

BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD
Town Hall—Selectmen’s Meeting Room
Regular Session Minutes
November 17, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Shawn Hanegan Chair, Amy Lloyd, Clerk
Jeffrey Cohen, Sandra Hackman and Lisa Mustapich

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Garber, Planning Director; Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner

STAFF ABSENT: Cathy Silvestrone, Planning A.A.

OTHERS PRESENT: See Attached

Shawn Hanegan, Chair convened the Planning Board meeting at 7:30 PM

Emergency Evacuation notice read by Amy Lloyd, Clerk

Amy Lloyd, Clerk read a public notice sharing information about E-Subscribe on the town’s website homepage. Ms. Lloyd explained that the best way for residents and others to stay informed of town board & committee meetings, agendas, and minutes is by subscribing to E-Info. on the town’s website.

Note: All meeting submittals are available for review in the Planning Office.

Other—Athena Lane definitive subdivision follow-up

Surveyor Cliff Rober, representing the Athena Lane subdivision developer, appeared at the meeting on an unscheduled basis. It was explained that a mylar would be filed by legal counsel Pamela Brown under the MGL Chapter 41, section 81X provision, which requires neither Board review nor signature, but that Mr. Rober was there to deliver paper copies of the subdivision sheet, and also to convey the information that there was another glitch in the as-built plans, in that the sump pump pit was straddling the common property bound between the two lots and that an easement would therefore be necessary. The Board chose not to deliberate because it wasn’t posted. However, due to the fact that as-builts are largely a matter for DPW Engineering approval, and to the fact that the lotting plan could be recorded without further endorsement, there was no reason for Mr. Rober to be appearing before the Planning Board, and member Lisa Mustapich reiterated the Board’s cautious position in regard to discussing any regulatory matter not previously posted.

FUTURE WORK PLANNING SESSION:

Planning Director Garber provided a handout entitled PROJECTING PLANNING LONG TERM WORK LOAD: Known and Possible Work Assignments between now and March, 2015, for the Board’s information, discussion, and prioritization.

1) MA Downtown Initiative (DHCH) historic wayfinding grant application—

Director Garber reported that in the last few days, planning staff has been invited to get involved in the application process for a MA Downtown Initiative grant for a way finding study to connect Economic Development destinations and cultural and historic resources. Director Garber said he worked with Alyssa Sandoval, Economic Development Coordinator, to draft a proposal that will go before the Selectmen this evening. A copy of the draft was included in the Board's packets. The grant is for \$10,000 and would be used to plan the way-finding system (theme, signage, media etc.). At Mr. Garber's suggestion, references have been added to the relevance of the Comprehensive Plan and Bedford's potential to fill a gap between Lexington and Concord. Mr. Garber mentioned that the grant submission is due December 4 and that if the grant is awarded, planning staff would have an ongoing role. Mr. Garber suggested it could be followed by a Community Preservation Act (CPA) bid to follow through with implementation.

Sandra Hackman mentioned that the Great Road Master Plan (GRMP) needs to be taken into account. Director Garber said information regarding GRMP was noted in the draft.

Amy Lloyd asked if they would look at consolidating existing signage too.

Director Garber said he has also recommended giving some attention to "gateways", including Depot Park.

The Board welcomed pursuit of this grant.

Chris Gittens, 8 Brooksbie Road, asked how many hours are expected from a consultant for \$10,000. Director Garber replied; consultants vary, but he expects that the consultant will provide a few hours per week over a period of a few weeks.

2) MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) Technical Assistance Options—

The Board discussed whether to apply for a grant of technical assistance under the DLTA or Planning for Metrofuture programs. Sandra Hackman reported that she heard at the MAGIC subregional meeting that there's a risk of cuts to the DLTA budget. Also at the MAGIC meeting there was discussion about MPO's long-range plan which mentions Route 4/225 as a major arterial bottleneck. Ms. Hackman asked if the board/town should think about addressing the corridor.

Catherine Perry commented that there'd need to be a discussion about how to balance the aims, considering the needs of both arterial traffic flow and other users/local environment; the state's approach has improved in this respect.

