

**PLANNING BOARD  
JULY 14, 2016  
MINUTES**

Russ Burke called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM at the Town Hall.

Members present: Barringer (via phone until arrival at 7:20 pm), Burke, Giger, Perkins, Svarczkopf (arrived at 7:30 pm), Vega, and Wilson

Member absent: None

**ROCKY HILL SUBDIVISION/SPECIAL PERMIT PUBLIC HEARING**

Burke read the public hearing notice into the record. Attorney Bob Collins represented the Applicant regarding this matter. He explained the status of the project. Comments from Nitsch Engineering are outstanding because they received the bulk of the application too close to the public hearing to turn around a review letter. Several plan changes are necessary per Bonavita's review letter. Collins asked the Board to continue the public hearing to August 25<sup>th</sup>, which will enable the engineer to make changes and time for the review of those revisions. Wilson made a motion to continue the public hearing to August 25, 2016 at 7 pm. Perkins seconded that motion. Members voted as follows: Perkins: yes, Vega: yes, Wilson: yes, Giger: yes, Barringer: yes, and Burke: yes. The vote was unanimous.

**GROTONWOOD – PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW**

Attorney Bob Collins represented the Applicant regarding this matter. He provided a brief overview of the project and the types of programs/activities offered by the Grotonwood Camp and Conference Center. He explained that the original building was destroyed by fire last fall. The Applicant is interested in replacing the building with a two-story structure that will accommodate a dormitory on the second floor and office space, storage and mechanicals on the first floor. The building will encompass a larger footprint and will be located approximately 25' closer to the dining hall than the original structure. Collins explained that the project was brought before the Land Use Committee last week. He said that they are in touch with the Health Agent about replacing the septic system, the building will have sprinklers, and there are no wetlands issues. Collins asked the Planning Board to waive site plan review.

Perkins asked about size of the proposed structure versus the prior structure. Bonavita responded that the structure will be approximately 13,000 square feet. Collins explained that the new structure is approximately 3 times larger than the original structure.

Perkins said that she wants the structure to be ADA-compliant. Collins responded that it will be ADA-compatible.

Svarczkopf expressed concerns about setting a precedent; he asked Collins about the grounds for waiving site plan review. Collins responded that site plan review has been waived in the past – in particular for a retail/agricultural use that was destroyed by fire. Burke responded that the Planning Board didn't waive site plan review for that project- that project never came to the Planning Board for site plan review. Collins countered that going through the site plan review process would cause unnecessary delay. The Applicant is interested in getting construction underway ASAP.

Barringer said that this project should undergo minor site plan review with the Land Use Director and Building Inspector. Collins responded that the information was already vetted by the Land Use Committee and that they had no issues with the project. Bonavita disagreed, stating that the Land Use Committee was provided with a sketch of Grotonwood with the former building circled and an isometric line drawing of the proposed building. The Land Use Committee has not seen the elevation drawings or

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the site plan. Also, he was told at the Land Use Committee meeting that this project triggers site plan review. To date, the Applicant has not submitted a site plan review application.

Wilson asked Collins why the Applicant is in such a rush. Collins responded that the Applicant wants to complete construction by November 2016.

Giger said that he was opposed to fast-tracking the project as there are a number of outstanding issues that need to be resolved. He suggested that the Planning Board perform limited site plan review taking into account the fact that this is a Dover Amendment use.

Barringer said that he is not adverse to waiving site plan review. He asked about the grade of the land from the front of the proposed building to the back of the proposed building. Is there an ADA-accessible route from the first floor entry to the second floor entry? Collins responded that there is not an ADA-accessible path between the first floor entry and the second floor entry.

Burke said that he shares the other members' concerns about creating a precedent. This project surpasses the threshold for triggering site plan review (1,000 square feet). He suggests minor site plan review by the Land Use Committee with comments and recommendations supplied by the Planning Board. The Land Use Committee can choose to kick the project review back to the Planning Board if they wish.

Barringer made a motion to waive the site plan review fee. Perkins seconded motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Svarczkopf wants to ensure that a design professional is signing off on the design- this will ensure ADA compliance.

Giger pointed out that while you can rebuild after fire within the existing footprint within 2 years, this building is 3 times larger than the original and not within the same footprint.

Barringer made a motion to remand undertaking to minor site plan review under our current regulations to the Land Use Committee with these stipulations- drawings shall be stamped by design professionals, the Applicant shall submit documentation on ADA accessibility and lighting, the project is subject to approval by Earth Removal Stormwater Management Committee, and the project shall be compliant with the requirements of other boards, departments and committees. In response to Burke's question about landscaping, Bob said that disturbed areas will be loamed and seeded. Wilson seconded with amendments articulating guidance. The vote was unanimous.

