



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

Town Hall Offices • 63 Main Street • Northborough, MA 01532 • 508-393-5019 • 508-393-6996 Fax

Approved 06.09.20

Planning Board
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2020

Members in Attendance: Kerri Martinek, Chair; Amy Poretsky, Vice Chair; Michelle Gillespie; Anthony Ziton; Mille Milton

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Fred Litchfield, Town Engineer; (audience attendees - see attached sign in sheet)

Chair Martinek called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Consideration of Minutes – Mr. Ziton made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2019; Ms. Poretsky seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved. Mr. Ziton made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 4, 2020; Ms. Poretsky seconded; seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Public Hearing for 0 Bartlett Street Special Permit per Groundwater Protection Overlay District Bylaw and Special Permit Site Plan Approval:

Applicant: The Gutierrez Company
Engineer: Allen & Major Associates Inc.
Date Filed: December 24, 2019
Decision Due: 90 days from close of hearing

The applicant requested a continuance to March 17th in order to complete the process of meeting with the Groundwater Advisory Committee on March 10th. Ms. Poretsky made a motion to accept the request for continuance for 0 Bartlett Street to March 17th at 7:00 p.m.; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Continued Public Hearing (425 Whitney Street) Special Permit Site Plan Approval and Special Permit per Groundwater Protection Overlay District:

Applicant: Steris A.S.T.
Engineer: VHB
Date Filed: September 17, 2019
Decision Due: 90 Days from Close of Hearing

The board reviewed the RFP for Peer Review Consulting Services. Section I: Project Description Overview explains what the Planning Board requested at the prior meeting and what the peer

reviewer would be responsible for. Ms. Joubert will firm up the language regarding liability, insurance, etc., with Town Counsel and/or the Town Administrator. She will also verify if it is considered a Request for Proposal or a Request for Qualifications.

Ms. Poretsky wants to add a question about will EMFs be emitted outside of the facility or past their property line to the Project Description Overview. Ms. Gillespie suggested considering the qualifications first and then the board review the minutes rather than having to amend it. Ms. Joubert explained that the request for peer review services must be very specific when requesting services. Mr. Litchfield said the applicant was asked specific questions and they provided information; the peer reviewer will review what has been submitted on behalf of the applicant; we are asking the peer reviewer to review it and tell us if it is accurate and appropriate or if they are any other concerns. Mr. Litchfield asked if the additional questions the board is talking tonight were part of what was asked for from the applicant? Ms. Martinek said some came out as part of the presentation. Ms. Joubert said if there is still information the board is seeking from the applicant, they need to ask the applicant and let them respond. Those additional questions and responses need to be made part of the peer review when it is put out to bid.

Ms. Gillespie had numerous points she wanted to compare with the documentation provided by Steris to make sure everything she discussed was included. Ms. Joubert said if there are specific additional questions the board wants to ask the applicant to respond to, that needs to be done in writing from the Board and she cannot send out the peer review requests until a response is received from the applicant. Their response to the additional questions will be made part of what the peer reviewer will be reviewing.

Ms. Martinek wanted to specify who the evaluation team is and if the board conducts interviews. Ms. Joubert said the standard procedure is staff, but the chairman of the Planning Board was added as part of the review. The team includes the Town Planner, Town Engineer, DPW Director, and Ms. Martinek as the Chairman. Ms. Martinek said peer review should be part of a public interview during a public meeting. Ms. Joubert said it is usually conducted during the day by staff. Ms. Martinek would like the board to have the opportunity to be part of the process. She asked the board for their opinion; there was no response. Ms. Martinek said she wanted to be part of the initial meeting or phone conference to outline the necessary steps, establish lines of communication, etc., so she understands what is happening.

Atty. Stephen Madaus said that, in the interest of time, since they have been before the board for some time now for this Site Plan Approval, they don't object to having the board send their questions to the Town Planner and the Town Planner attaching it as an appendix to be included in the RFP. Ms. Joubert asked the applicant if they wanted an opportunity to respond to the questions from the board since the peer reviewer would not have information from the applicant to review; the applicant will want the opportunity to answer. Mr. Litchfield told the board that they should consolidate their questions, issue them to the applicant, have them respond, and have those responses added to the document that the board wants the peer reviewer to review; make it clear.

Questions need to be submitted to Ms. Joubert no later than February 25th. She will forward them to the board by March 6th; the applicant will receive them on March 10th. Ms. Gillespie made a motion to continue the public hearing to March 10th at 6:00 p.m.; Ms. Poretsky seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Site Plan Approval for 200 School Street:

Applicant: Northborough DPW
Engineer: Woodard & Curran
Date Filed: January 23, 2020
Decision Due: April 22, 2020

Scott Charpentier (DPW Director), Tim Davison (Water/Sewer) and Scott Medeiros (Woodard & Curran) were present. Mr. Charpentier said an Order of Conditions was issued by the Conservation Commission. Proposed is a second building at the Water/Sewer Garage at 200 School Street. The existing building will remain and be converted for storage; there will be no change in staffing or operations. The need for the new building is for office space and equipment storage. New equipment (which Mr. Charpentier explained) has been purchased and is currently stored outside and needs to be inside; it is expensive equipment which includes updated technology. The goal is to store the equipment inside to have a better operating facility and able to respond to emergencies quickly. The process for the design and construction was explained; site work will be done by the town; Assabet Valley students will do the indoor outfitting; it is a 2,500 square foot metal, prefabricated building.

