

PLANNING BOARD



19 WASHINGTON STREET
SHERBORN, MASSACHUSETTS 01770

MINUTES

May 9, 2012

Members present: Chairman John Higley, Charles Yon, Robin Perera, Town Planner Gino Carlucci

John Stevens arrived at 7:36 p.m.

Absent members: Eric Johnson and Associate Grace Shepard

New member Charles Yon was sworn in prior to the meeting commencing.

The meeting began at 7:28 p.m. in Sherborn Town Hall, Room 204A.

TOWN CENTER REPORT (*Reference Document #1*)

John Higley summarized the notes from the meeting with the Conservation Commission. The focus was to look at the long-term strategic plan for the town in addition to other options such as modification of the PUD. The Conservation Commission suggested the Planning Board may want to “think big.” Before the town makes a decision to invest in big changes, a Master Plan should be in place. The Conservation Commission will get a map of the wetlands to the Planning Board. The Planning Board referenced the map of wells and septic systems (figure 7 on page 19). The Planning Board will continue to get feedback from the other boards and see if the feedback sharpens up any of the existing recommendations.

John Higley presented information on the sewer system installed in Littleton and the mixed-use zoning in Mansfield, MA. Robin Perera presented information on the sewer system installed in Harvard, MA in 2009. Robin Perera recently visited and spoke with a business owner in Harvard who is benefitting from the system.

Robin Perera asked what options are available to add sidewalks. Gino Carlucci said that the town applied for a STRAP Grant two years ago and received consensus at town meeting. The grant was not received, but the town can apply again. John Higley noted that in the past, the town has turned down grants. The town declined the grant last year because it didn't want to match the money, which was a requirement for the grant. Gino Carlucci added that if sidewalks are a priority, the town can probably do it with existing funds including the money from ADESA.

John Stevens said that sidewalks meandering off the edge of the road would make a nice walking trail. A possible route could be from Woodhaven, behind the Peace Abbey, down toward the Clarke House. Options for a path on and off the street will be included in the recommendations. Certain areas need to be prioritized for sidewalks. For example, would trees be impacted by installing sidewalks? Charles Yon stated that the Planning Board will have to take a look at the easements and safety issues near the train tracks.

It might be a good time to start a discussion with the Peace Abbey. Gino Carlucci noted that pedestrian facilities are a requirement for a PUD, which is going to be pursued on George Fiske's land in the downtown. The Peace Abbey property may be zoned as PUD in the future. It is currently for sale as EA and RA zoned.

Making changes to invite more businesses to town is important. Esthetically, an attraction similar to Natick's Gazebo/Commons and Norfolk's Gazebo would be nice. Millis is also a good example, as that town has made a lot of positive changes to their downtown. In addition to esthetics, other changes need to be made to allow businesses to function properly. For example, the current retail space restriction of 2,500 square feet is too prohibitive. Business owners need 5,000-10,000 square feet minimum. (As a guideline, a store the size of Whole Foods or Trader Joe's is 12,000-30,000+ square feet). John Stevens suggested that having more businesses off the road would be great.

Increased access behind C&L and the post office is also needed. Robin Perera pointed out that there is parking there that most people don't use. In order to promote walking and communal areas, people should be encouraged to use that area. Perhaps taking away some curb cuts will help. The Smart Growth/form-based codes advocate that kind of living. John Higley stated that the Library Committee studied parking and concluded that people will park only in areas they see immediately. C&L owns the back parking lot and rents it to the post office. Gino Carlucci noted that if there was a PUD on Kent Fitzpatrick's property, there could be parking on the strip along the tracks. There was a similar idea proposed in the 1975 plan, but it didn't pass. The 1975 plan focused on creating a central village. The Planning Board did not approve it at that time. A proposed shopping development was unreasonable because the parking bylaw was prohibitive. Things have changed since then. John Stevens noted that there are two sizeable properties that can be enhanced. The Planning Board has the opportunity to give guidance and some say as to encouraging more businesses to come into town. A consensus of the property owners, business owners, and townspeople is needed. The key will be to show everyone in town all of the possible scenarios including the scenario of making no changes at all. If the long term plan is shown in detail, hopefully people will be able to see the benefit to the town. It is important for the business community to get onboard.

It will be helpful to map out the area and put a detailed plan on paper. Gino Carlucci will bring an aerial photograph of the area to the next meeting. Robin Perera proposed a field trip to walk the downtown just before the next meeting.

WARRANT ARTICLES

John Higley revised Warrant Article 13 to contain its old language minus the tolling provision. Advisory Committee and Town Counsel will probably approve it with that language. As such, it

will most likely pass at next Town Meeting. The new version will be distributed at the next Planning Board meeting.

If there is a fall town meeting, that may be the time to try to amend the PUD. After receiving feedback from the town boards and businesses, the Planning Board can make a draft PUD modification.

OTHER BUSINESS

The following events are occurring in May and June:

There will be a SWAP meeting in Franklin on May 16th.

The MAPC annual meeting will be in Salem on May 23rd.

The Conservation by Design Workshop will be in Franklin on June 4th.

AMERESCO update: The walkthroughs of buildings have been completed. The fire station needs a new heating system.

ADESA applied for renewal of their special permit. There will be a public meeting in June. The final payment from the last special permit was received today. There is a recreation trails grant which will reimburse approximately \$30,000.

The town received a letter offering it right of first refusal for a 61A plot of land at 247 Washington Street. The sale price was not specified. The town will likely decline the offer. If the town doesn't buy the property, the owner intends to sell so the land can be divided for two homes to be built.

There is active lobbying for a new bill to include CLERPA (a land use reform bill). It hasn't made it past committee for many years, but may be getting closer.

There is nothing new to report on solar opportunities

John Higley reported that the proposal to repave the landfill did not pass. There were questions of cost and if the current paving is on top of the landfill.

John Higley suggested that members of the Planning Board volunteer to each speak with various Sherborn businesses about the proposals for the future of the town.

MINUTES

Robin Perera motioned to approve the April 4, 2012 minutes. John Higley seconded the motion and all were in favor. John Stevens motioned to approve the May 3, 2012 minutes. Robin Perera seconded the motion and all were in favor. Charles Yon abstained as he was not a member of the Planning Board on either date.

The meeting on April 18, 2012 was informal due to lack of a quorum; therefore, official minutes were not kept. Notes from the meeting will be filed in the Minutes binder.

The next meeting of the Planning Board will be May 23, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Pettit

Clerk

DOCUMENTS REFERENCED DURING THE MEETING

1. Map of Sherborn Wells and Septic Systems