in the next year or two, and consideration of any extremes that the board could start working on.

Transportation – Ms. Martinek discussed the state's *Complete Street Program* and suggested that the board gather information on that initiative if we do not already have it. She voiced her opinion that the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) shuttle between towns is further out in the future so the board does not necessarily need to delve into in that topic in the immediate term.

Ms. Gillespie mentioned that one of the topics that has been discussed from the beginning of the Master Plan process was how to incorporate mitigation measures from applicants seeking waivers for their projects, most specifically how to get some relief on sidewalks as there is a critical need to improve the sidewalks in town and have some type of sidewalk plan. She also noted that bike paths are also worthy of discussion, though the board does not have any control on state roadways. She suggested that there is quite a history with regards to sidewalks in town that Ms. Joubert can detail.

On the subject of signed bike routes, Ms. Poretsky mentioned that many residents in town complain about the overabundance of signs in town. She noted that bike route signage will actually be printed on the pavement and not on a posted sign, and it will be important to ensure that residents are aware of

this. Ms. Gillespie indicated that the town would need to check with the state about doing so along Route 20.

Town-wide Traffic Flow and Safety - Ms. Gillespie explained that, when looking at traffic flow and safety, the two intersections in town that are always of the most interest are Maple Street and Route 20 and Lincoln Street and Route 20. She suggested that Mr. Litchfield likely knows of others that have also proven to be problematic in the past.

Ms. Gillespie stated that she did not have an opinion on public transportation expansion but thinks that it is likely part of the bussing service with the WRTA and the desire to expand it to meet needs of seniors and people in special needs, but she thinks it would be advisable to seek guidance from town. She also noted that changes in growth have an effect on future transportation and, in looking at feasibility studies and how improvements are going to be funded, she suggested that the town could look to mitigation measures to do so.

Ms. Gillespie also mentioned electric vehicle charging stations and suggested that the town look at that now. Ms. Joubert stated that there may not be anything in zoning that needs to be adjusted to accommodate them. She noted that many communities inside of Route 128 are requiring them, parking garages must provide a certain number of them, and a lot of companies are installing them for use by their employees. Ms. Gillespie suggested that inclusion of these charging stations may be a factor to consider in the event of further expansion at Northborough Crossing. In response to a question from Ms. Milton about fees for using charging stations, Ms. Joubert stated that she was unsure but did voice her understanding that these costs are typically included in the cost of development of a parking garage. She expressed a willingness to research the matter further to determine how other communities have handled them in the past.

Ms. Martinek indicated that the subject of wildlife passage was of interest to her and asked if improving pathways for wildlife is something that the Planning Board can impact. Ms. Joubert suggested that the board could potentially include some language in the Zoning Bylaw and/or Subdivision Rules and Regulations, but thinks the board should look at it in conjunction with the Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee. She explained that, through the Open Space Committee, the town has reviewed properties to be developed as Open Space in the past by looking at the connectivity from one large open space parcel to another. She also noted that she has seen instances where an overpass was built over an interstate to allow for wildlife passage. Ms. Joubert mentioned that the Conservation Commission, in conjunction with the Natural Heritage program, will also review it.

Ms. Gillespie suggested that, as we continue to develop parcels on Bartlett Street, the board should impose a roadway restriction for all truck traffic like was done with the A. Duie Pyle project. She emphasized that any improvements and enhancements in the downtown area will require the eliminations of truck traffic through the center of town. She also commented that A. Duie Pyle appears to be complying with the board's requests relative to their trucking routes and it is unfortunate that the board did not impose the same condition on Federal Express. She would like to ensure that this is done for any future businesses that come to town. Ms. Poretsky asked if it might be possible to have this written into the Zoning Bylaw so that future Planning Board members will know of the expectation.

Public Facilities and Services – Ms. Gillespie indicated that this is a big topic that she thinks has merit, and there has been a fair amount of discussion given the proposed new Fire Department facility and location. She mentioned that this is listed for consideration as one of the main goals for the Master

Plan. She also noted that there has been considerable conversation about expanding the water and sewer infrastructure in town, which she believes will greatly impact future commercial development as well as giving some relief to homeowners currently on septic.