Mr. Medeiros showed the existing wetland and buffer zone as well as the placement of the proposed building on the Existing Conditions plan. Restoration is proposed as part of the Order of Conditions. No new tree removal is proposed. A comment letter was received from the Town Engineer regarding the washing of vehicles and storage of chemicals (which Mr. Charpentier previously addressed). Mr. Litchfield said the plan presented tonight was slightly different from the original plan; the changes were minor. As a result of the Conservation meeting, a berm and a swale in the back of the building were added. The plans to be reviewed and approved are dated February 5th; the original plans had a January date; electronic copies were provided to the board last week. Mr. Charpentier pointed out where there is an existing catch basin in the parking area; it is a leaching basin and is being removed.; everything sheet flows off to two grass areas; the roof is a shed roof that goes to an infiltration trench in the back; all utilities will be extended from the current building to the back. They modified the location of the storage bins to allow a change in the grading.

Ms. Poretsky commented that there were abutters present at the Conservation meeting who were not opposed. The only question they had was about lighting. Mr. Charpentier did explain the lighting to them and told them if they preferred the lighting on the new building better, he will change over the lights on the existing building.

Ms. Gillespie asked if they felt size of the building was sufficient for a build-out in the future. Mr. Charpentier said a space study was done and there will be some modifications required to the existing building to allow them to use the high roof line.

Ms. Litchfield recommended language regarding if any vehicle washing is proposed it must be done inside the building. Mr. Charpentier explained any vehicle washing or vehicle maintenance will be done at the Highway garage on Main Street.

Ms. Poretsky made a motion to waive Section 7.2.C.9 of the Planning Board Rules and Regulations for 200 School Street; Mr. Ziton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved. Ms. Poretsky made a motion for Site Plan Approval for 200 School Street with the conditions as outlined by the Town Engineer and approval from the Fire Chief; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Old/New Business:

Review of 260 West Street and 5 Goddard Road Decisions – The board signed the Decision for 260 West Street which was previously approved. Ms. Joubert explained the minor changes to 5 Goddard Road. Ms. Poretsky asked if the board received revised plans and was told yes; the board signed the Decision.

Adoption of Master Plan – The Master Plan was reviewed on January 21st; the Master Plan Steering Committee met on February 4th.

Public Facilities and Services: The School Board's representative did not feel the need to incorporate Ms. Martinek's change; the school is a separate entity. Re inventory of public facilities, it's already done. **PFS 2-2 Communication**, "consider modernizing communication network over time" will be added. Videotaping of meetings was discussed. Currently only Board of Selectmen and Planning Board meetings are videotaped. Ms. Poretsky made a motion to approve the Public Facilities section of the Master Plan as amended; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Transportation: Ms. Poretsky made a motion to approve the Transportation section of the Master Plan as submitted by the Master Plan Steering Committee; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Open Space: Ms. Poretsky made a motion to approve the Open Space section of the Master Plan as submitted by the Master Plan Steering Committee; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Economic Development: "Residents" will be added to the Economic Downtown Development Committee to ED1-1. ED2-1 was fine as revised by the Committee, ED2-2 discusses merits of a real estate advisory firm vs. the CMRPC; Ms. Martinek wants to include CMRPC. Ms. Joubert attended a meeting where CMRPC was present and asked them specifically about it. Trish Settles said they do not have the expertise to do something like this; they don't get into fiscal analysis. Ms. Martinek wants to add "and/or Regional Planning Commission". Ms. Milton made a motion to accept the Economic Development section of the Master Plan as amended; Mr. Ziton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources: Mr. Ziton made a motion to approve the Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources recommendations as set forth by the Master Plan Steering Committee; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Land Use: Ms. Martinek had recommendations to LU-2,3,4 to provide flexibility to review opportunities or investigate the merits of density bonuses. Ms. Poretsky said some text and table did not match on Table 2-3; it was corrected. There was a new table added for vacant land. She had questions on industrial land; it lists 319 acres of developable industrial land; Table 2-2 lists 480 acres total. Ms. Joubert explained that Table 2-3 has to do with vacant land only; they are two different tables. She further explained to Ms. Poretsky that you look at the Land Use Table which tells you how many acres in Northborough, not what is zoned, are in that particular use. Ms. Poretsky would like the numbers checked. She wants to know what Code the

assessors used to arrive at the number of acres in Table 2-2; she felt the 480 acres should be higher by her comparisons of the 2017 and 2019 Land Use Tables. Ms. Gillespie, after reviewing the numbers did not understand what Ms. Poretsky's question was. Ms. Gillespie said Ms. Poretsky had brought up this question at the Steering Committee meetings and the consultants were asked to review it, and it was verified with town staff that the information is correct. Ms. Joubert explained one of the tables she was looking at was actual land use, not zoning; the other table is about vacant land (what land has not been developed). When the assessors do assessments, and when a buildout analysis is done, there are formulas used which deduct a certain percentage of land (e.g., slopes in excess of 6%, wetlands [definition has changed]). The consultant has verified that the information is correct. Ms. Joubert said the Codes were 40-48 and 400-452.