Svarczkopf wants the path from the building to the dining hall to be ADA compliant.

#### **NESSP TEMPLE**

Forrest Lindwall of Mistry Associates, Inc. represented the Applicant. He briefly discussed the revised landscaping plan. He said that the Applicant is willing to add some shallow-rooted trees along the side of the mound but they want to maintain the line of sight to the monument. Therefore, no trees will be planted in front of the mound. In response to Burke's question, there will be no exposed rock/ledge.

Perkins said that she wanted Nitsch Engineering feedback on the 1 ½':1' slope. Burke said that he is okay with the proposed riprap slope. Lindwall stated that the edge will be compacted because of the porous pavement parking lot. There will be no wash-out with this type of stone.

Perkins asked for verification that none of the proposed landscaping elements are invasive species.

Lindwall addressed Bonavita's comment #5 about placing a sidewalk along the western side of the western portion of the loop road. He claimed that a sidewalk cannot be placed in this location because there will be no ADA-accessible outlet. Burke responded that he should loop the walkway back into itself.

Lindwall explained that the revised photometric and lighting plan should be ready in a week to a week and a half.

Discussion of possible Saturday work activity ensued. Giger stated that he didn't want any exterior work performed on Saturday except for painting.

Lindwall explained that, due to the drought, no landscaping shall be installed until September. The final tower will be reduced in height by 11" to accommodate grade changes.

Giger stated that he wants engineer sign-off on drainage issues. He also wants to know what will be done to address dust/sedimentation issues.

Lindwall explained that the Applicant would like to proceed with road work ASAP to minimize the amount of time the site is left in its current disturbed state. Would the Planning Board be willing to sign off on that portion of the work tonight?

Barringer made a motion to approve the vertical and horizontal geometry of the roadway, subject to Nitsch Engineering and Conservation Commission approval, as shown on the Plan last revised June 17, 2016. This is solely for the convenience of the Applicant and does not constitute approval of the site plan. Wilson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Planning Board will continue discussion of the proposed modifications on August 4, 2016.

## **DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL REGULATION CHANGES**

### **FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT BYLAW**

Burke opened by reminding the Board of earlier discussion about modifying regulations to make Flexible Development the standard for subdivision design. Conventional subdivision would be allowed by special permit upon demonstration that the Flexible Development design doesn't work. This would be predicated on the belief that Flexible Development is the preferred method of subdivision design. Burke explained that he would provide examples from other communities to Bonavita who would then distribute them to the rest of the Board.

### **FIRE PROTECTION REGULATION (Section 381-12(C))**

Giger mentioned that he would like to revisit a proposed change to the subdivision regulations that would require sprinklers to be installed in single family homes that aren't served by municipal water. Currently cisterns are required.

### **APPRAISAL OF NON-TAXABLE PROPERTIES**

Giger said that he wants the Town to explore the possibility of establishing a requirement that Applicants submit recent appraisals with building permit applications when renovations are proposed to buildings on non-taxable properties. Because these properties are not taxed, the Assessors' Department does not necessarily keep values current. This makes it extremely difficult for the Building

Inspector to determine if the value of the renovation exceeds the threshold for triggering ADA-compliance of the entire structure. Giger said that he is willing to take the lead on this issue and will work with both the Disabilities Commission and the Building Inspector on it. Giger suggested that Bonavita ask other Building Inspectors how they address this issue.

**DALE LANE – CHAPTER 61A (GILSON)**

Wilson explained that he recently became aware that the intended purchaser of the Chapter 61A property on Dale Lane owns a significant amount of adjacent land with high development potential. Burke read an email from Ted Lapres, President of the Groton Conservation Trust, dated July 13, 2016 into the record. The email highlighted the ecological importance of the parcel and the substantial development risk given the quantity of land in common ownership. Wilson made a motion to forward this additional information to the Board of Selectmen for their consideration. Svarczkopf seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**MINUTES**

Giger made a motion to approve the minutes of June 23, 2016 as presented. Barringer seconded the motion. Svarczkopf and Barringer abstained from the vote. The remaining five members voted in favor.

**COMPLETE STREETS POLICY**

Burke informed the Board that the Board of Selectmen adopted the Complete Streets Policy and established the Complete Streets Committee. He suggested that the Planning Board appoint a Planning Board member to the Committee at the next meeting.

Giger made a motion to adjourn. Barringer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Laurie Bonavita  
Land Use Director/Town Planner