Climate MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Program- Ms. Poretsky suggested that there may be some zoning changes resulting from this recommendation for the board to consider. Ms. Joubert noted that the DPW is taking the lead on that item and has started with the process, which will be done in two phases; the first of which will be to develop a plan to be approved by the state and phase two will open it up for funding for particular projects. She explained that the DPW is working with a consultant to prepare a preliminary report. She also mentioned that a primary project will involve the dismantling of a dam on a town-owned reservoir in Shrewsbury. She stated that the dam has been deteriorating and one of the DPW's first priorities is to take it down, which we hope will be funded with grant money through the MVP program.

Ms. Martinek asked about the green community aspect of the MVP program. She recalled that the town received a grant for it and asked if the MPSC discussed creating a committee for ongoing projects. Ms. Gillespie and Ms. Poretsky noted that nothing has been done yet. Ms. Joubert explained that the town is a green community, has received a first round of funding, and projects were identified and approved for the use of that funding. She noted that the town does not have a sustainability committee and it has not been discussed but was one of the recommendations.

Ms. Joubert explained that she is awaiting more detailed information from the state about the solar bylaw, which does fall under the green communities initiative.

Ms. Poretsky asked about projects that were identified through the green communities initiative. Ms. Joubert noted that most pertained to school buildings, improving boilers in the schools, making lighting in all municipal buildings more efficient, improving efficiency in general, and evaluating whether solar can be added to rooftops.

PFS-3 - Ms. Gillespie noted that section PFS3 in the recommendations pertains specifically to the solar bylaw, which will be discussed later tonight.

Education system – Ms. Gillespie explained, since there is already a Master Plan under the School Committee's purview, the MPSC did not touch on this subject much other than the desire to support a focus to maintain the excellent school system that we currently have,

Ms. Martinek noted that the board considers impacts to the schools for any project that comes before it, and asked if there is anything that would help members have a better understanding so that we are making informed decisions. Ms. Joubert explained that she is in contact with the School Department and has ongoing discussion about any developments in town. She indicated that, since the Avalon development was built out, there have not been any further developments that were very impactful on the schools. She noted that town staff has previously done periodic check-ins with the School Superintendent and will continue to do so. She also stated that, in the event of any large scale developments, the Town Administrator will typically form a Mitigation Committee that includes representatives from the school department, who will review the project in-house. She also noted that developers of larger projects are required to review impacts on the schools as part of their impact studies.

Ms. Poretsky noted that part of the Master Plan will be to evaluate school population numbers and housing numbers and asked if the board will get a general idea about the various districts. Ms. Joubert confirmed that demographics will be included as part of the Master Plan. She indicated that she has not yet seen that portion of the draft documents so is unclear about how they will specifically break out the schools but we can certainly inquire. Ms. Poretsky noted that the board will occasionally hear concerns about overcrowding so it would be good to have the information. Ms. Joubert indicated that, whenever she hears such rumors, she reaches out to the schools for clarification and brings that information back to the board. She agreed to continue to do so.

Ms. Gillespie stated that one of the top priorities for public facilities and services is the expansion of the water and sewer infrastructure. She noted that doing so will be critical in order for the town to progress to the next level as far as commercial development as well as residential. She expressed a desire to get periodic status updates to understand how we will accomplish the water and sewer expansion.

Open Space – Ms. Gillespie suggested that this section be presented by Ms. Poretsky since she is the board's representative on the Open Space Committee. Ms. Poretsky noted that the Open Space Committee is already actively doing many of the things that are being recommended including evaluating ways to connect trails, increasing the CPC fund, and identifying acquisition opportunities.

Ms. Poretsky also discussed development of a town dog park and noted that the town's Conservation Agent is working with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to establish one. In response to a question from Ms. Gillespie about additions to the Zoning Bylaw to cover a dog park, Ms. Joubert indicated that it would not belong there as it falls under Recreation and Open Space. She also explained that the town is exploring the potential to use some state land, but she is not hopeful that those discussions will go as the town had originally hoped. If not, she noted that there are still other parcels where it may be possible. She mentioned that the Recreation Department and Trails Committee are both very interested in pursuing the matter.

In response to a question from Ms. Martinek about anything that has an immediate impact on the board's planning, Ms. Joubert noted that the town has two bylaws covering Open Space development. She explained that one specifically relates to land off of West Main Street on the back side of Northborough Crossing, given the constraints on that property, and the second more generally addresses an overlay district that an applicant can take advantage of if they wish to do so. In response to a question from Ms. Poretsky about whether the Planning Board can recommend that a developer utilize the overlay district, Ms. Joubert indicated that the board cannot require them to do so but reiterated that it is an option that exists in the zoning bylaw if someone wants to take advantage of it.