Ms. Poretsky commented on Table 2-1 that land cover only goes from 1985 to 2005 and talked about how it should be updated when the numbers became available but that it can't be updated because the state uses a different method now. Ms. Joubert explained that the state GIS data is updated in 15-year increments; that information is included in this Master Plan; it's a frame of reference. She said every one of the charts is only good as the day it is printed; data changes every day. The state has changed their methodology on how they collect coverage. The information is available but in a different format, it will continue to be available, and the information is used by staff. The state land coverage GIS data is calculated by aerial photography, not parcel information.

For next meeting: verify the Codes the assessors used for the industrial number only in Table 2-2 and add the words "vacant and land" to the residential, commercial and industrial tables in Table 2-3. Ms. Poretsky made a motion to approve the Land Use chapter as amended upon verification of Table 2-2; Ms. Gillespie seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved.

Housing: Mr. Zitton is not in favor of putting any "missing middle" language into the Master Plan; he doesn't see it as a good fit for the town. Mr. Leif said the point of the recommendation was a type of housing; it is allowed in the zoning, they were looking to see what different types of housing could be built in the town; something that should be evaluated. It doesn't particularly say to do it; it can only be allowed in the areas the zoning allows it in if in fact the zoning bylaw was amended to such housing. Mr. Leif explained the recommendation is trying to open a broader scope of types of housing that could be considered. Ms. Joubert expanded on what missing middle is. It's not just a type of housing; it's a demographic of people. It's not so much describing a certain type of house or density or apartment or townhouse; the term was captured years ago as people who were shut out of the housing market. Part of this goes to do we want to address it as a community. We talk about are there needs for different types of housing to provide opportunities for various income ranges. It's not so much prescribing that it's a different type of style of housing, but it is a segment of the population. Ms. Martinek asked if they were to equate it to a type of housing, would it be a cottage type dwelling; where in zoning is it. Ms. Joubert said in our zoning today, there is only one zoning district where cottage dwellings are allowed, there is a specific definition of what a cottage dwelling is. It limits the size of the house which means it will be a less expensive house. Ms. Martinek asked Mr. Zitton how we can make it workable to capture the intent of the people who are priced out. Mr. Zitton believes the definition is so broad to him that he is concerned about leaving something exposed down the road. The recommendation is to change it to read "consider if there are appropriate areas for missing middle housing", rather than "identify".

Ms. Martinek read the edits in the Key Findings. Ms. Gillespie felt that for future buildout there should be a tool in place because of the density, to be able to ask a developer to provide some affordable housing; an Inclusionary Bylaw is one way. However, the letter they received is from resident Brad Blanchette who is the Chairman of the ZBA states he is not in favor of it. Ms. Gillespie would like to have a discussion with Mr. Blanchette regarding some of the points in his letter. Ms. Martinek said that developers could give cash in lieu of building the units. Where would those funds go? Ms. Joubert said Northborough has an Affordable Housing Corporation. They could be included as part of the process. But towns adopting inclusionary zoning today are generally not allowing payments as they want to see the affordable housing built and towns are not developers. If the town did adopt a bylaw, and if there was a payment in lieu of building the actual units, you would want to work with a non-profit housing corporation or trust and there is a corporation in this community. With an Inclusionary Bylaw, there is a tradeoff which is increased density and for the increase in density, the community gets affordable housing units. If the units satisfy DHCD, the units can be added to the Subsidized Housing Inventory.

(At 10:00pm the taping of the meeting was stopped due to the videographer needed to leave the meeting.)

Ms. Martinek stated the housing chapter discussion will be continued to a future meeting.

Ms. Martinek asked about the creation of the Implementation Committee and could that be done now by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Joubert responded the Selectmen would not advertise for the Implementation Committee until the Master Plan is adopted by the Planning Board. A brief discussion about the make-up of the Committee concluded with Ms. Martinek suggesting she would like to see a representative from the Council on Aging on the Committee.

Meeting Schedule – The Planning Board will meet on the following dates: March 5th to continue the Master Plan discussion; March 10th at 6:00pm to continue the 425 Whitney Street public hearing and peer review discussion; March 17th for various public hearings including the zoning amendments; and March 31st will be canceled.

Ms. Gillespie made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Milton seconded; all voted in favor; motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Rich
Board Secretary