

**PLANNING BOARD
OCTOBER 13, 2016
MINUTES**

Russ Burke called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall.

Members present: Barringer, Burke, Giger, Svarczkopf (arrived at 7:20 pm), Vega (arrived at 7:15 pm), and Wilson

Member absent: Perkins

Burke read a letter by Alan Hoch dated October 13, 2016 into the record. The letter alleges that Burke is biased towards the Indian Hill Music Center project, treating it as a fait accompli months before Indian Hill Music submitted its application. According to the letter, Hoch made this allegation because Burke mentioned the project several times during his bid for a Board of Selectmen seat as a project "that will be coming online in the near term". Burke responded that Hoch misunderstood his comments and that he is not biased towards the Indian Hill Music Center one way or another. Burke said that he wants to participate in the matter, but will not do so if either the Applicant or the Planning Board members have an issue with it. Mark Bobrowski, attorney for Indian Hill Music, responded that he does not have any objections to Burke participating in the matter. The remaining members of the Planning Board responded that they have complete confidence in Burke's ability to act in an unbiased manner on this issue.

PUBLIC HEARING – INDIAN HILL MUSIC SITE PLAN REVIEW PERMIT

Barringer read the public hearing notice into the record. Gary Shepherd introduced the project team and provided an overview of the project. Susan Randazzo, Executive Director of Indian Hill Music, explained their mission, described their clientele and explained that they wish to hold at least one performance in the concert or recital hall every week. Alan Joslin, lead architect from Epstein Joslin Architects, explained how the agrarian setting influenced the building and site design. The rehearsal room will be approximately 40' in height, the recital hall will be approximately 45' in height, and the concert hall will be approximately 68' in height. Shepherd explained that the acousticians designed these spaces so that the music won't impact abutters and exterior sound won't impact the music. Todd Morey, civil engineer from Beals Associates, Inc., explained the approach to stormwater management, parking, grading, and utilities. A sewer pump station will be installed on-site that will be linked to a 2" force main. The project team is exploring the possibility of putting the force main through an abandoned water line to minimize disturbance to Old Ayer Road.

Mark Bobrowski spoke about the Dover Amendment and its applicability to this project. He explained that the Applicant is seeking two major deviations from the Zoning Bylaws- from the maximum height requirement of 35' (see above) and the minimum impervious lot coverage requirement of 25% (32.4% is proposed).

Greg Dazollo, landscape architect with Stephen Stimson Associates, described the landscape plan, including the proposed screening of abutters on Peabody Street, Old Ayer Road and the rail trail.

Burke informed the public that the peer review and staff review comments will be uploaded onto the municipal website.

Giger suggested that the Applicant go through the various documents and clean up any inaccuracies- i.e. whether the Peabody Street access will be used during festivals or for emergency access only. Giger asked the Applicant for an electronic copy of both the presentation and any new submissions.

Wilson expressed reservations about the design of the building. He is concerned that the architecture of the building is not in keeping with the character of Groton as a whole.

Svarczkopf expressed concerns about project impacts- traffic, lighting, visual appearance, energy consumption. He encouraged the Applicant to incorporate multi-modal transportation options into the design.

Vega expressed concerns about the danger of getting too bogged down with inconsequential details.

Burke asked if the Applicant is exploring incorporation of LEED-certifiable measures into the design. Joslin responded that they are incorporating energy efficiency measures into the site and building design wherever possible.

Burke asked about transportation demand management.

Burke asked for comments from the public.

Steve Robertson of 135 Peabody Street said that he is concerned about the size of the building and noise. He asked that everyone be cognizant of the fact that this project is proposed within an existing residential community, concessions should be made to make the project more palatable for abutters. For example, he asked the Planning Board to incorporate a 7:30 am start time into the decision instead of the 7:00 am start time currently incorporated into the decision for Phase I. He is concerned about events getting out at 10:00 pm and the fact that the school will be open until 10 pm 5 days a week. He is concerned about concerts held in the festival meadow after 7:30 pm. To help mitigate noise, he suggested either eliminating or reducing the amount overflow parking off of Peabody Street. This area should be used to enhance the buffer, not as parking. He wants the Applicant to define a "rare" event and wants Town Counsel opinion on larger events.

David Zeiler, 310 Old Ayer Road, is concerned about the parking calculation. He pointed out that the capacity of the building exceeds the number of available parking spaces. He believes that the assumption of 3.4 people per car is unrealistic. He is particularly concerned about parking during festival events when 3 venues may be in use simultaneously. He does not believe that the proposed parking supports the vision for the facility.

Bob Haargraves, 21 Temple Drive, requested an opaque gate at the Peabody Street egress. He wants traffic mitigation and suggests using the schools for overflow parking and shuttling folks to the site. He says that the Police Department in Ayer should be contacted since major events may impact traffic flow in Ayer.

Jim Antonellis, 13 Temple Drive, is concerned about areas that are not well defined- the festival ground, overflow parking and the barn area. He wanted to know how the barn area will be used. Todd Morey responded that the Applicant has not yet determined a final use for that structure.

Mary Jennings, 62 Blossom Lane, expressed support for the project and happiness that the abutting APR land will remain agrarian in nature. She echoed the idea of using the schools for satellite parking.

Tim McGivern, peer review engineer from Nitsch Engineering, provided a brief overview of his comment letter. His major comments were that the project conflicts with zoning with regards to height and impervious lot coverage. He said that more details are needed on the utility connections and the

October 13, 2016

Page 3

capacity of utilities. He is concerned about Fire Department access and wants a graphic analysis of cut and fill.

Barringer asked how they plan to reuse excavated material on site. Gary Shepherd responded that much of the material will be used on site or across the street to level the area for agricultural purposes.

Barringer requested more information on the stormwater ponds, particularly their depth and measures that will be put in place to ensure that they are not a hazard for people.

Sue Lotz, 153 Indian Hill Road, expressed excitement for the project.

The Board agreed that the November 10th meeting will be devoted to traffic issues exclusively.

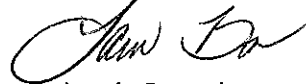
Wilson made a motion to continue the public hearing to 7:30 pm on October 27, 2016. Barringer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Giger asked Bonavita to add a hyperlink onto the Planning Board webpage to the Indian Hill Music application, which resides on the Land Use Department webpage.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laurie Bonavita".

Laurie Bonavita
Land Use Director/Town Planner