Sandra Hackman said MAPC has some transportation planning competence and Board members felt this was an important issue to work on; however they were unsure about problems presented by parts of The Great Road being state controlled.

Ms. Hackman commented that lack of transit options is an important issue, although others are working on it so it may not be the top priority for Planning's work program.

Planning Director Garber suggested the east end of Great Road as a land use study. The board was interested in this but wasn't sure if this area was ready for change. It was suggested that possibly parts of this area could be addressed.

Catherine Perry suggested opening up views of the rivers, which members agreed would be beneficial. Also a technical study could include outreach to property owners to gather their views and intentions and begin to develop a vision. All agreed this would be helpful.

Sandra Hackman mentioned that MAPC favors inter-town projects. The board discussed coordinating with Lexington on traffic movements near the east end of Great Road-- Shawsheen/Hartwell Avenue area and noted that it would be beneficial to get more information.

Lisa Mustapich suggested that Hanscom Air Force Base has information on traffic origins (for base passes).

John Crockett, 15 Elm Street, suggested coordinating among permitting boards to entice investors to come in.

There was Board consensus on the east end of Great Road study idea. Planning staff can start by discussing this idea with Marc Racicot. Director Garber will follow up.

3) Potential future zoning amendments—

Industrial—Mr. Garber said the time scale and amount of work depends on how much change is contemplated, e.g. height or significant increase in Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Some changes seem a priority; however, a good approach may be to start with the minimal changes, then possibly include district consolidation.

Lisa Mustapich expressed support for renovating industrial areas, and considering adjustments to height in the industrial districts. Ms. Mustapich felt it was important to improve the competitive position of the town.

Opens Space Residential Development (OSRD)—Catherine Perry suggested waiting until the proposed Hartwell Road/Beacon Street development is settled. Amy Lloyd agreed.

Jeffrey Cohen asked about **adjustments to Depot Area Overlay District** related to housing and mixed uses to reduce emphasis on housing. Mr. Garber said that cottage-style housing could make higher density more palatable, as opposed to more apartment blocks. There was a suggestion not to rush changes to the Depot Area.

In respects to **dense housing** more broadly, Lisa Mustapich commented that she wasn't sure the town would be receptive.

Amy Lloyd voiced that meeting diverse housing needs is of economic importance and that cottage housing has been shown to maintain value over time. Ms. Lloyd added that there may still be an unmet demand.

Catherine Perry said one approach is to study housing needs first. Glenn Garber noted that cottage zoning could be a floating zone, available where suitable criteria are met.

Jeffrey Cohen suggested working on changes to the industrial zoning for spring town meeting and possibly includes limited adjustments to height; another board member agreed. Others commented that height could be considered more fully for fall town meeting 2015. Chair Hanegan suggested considering making “extra” height be by special permit.

Beyond what was discussed, staff suggested seeing how the workload goes, (including permitting and work to support any grants received) and addressing identified needs for technical improvements to the zoning bylaw.

REPORTS:

1) MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) development data base—

Catherine Perry reported that she has updated Bedford’s portion of the MAPC development data base which is made available online, and that the data is mainly collected for long-range transportation planning.

2) Development Updates—

Café at the bike shop (near the Depot area) hasn’t progressed.

3) Westford Conservation Subdivision Workshop Summary—

Catherine Perry reported on a workshop she attended in Westford, led by Mass Audubon with a variety of other speakers, which discussed Cluster/Open Space Residential Design subdivisions and included a tour of several examples. She provided photographs of three sites and reviewed their key features including different types and configurations of protected open space. She noted that Westford has been quite successful in achieving trail connections through and between developments.

4) Bike path extension discussed at Selectmen’s meeting—

Amy Lloyd reported that she attended the Selectmen’s discussion regarding the bike path extension at Railroad Avenue, and that the consultants have now worked with the state’s bicycle coordinator. Ms. Lloyd commented that the latest design is a big improvement, with a shared path on the south side and a sidewalk on the north. There are still some issues with the school bus area and reluctance to use the full easement on the south side in front of the houses. The pedestrian crossing is still at the curve of Rail Road Avenue and many people felt it should be away from the curve. Ms. Lloyd mentioned that there are still a large number of curb cuts along

the shared-use path, with Taylor & Lloyd and a landscape contractor's trucks presenting a safety issue. A suggestion was made to locate an easement at the rear to aid turning. Ms. Lloyd said the Bicycle Advisory Committee is happier, but recognizes these are complex issues. Ms. Lloyd commented that some details of the design could be improved (e.g. proposed signage seems cluttered), and that the Selectmen are likely to be influenced by what can get funding.

5) Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan Meeting (November 12)—

Planning Director Garber reported that he attended the Pedestrian & Bike Master Plan meeting, and that the first meeting covered people's desires, feelings about safety etc. There were 10 breakout groups that each addressed the same set of goals, followed by a wrap-up session. Ms. Lloyd added that there was a lot of talk about pedestrian issues (which balances up with bikes).

BUSINESS SESSION

1) Hartwell Farms/Pulte Homes – request for release of performance guarantee

The following documentation was provided to the Board in conjunction with Hartwell Farms/Pulte Homes request for its final release of performance bond:

- Memo dated, November 13, 2014 from Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner, sharing the performance bond history for the Hartwell Farms development, including the latest request for the final release of the bond.
- Email dated November 12, 2014 from Adrienne St. John, Public Works Engineer stating that DPW was satisfied with the replacement trees and also noting that the developer painted the stop bars at the driveway island.
- Letter dated November 11, 2014 from Mark Mastroianni, Land Project Manager @ Pulte Homes, requesting a final release from Hartwell Farms development performance guarantee (Bond #268002900), the remaining amount being \$2,450 for the replacement of trees that had died .

The board reviewed the above documentation, and proceeded with the following motion and vote:

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to release the remaining Hartwell Farms development performance bond amount of \$2,450 that was retained to cover the replacement, in the fall planting season, of seven trees that had died. Adrienne St. John, Public Works Engineer, confirmed that these trees have been replaced to her satisfaction. (Sandra Hackman seconded the motion)

VOTE: 5-0-0

2) Middlesex 3 Coalition – Transportation Committee Meeting Info.—

The following documentation was supplied by Sandra Hackman from the November 14, 2014 Middlesex 3 Coalition Transportation Committee Meeting:

- Agenda
- Middlesex 3 Transportation Management Association (Operational Guidelines)
- Middlesex 3 Coalition Transportation Management Association (general contact info.)
- Middlesex 3 Transportation Management Association—Membership Application Form
- Middlesex 3 (A Transportation Management Association) Memorandum of Understanding
- Innovative Public Transportation Workforce Development Program (Ladders of Opportunity Initiative) funding opportunity from the Department of Transportation—DOT/Federal Transit Administration.

Ms. Hackman briefed the board about the meeting. The Transportation Management Association (TMA) is going to start. Documentation is being prepared for memberships by businesses. Shuttle services, safe rides home, etc. will be available. A kick off meeting is slated for December 18 at the Doubletree Hotel (time of the event needs to be verified). MITRE Corporation will be sponsoring this first event. Ms. Hackman also commented that the Planning Board needs to remember to ask businesses to join the TMA and follow-up with those who were required to join. The TMA is employing someone to coordinate and apply for a 2nd grant. The employee costs to ride the shuttle service are low and some charges may be pre-tax or tax deductible. Other ideas discussed were Park and ride and an Intermodal Center.

Sandra Hackman also reported that Acton is developing a transportation impact zone to enable small businesses to participate in the Acton-area TMA as a group.

3) Minutes—October 14, 2014 Regular Session Minutes

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to approve the October 14, 2014 Regular Session Minutes with some minor amendments. (Amy Lloyd seconded the motion)

VOTE: 5-0-0

4) Other –Scheduling

Upcoming meeting dates:

December 9, (Tues); already scheduled

December 22, (Mon.); not scheduled; but a potential meeting date if needed

January 7, 2015 (Weds)

January 20, 2015 (Tues)

February 4 (Weds)

February 17 (Tues)

March 3 (Tues)

March 17 (Tues)

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to adjourn the meeting. (Amy Lloyd seconded the motion)

VOTE: 5-0-0

TIME: 10:10 PM