

**MINUTES
MARLBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
MARLBOROUGH, MA 01752**

Call to Order

October 30, 2017

The Meeting of the Marlborough Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 pm in Memorial Hall, 3rd Floor City Hall, 140 Main Street, Marlborough, MA. Members present: Barbara Fenby, Phillip Hodge, Colleen Hughes, Sean Fay and Brian DuPont. Also in attendance were City Engineer, Thomas DiPersio, and Planning Board Administrator, Krista Holmi.

1. Meeting Minutes:

A. October 16, 2017

On a motion by Ms. Hughes, seconded by Mr. DuPont, the Board voted to approve the Planning Board meeting minutes of October 16, 2017. Mr. Hodge abstained. Motion carried.

2. Chair's Business: (None)

3. Approval Not Required: (None)

As time allowed, Chairperson Fenby requested that Item 5, Engineer's Report, be moved up in the agenda.

5. Pending Subdivision Plans: Updates and Discussion

A. Engineer's Report

Mauro Farm - Engineering Division is closer to making its recommendation for acceptance. Work is complete, and the Open Space description issue is progressing. Plans have been created depicting open space parcels 31 and 32 and deeds for the open space parcels, roadways and their appurtenant municipal easements will be finalized.

Slocumb Lane - City Engineer DiPersio indicated that "we are in good shape". There are acceptance plans and as-built plans ready. Deeds are in process, so we are on a good path to acceptance.

Water's Edge - Ms. Hughes requested an update. City Engineer DiPersio indicated that the lots were conveyed using the original subdivision plans. Easements were added later that were not depicted on the original plans. The City must obtain easement rights from the homeowners.

Berlin Farms - Ms. Hughes requested an update. Solicitor Rider is waiting until the next legislative session to revisit the Home Rule Petition. We are hopeful that acceptance of some of these (older subdivisions) will progress after January.

Hager St. - On a Motion by Mr. DuPont, seconded by Ms. Hughes, the Board voted to send correspondence to the applicant representative, Peter Bemis, indicating that the Planning Board will take a formal vote on the definitive plan before them at the next meeting scheduled for November 13, 2017. Motion carried.

Goodale Estates - While sidewalks are strongly preferred by the Planning Board, the street area between Hutchinson and Woodland contains narrow sections that are not wide enough for a full sidewalk. Utility poles in the ROW also contribute to the design challenges.

City Engineer DiPersio reminded the board that their approval condition stated that if a full sidewalk could not be constructed, then a pathway was to be built. Councilor Delano felt that the developer's use of "stone dust" was not acceptable, and that other materials must be considered. Options including a mulched or woodchip dressing or the possibility of narrower, paved sections providing continuity to other sidewalk sections were discussed. City Engineer DiPersio felt that the stone dust base would firm up in time. Rework on the stones along the right-of-way and a new top treatment may be an acceptable solution. Mr. Keenan (10 Hutchinson) was present for the discussion and expressed his preference for a fully-constructed sidewalk. Chairperson Fenby indicated that the City would determine a resolution for the area. She charged the City Engineer with setting up a meeting with the developer and invited the homeowner to participate.

4. Public Hearings:

A. Public Hearing: Proposed Zoning Amendment – 650-8

Retirement Community Overlay District 685-685R Farm Rd (Marlborough Airport Property)

Public Hearing Monday, October 30, 2017- Proponent- Attorney Arthur Bergeron

Chairperson Fenby opened the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Ms. Hughes read the notice of public hearing into the record. Chairperson Fenby provided introductions and instructions to those in attendance. The hearing was conducted in the following stages: 1) Presentation 2) Those speaking in favor 3) Those speaking in opposition 4) Comments and questions from members.

Presentation:

Attorney Bergeron identified that on behalf of his client, Capital Group Properties, he is requesting consideration to amend the City's zoning map established by Section 650-8. The amendment would be further amended by superimposing the Retirement Community Overlay District (RCOD) over Assessors Map 73, Parcels 52 and 53, and Assessors Map 85, Parcels 14 and 15. (This is the area of the Marlborough Airport.)