Ms. Gillespie discussed a small over-55 development in Boylston that has 24 or 25 homes on small lots. She noted that walking paths were required around the exterior and at the rear of the development and asked if this is something the town could include. Ms. Joubert stated that this is part of our existing Open Space Residential Design bylaw that allows for a higher density with an increased percentage of useable open space. She mentioned that the bylaw requires a developer to provide a yield plan that compares their proposed higher density to a standard subdivision.

Ms. Martinek asked if there was any feedback on the Open Space and Transportation recommendations that the board should be aware of. Ms. Poretsky noted that Open Space is a top priority for the majority of residents. Ms. Gillespie agreed, and noted that solving some of the traffic congestion and the walkability issues are second, with water and sewer being next in line.

Ms. Poretsky mentioned the *Complete Streets Program* and Ms. Martinek asked about any specific training that might be of value for the board members. Ms. Joubert explained that the *Complete Streets Program* is run by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT) and has been adopted in varying degrees by several towns. She stated that the DPW is very aware of the program and that is part of the Master Plan.

Ms. Joubert explained that, within the next two months, the draft of the Master Plan will be provided to the MPSC as well as various town departments that are included in the Master Plan for review before it becomes final.

Gib Chase, 6 Kimball Lane referenced the dog park and stated that he would not be in favor of the town funding either the development or the maintenance of it. He also suggested that the comment about its benefit as a social gathering place is a real stretch. He voiced his opinion that making the downtown area more attractive and dealing with the overwhelming traffic are much more important priorities. He also asked about the access from the bank property out to Gale Street that has proven beneficial for many years and noted that he was recently told that it is closed to public traffic. He reiterated that, for many years, there has never been a problem using this access roadway and suggested that it would provide good access for the new coffee shop and the new business in the former Lowe's Market building. He suggested that, if the town is trying to deal with traffic on Route 20 and hoping to encourage more businesses in the downtown area, it would be beneficial for the town to work with the property owner to make the access road a public way. Ms. Martinek suggested that this feedback be relayed to the MPSC.

Henry Squillante, 72 Crestwood Drive, agreed with Ms. Gillespie's suggestion to seek ways to limit truck traffic through the downtown area. He mentioned that he has frequently seen large Harvey trucks and trailers traveling along Church Street.

In response to a question from Mr. Squillante about the possibility of using the old dump for the dog park, Mr. Litchfield indicated that it is not possible. He explained that the dump was closed in the 1970's when the standards for closing landfills were quite different than what exists today and anything that the town does that would disturb that closure would require bringing it to existing standards, which would be cost prohibitive. He also noted that using the site for solar is also not possible because disturbance of the ground is required in order to install the foundations on which the panels are mounted. He stated that the town has discussed various options over the years and nothing has been possible due to the extreme costs involved.

Lisa Maselli, 13A Maple Street, asked about sidewalks, specifically in the downtown area near the Hillside Grille and the new condominium development. She noted that the sidewalks in front of the Hillside Grille and 130 Main Street are not accessible to foot traffic and asked if there is another way to make it uniform. In addition to expressing the importance of having contiguous sidewalks, she also mentioned that the town needs more crosswalks and cited the dangerous crossing conditions at 6 Maple Street.

Ms. Maselli addressed the issues of truck traffic and noted that Maple Street, Ridge Road, and Rice Avenue are continually subjected to heavy truck usage. She suggested that there are certain roads that the town should consider placing a restriction on, as conditions will only worsen with the ongoing development on Bartlett Street. Ms. Martinek requested that this feedback be brought back to the MPSC.

Jason Perreault, 27 Treetop Circle, agreed that the expansion of the water and sewer infrastructure is critical, especially for economic development.

Ms. Martinek noted that the board will address the additional recommendations at a future meeting.

ANRs – Ms. Joubert noted that there are no ANR's requiring signature.

