

MARCH 17, 2016
MINUTES

Chairman Perkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM at the Town Hall
Members present: Perkins, Burke, Giger, Svarczkopf, Vega, and Wilson
Member absent: Barringer

SITE PLAN REVIEW – LAWRENCE ACADEMY ENTRANCE

The Groton Planning Board held a continuation of the public hearing to consider Lawrence Academy's application to construct a new entrance to the campus on Main Street. Stan Dillis of Ducharme & Dillis Civil Design Group was present.

Mr. Dillis explained the changes to the site plan. The Plan was revised to depict bump outs at the crosswalk location on Main Street as suggested by the Planning Board at the March 3rd meeting. In deference to Bonavita's suggestion, Mr. Dillis said that the school is willing to construct a stamped concrete crosswalk in a brick pattern if DPW Director Tom Delaney is okay with it. The Planning Board discussed whether the stamped concrete crosswalk would provide sufficient contrast to be visible to motorists. Wilson suggested adding striping alongside the stamped concrete crosswalk to enhance the contrast. Giger said that he wants other crosswalks along the Lawrence Academy frontage to be similarly modified and wants Lawrence Academy to install school zone signs along Route 40.

Mr. Dillis said that his client is unwilling to change the style of proposed lights because they were already approved by the Historic District Commission and match lights installed elsewhere on campus. There was some debate between the Planning Board and Mr. Dillis regarding the height of the pole top luminaires (BEGA Product). Dillis will obtain the specifics of the luminaire height and provide that to the Planning Board.

Mr. Dillis said that he was unwilling to commit to a species of coniferous tree because they want to leave that up to the abutter. Wilson stated that he agreed with Bonavita's suggestion that the species contain foliage that extends to the ground.

Mr. Dillis said that the Lawrence Academy name will not appear on the retaining walls at the driveway entrance despite the photo that was submitted with the revised Plans. The school seal may or may not appear on the wall. Mr. Dillis stated that he is amenable to requiring submission of the specifics of the lighting of the wooden sign that will be relocated to the new entrance as a Condition of Approval.

Mr. Dillis said that they are amenable to moving the street light closer to the intersection in deference to Bonavita's comments. Bonavita suggested adding an additional street light- one at the Main Street intersection with the new driveway and one at the intersection of the new driveway and the driveway to the headmaster's house. Wilson underscored the fact that both the intersection of Main/new driveway and the crosswalk need to be adequately illuminated. Dillis said that he will confirm whether or not there is an existing street light in the location of the crosswalk.

The Planning Board and Mr. Dillis discussed Bonavita's suggestion with regards to adding a sidewalk around the circumference of the proposed traffic circle, as well as accessible crosswalks. Perkins, Wilson and Burke expressed concurrence with the need for sidewalk and AAB accessible crosswalks. Dillis said he will discuss this with Lawrence Academy but is personally ok with adding a sidewalk around perimeter of traffic circle and associated crosswalks.

Giger made motion to close the public hearing. Burke seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Bonavita will prepare a draft decision for Planning Board consideration at the March 24th meeting. In response to Bonavita's suggestion, the Board agreed that she can leave out public hearing minutes from the decisions, except when it seems likely that the project will be appealed.

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Bonavita provided a little background information about the Complete Streets Program. If the Town adopts a Complete Streets Policy, then the Town will be eligible for up to \$50,000 in technical assistance to create a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and up to \$400,000 for construction. She explained that projects that are eligible for construction funding include street lighting, traffic calming, intersection improvements, pavement markings, regulatory and wayfinding signage, curbing, new and approved sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signals, etc... Bonavita stated that she compiled a draft Complete Streets policy to get the conversation started. She explained that she also forwarded the draft policy to the DPW Director for his review and comment. Bonavita suggested focusing the Complete Streets implementation on specific areas of Town (i.e. villages, major roadways).

Burke explained that he is excited at the prospect of using Complete Streets funding as a vehicle for implementing Master Plan recommendations. He expressed frustration that Groton's subdivisions are isolated islands and that arterials aren't walkable. He mentioned that the Town needs to keep in mind future sidewalks when approving commercial projects.

Vega stated that he is also happy with the prospect of construction funding. He wants to get the most for our money by providing pedestrian links to different areas of Town, essentially spreading the wealth.

Burke suggested that public/private partnerships are a possible way of leveraging additional funds.

Wilson lamented the fact that one has to drive in order to access the various trails scattered throughout Town. He prefers that the Town focus on Main Street, constructing sidewalks from Route 119 to the proposed Indian Hill Campus and bicycle accommodation.

Giger stated that, in his opinion, the coordination currently underway between the Groton School, MassDOT and Indian Hill is an exciting way to satisfy pedestrian needs.

Giger questioned who will be the decision-making authority. Bonavita explained that she specified the Land Use Committee as the enforcement authority in the draft because it consists of the various development-related departments including DPW, Planning, Police, Conservation Commission, Fire, Building, etc.... She stated that she is also open to the prospect of creating a new committee devoted exclusively to Complete Streets and is looking to the Board for guidance.

The Planning Board commenced discussion of groups who could be targeted for membership on a Complete Streets Committee. The Board agreed that a combination of volunteers and staff is optimal. Suggestions included:

- DPW Director
- Police Chief
- Town Planner
- Planning Board member
- School Committee member
- Member of Commission on Accessibility
- Member of Trails Committee

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The Board will make suggestions for Committee composition to the Board of Selectmen, but will defer to the Board of Selectmen as to the appointing authority.

Svarczkopf stated that he wants the Planning Board to be able to guide process.

Burke mentioned the prospect of raising fees as a way of financing improvements once the Complete Streets grants are fully expended. Land Use Reform may enable the Town to charge impact fees as a way of financing improvements in the future.

Judy Anderson asked if it is possible to use CPA money as a source of funding Complete Streets projects. The Board responded that some projects, such as trails and providing bike accommodation may be fundable using CPA money.

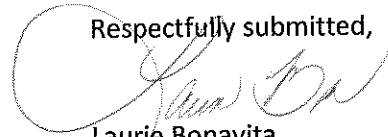
The Planning Board agreed to email any additional ideas regarding Complete Streets to Bonavita in advance of the March 24th meeting.

MINUTES

The Board discussed the minutes of March 3, 2016 and requested that Bonavita make the following changes: change the date in the heading, add the word "concerned" to the third bullet from the bottom of page 1, substitute "Burke" for "Russ" on page 1, and add the particulars of the motions for approval of the minutes, ANR endorsement, and meeting adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Laurie Bonavita

Land Use Director/Town Planner