Attorney Bergeron explained that many small airports are closing as there are fewer pilots with private certificates. Flying is expensive - planes, specialty fuels, liability insurance, maintenance and hanger space are costly, and there is a reduced interest in flying. These factors have contributed in the owner's decision to sell. Attorney Bergeron said that the Overlay District would still have the underlying zoning criteria of the current zone, Limited Industrial. A payment of \$80,000/unit in lieu of a provision of affordable units is proposed. The property would be a "for sale" retirement community with approximately 114 units (shown in the presentation slide Retirement Community Concept Plan). The units would have an occupancy restriction of 55+. The proponent explained that Capital Group Properties has extensive experience in these types of developments and provided numerous slides showing existing retirement communities done by Capital Group.

The proponent feels that the airport property is ideally suited for the 55+ community. The property is situated next to the Wayside Athletic Club, a nature trail system, Trombetta's Farm, and is near retail shopping (Target). Attorney Bergeron acknowledged the expressed concern of City Council in a previous presentation, "What happens when the baby boomers die?" (and the market collapses). The proponent approximated that the market should be strong until 2050, when the peak of the boomers is no longer alive. He went on to explain that this type of resident community is designed for the aged 55-80 market. The majority enter assisted living in their late 80's, and in the meantime, the City could benefit from the favorable tax revenue associated with residential housing. As an illustration, he showed a slide with projected new tax revenue associated with a retirement community vs. limited industrial use. The presentation mentioned additional information would be available at www.capitalgroupproperties.com.

Speaking in Favor of the Amendment: Speaking in Opposition to the Amendment:

No person spoke in favor or in opposition to the amendment.

Chairperson Fenby declared that portion of the Public Hearing closed. (7:45 p.m.)

Questions and Comments:

Ms. Hughes is familiar with this marketed approach she described as "upselling" homes to an older population. Ms. Hughes cautioned against consideration of these units as elderly housing options. She feels these homes are not typical "downsized homes", and are not usually designed with the elderly in mind. (She speculated that the units wouldn't contain special features for an elderly population, i.e. handicapped accessibility baths or floor plans).

Mr. Fay, following the usual line of criticism of Overlay Districts, explained that he does not agree with the City's current approach to zoning. He said that waiting for a developer's specific project and putting an overlay district to make it fit doesn't make sense.

Mr. DuPont echoed the sentiment he has previously expressed – the City lacks a detailed Master Plan that would inform decisions on these types of projects. Mr. DuPont quoted from Mayor Vigeant's own letter sent to Council President Clancy on 7-20-17. The letter accompanied the Housing Study Report of RKG Associates following a six-month cessation of all special permit housing projects in the City.

"One of the key points of the report is that the City should control and determine where housing developments should grow. Developers are driven by market demand, not necessarily what is best for Marlborough and its future. A developer, even one who has a good track record and proposes a nice overall project should not receive the stamp of approval unless it fits into our broader vision."

Mr. DuPont summarized that, "Ideally, development should be consistent with sound planning." There was a discussion of a general discussion of other retirement communities and specifically, the Villages at Crane Meadow retirement community and the proposed addition of an ancillary apartment building. The proponent explained that the provision for that type of structure was built into the original zoning amendment for the Retirement Community Overlay District.

The public hearing was closed at 8:00 p.m.

6. Preliminary/Open Space Submissions/Limited Development Subdivisions: (None)

7. Definitive Subdivision Submission: (None)

8. Signs: (None)

9. Unfinished Business: (None)

10. Informal Discussion: (None)

11. Correspondence: None

12. Public Notices of other Cities and Towns:

On a motion made by Ms. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Hodge, it was voted to accept and place on file. Motion carried.

Adjournment: On a motion made by Mr. DuPont, seconded by Mr. Fay, it was voted to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Motion carried.

/kih

Respectfully submitted,


Colleen Hughes
Clerk