Newton Street Update – Ms. Joubert explained that the Planning Board had sent a letter to the developer, Mr. Ramadan, and the town is in receipt of a letter from his attorney requesting additional time to complete the road work. She noted that Town Counsel will be contacting Mr. Ramadan's attorney. She also indicated that the DPW has stressed to the Town Administrator that time is of the essence since it is critical that the work be completed this summer and the developer has asked for an additional 30 days. Ms. Joubert stated that she hopes to have more information before the board's next meeting. In response to a question from Ms. Martinek about whether the board has the ability not to allow the additional 30 days, Ms. Joubert indicated that she will need to consult with Town Counsel. She mentioned that the board's letter requested a July 1 deadline for commencement of the work and that has clearly not happened. She stated that Mr. Ramadan has asked that the town not take any action to pull the bond. She also noted that Town Counsel is aware that the town wants the work to be done this summer and would like to move forward while the town has a contractor in place doing other road work. Ms. Gillespie and Ms. Joubert both mentioned that another winter season would further compromise the roadway.

In response to a question from Ms. Gillespie about timing of the work, Mr. Litchfield stated that the town's goal is to have the work done while the contractor is in town to save the cost of a second mobilization. Ms. Martinek voiced her understanding that the board does have the right to pull the bond. Mr. Litchfield agreed, but noted that Town Counsel will advise whether we must allow the developer the additional time he has requested. Ms. Milton asked if the developer would be entitled to another 30-day notice if the town were to agree to the 30 day extension and voiced concerns about the situation continuing to drag on. Ms. Joubert stated that she is unsure, and noted that Town Counsel will work to determine the developer's exact intent. Ms. Gillespie asked if it would be helpful for the Planning Board to provide Town Counsel with a letter stating that we are not in favor of granting the 30 day extension. Mr. Litchfield voiced his opinion that it is not necessary and Ms. Joubert indicated that the DPW has already done so.

Subcommittee Updates

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) – Ms. Martinek noted that the CMRPC has not met since the Planning Board's last meeting. She informed the board members that there is a Regional Recycling Forum scheduled for August 8th from 10AM to noon.

Open Space Committee – Ms. Poretsky noted that there have been no recent meetings.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) – Ms. Milton noted that there have been no recent meetings.

Design Review Committee (DRC) – Ms. Gillespie indicated that the DRC has not met recently either, but needs to do so in order to wrap up the duplex guidelines. She expressed a desire to do so in August or early September. In response a question from Ms. Poretsky about whether there is still an open seat on the DRC, Ms. Joubert confirmed that there is. She noted that the opening has been advertised but there

have been no applications to date. She encouraged board members to solicit their network for any interest.

Groundwater Advisory Committee (GAC) – Ms. Poretsky indicated that there have been no recent meetings. Mr. Litchfield stated that there have been no applications.

Preparation for 2020 Town Meeting

Model Solar Zoning Bylaw – Ms. Joubert explained that she has provided the board with information that she obtained from the state’s website that dates back to 2014 and she has contacted the Department of Energy Resources for more updated information, if available. She mentioned that she has also asked the town’s Green Communities contact for more information and invited them to come in and talk to the board.

In addition to the model language and information about solar, Ms. Joubert also provided an additional document from the state’s website from 2016 and labeled “Draft” and indicated that she is in the process of attempting to get some clarification.

Ms. Joubert stated that, while she doesn’t have specific details, she knows that in the past year some communities have revised their bylaws to include a requirement that any new building must be solar-ready in the event that someone wants to install solar at some point in the future. She also noted that, given that we are a green community, there are specific things that we will need to include in our bylaw.

Ms. Gillespie stated that she would like to know the following, in preparation for 2020 Town Meeting:

1. Are there any communities, especially any with a regional high school, who have solar panels on their high school? If so, she would be interested to know how it is going as this would be helpful information to present at Town Meeting. An audience member suggested that the new fire house should be identified as a potential location for a roof-top solar installation.
2. Information about bylaws in surrounding communities who already have a solar bylaw.

Ms. Gillespie expressed a desire to see solar installations along highways and on town-owned parcels as they would be a good of income for the town that she has advocated for in the past.

Ms. Joubert noted that, in the past, solar installations typically involved removal of trees but people now agree that this is not a reasonable approach. She mentioned that the focus now is on using existing open space, including pasture land and rooftops.

Ms. Gillespie mentioned the National Grid project where carports with solar panels were installed and voiced support of the idea.

