

HAMILTON PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 19, 2019

Members Present: Richard Boroff, Peter Clark, Dan Hamm, Rick Mitchell, Brian Stein, (Chair), Laura Walsh, and William Wheaton.

Associate Members:

Planning Director: Patrick Reffett

This meeting was called to order in the Memorial Room, Hamilton Town Hall, 577 Bay Road at 7:00 with a quorum established.

Continued Site Plan Review. 59-63 Willow St. Public Hearing and Site Plan Review as submitted by the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) for a multifamily, multi-use dwelling.

Brian Stein announced that the applicant requested a continuance until December 3, 2019.

Motion made by Peter Clark to continue the Site Plan Review hearing for 59-63 Willow St. until December 3, 2019.

Dan Hamm seconded.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Patrick Reffett explained that The Engineering Collaborative (TEC) of Andover, MA had been hired for a peer review focusing on traffic planning, design, and site drainage. The firm was currently reviewing the project submittals and would provide a report and a presentation on December 3, 2019.

Approval Not Required (ANR). 466 Highland St. Britton Family LLC. Three new lots.

Peter Britton and Charlie Wear (Meridian Associates) were present. A six acre piece had frontage on Highland St. and had been divided into two lots. A perc test had been conducted on the unrestricted land, which would have more value after the ANR was approved. Patrick Reffett had reviewed the proposal to determine that the lots had sufficient frontage on Highland St. and more than enough land to fulfill zoning requirements. Mr. Reffett noted that the last two words on the agenda posting indicated that frontage was on Porter Lane which was an error as the frontage is on Highland St.

According to Peter Britton the compost facility was on a reduced frontage lot and the gravel driveway to access the facility would not impact the new lots. There were varying amounts of traffic to the compost facility depending on the season but Mr. Britton said it was minimal compared to the traffic generated by Pingree School nearby. Mr. Britton had no future plans for the lots except to convey value to the piece of land. The lots benefited from excellent site lines for access.

Motion made by Brian Stein to approve the plan for 466 Highland St. as presented.
Rick Mitchell seconded.
Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Master Planning and Housing Production Plan (HPP) – Review Presentation.

The Planning Board had met with the Selectmen the previous night. Patrick Reffett said comments had been provided to the consultants but changes had not yet been received. Mr. Reffett suggested waiting for the revised document in a couple of weeks before voting to accept it.

Discussion ensued regarding if the Longmeadow site should be listed in the Housing Plan as a potential site. As Chairman of the Affordable Housing Trust Russ Tanzer had asked to have it removed from the list at the Selectmen's meeting and prior to that time when the Trust was reviewing the HPP document. While Richard Boroff had asked to have it listed, Patrick Reffett said a developer had the ability to lock up virtually any property and use it for a 40B regardless of what sites were listed in the plan. Brian Stein and Dan Hamm agreed that only Town owned properties should be listed, however the Essex St. and Gordon Conwell (previously approved 20 acre ANR site) had been listed. Rick Mitchell said the Selectmen were interested in looking at changing the zoning for the Winthrop School and Gordon Conwell parcels to provide options for the properties if they or a portion of them become available. William Wheaton said the property would have a higher value being eligible for the Estate Overlay District than being zoned commercial or industrial.

Reffett said the Master Plan's outcome was to guide the Board and Town in appropriately amending the Zoning By-law in ways our public would support. Mr. Reffett reviewed some of the recommendations from the consultants including: simplify the Open Space Farmland Preservation By-law (OSFPD) and allowing wetlands to be used as part of the open space requirements; allowing a density bonus within various districts as well as in the Inclusionary Housing By-law; revising the Estate Overlay District By-law; and creating Natural Resource Zoning, which Mr. Reffett assumed would include cluster zoning to better deal with properties that had wetlands and natural habitat resources as site amenities. Other changes included amending R1a and R1b districts to allow for two family townhouses by special permit.

Discussion ensued regarding the prior Fall Town Meeting and opinions on why so few residents attended. Rick Mitchell was concerned about presenting Zoning changes to 1% of the population. Patrick Reffett would consult the Selectmen regarding presenting Zoning articles at Annual Town Meeting. Brian Stein suggested revising OSFPD and implementing two family housing to provide additional housing options for the town. A developer should be able to present their concept for OSFPD without presenting a yield plan to allow for more economically feasible projects. Mr. Reffett recalled that Marc Bobrowski had suggested the Town pursue a Flexible Housing By-law, which Wenham had previously approved. Mr. Reffett would distribute the Flexible Housing By-law and Hamilton's current OSFPD By-law to members. Mr.

Stein suggested allowing for multiple uses such as cluster and senior on one site. Mr. Mitchell said the Selectmen and FinCom should drive the commercial zoning changes.

Patrick Reffett said neighbors to the Willow St. project were concerned about traffic, drainage, and parking. William Wheaton said the proposal's density was greater than surrounding sites. Mr. Reffett responded that the Zoning By-law allowed for the density. Mr. Wheaton said he would be proposing a change to the By-law that removed the allowance for two or more units and substitute a provision for floor area ratio (FAR) as it related to commercial and residential floor areas.

Patrick Reffett said he was preparing a budget request which would allow for hiring an environmental consultant who could evaluate the landfill / Commercial Overlay District area. The site featured solar arrays, wetlands, and an area where a gun club had lease land from the town previously. He also said from his research the majority of the area was wet outside of the landfill (now solar field) and a part was under the Natural Habitat overlay for endangered species. Some people believed there would be usable land on the site, so a study was being proposed which would determine if there was developable land area. Due to the budget process, the study would not be conducted until the next fiscal year. Peter Clark indicated that there might be five acres out behind the solar array but Mr. Reffett said he believed the land to be too steep for building. The study would cost approximately \$10,000.

The Estate Overlay District was discussed, noting that in the past, abutters were concerned about commercial traffic near their homes. Some residents were afraid the By-law would be used too extensively. Brian Stein thought amending the By-law to make it only residential might minimize fears. William Wheaton noted that allowing flexibility in the By-law would allow Gordon Conwell greater value to sell their property. It was agreed that the Board would work on the OSFPD first.

Board Business.

Minutes of November 5, 2019.

Motion made by Peter Clark to approve the minutes of November 5, 2019 as amended.

Seconded by Richard Boroff.

Vote: Unanimous in favor with Brian Stein abstaining due to his recusing himself during a portion of the meeting.

Adjournment.

Motion made by Dan Hamm to adjourn at 7:57 pm

Seconded Richard Boroff.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Prepared by:

Marcie Ricker

Attest

Date