Ms. Poretsky noted the number of warehouses on Bartlett Street and wondered if their roofs can support solar. Ms. Gillespie recalled that there were two new buildings recently constructed on Bartlett Street that the DRC was told are solar-ready. She explained that, though not in any bylaw, the DRC will typically request this of developers.

In response to a question from Ms. Martinek about next steps, Ms. Joubert suggested that board members review the solar bylaw information she provided for reference. She reiterated that she will

pursue additional information from the state, seek guidance from our Green Communities contact, and collect bylaws from other communities.

Ms. Martinek noted that interest in establishing a Hazardous Waste Bylaw was discussed at a previous meeting and asked about the status of that information-gathering exercise. Ms. Joubert explained that her immediate focus has been on the solar bylaw and she will speak with CMRPC regarding the Hazardous Waste Bylaw.

Board Appointment Policy – Ms. Joubert explained that she had distributed some materials via and stated that the draft provided was the Board of Selectman’s policy, which is part of the town code, and she edited to reflect references to the Planning Board specifically. In response to a question from Ms. Martinek about how the board can proceed with an appointment to the DRC if we do not have a policy in place, Ms. Joubert explained that the Planning Board has always made board appointments without having a formal policy in place. Ms. Gillespie suggested deferring the discussion about the Board Appointment Policy to the August meeting.

Ms. Martinek suggested that the board also discuss developing written criteria for what qualifications the board thinks would make for a good Planning Board candidate to provide guidance on which to base interview questions.

Town Planner Update – Ms. Joubert noted that the Master Plan has been her focus in recent months. She reiterated that the MPSC and town departments will be receiving copies of the draft of the Master Plan and an implementation schedule. She noted that the MPSC will have the first opportunity for review and comment, after which they will meet to consider the final draft. Ms. Joubert also indicated that she will be working with the Town Administrator to schedule a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Selectman that will likely occur in October.

In response to a question from an audience member about whether the Master Plan draft will be available to the public, Ms. Joubert mentioned that she expects it to be uploaded to the Master Plan website.

Next Planning Board Meeting, August 6th – Ms. Martinek noted that the board’s next meeting is scheduled for August 6th and the agenda will include a review of the beginning half of the Master Plan recommendations. She mentioned that she would also like to take some time to revisit the board goals to identify the top goals for 2020 and discuss anything additional that board members may have thought of since the original goals were developed.

Next ZBA Meeting, July 23rd – Ms. Joubert explained that the only application for the ZBA’s next meeting is for a pump house to be added for the warehouses 330 & 350 Bartlett Street. She noted that a variance to encroach within the front setback is needed in order to stay out of the wetlands.

Ms. Joubert also noted that there is an incomplete application for which the applicant has requested a continuance to the August meeting (that will like be pushed to September) involving a couple who recently purchased a single family home at 125 Rice Avenue with a fair amount land abutting Edmonds Woods. She explained that the gentleman currently operates a dog walking business and would like to officially operate it out of his home, with dog walking trails on his property, but he has still has some work to do. Ms. Gillespie recalled that the board previously had a resident who sought to have a dog business at his home. Ms. Joubert discussed a resident on Brewer Street who went to the ZBA and

wanted to operate a dog walking and training operation as a home-occupied business and also asked for approval to board up to 3 dogs as is allowed in the bylaw. The ZBA approved that application.

Ms. Poretsky voiced her understanding that this gentleman uses a van to pick up dogs for the business. She noted that Natick recently held a Town Meeting because neighbors complained about van traffic and the barking. Ms. Joubert indicated that these details are part of the application and, once complete, she agreed to provide a copy of the application to the Planning Board. Ms. Gillespie indicated that the Planning Board does have the ability to provide input to the ZBA.

In response to a question from Ms. Martinek about input from the ZBA about a possible joint meeting Ms. Joubert noted that she will address it at their next meeting. Ms. Martinek explained that the Planning Board is interested in determining if there are requests that the ZBA finds that they are always approving that should be made part of the bylaw and/or there are things that they would never approve that might dictate reconsideration of the language in the bylaw.

Ms. Poretsky questioned whether the Planning Board should address the use variance when they meet jointly with the ZBA. She stated that, if we have strong bylaws and the Master Plan is taking us in a certain direction, then the use variance would provide a loophole for developers that we should consider closing.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Rowe
Board Secretary