



Town of Southwick

Planning Board

MINUTES



Tuesday, February 1, 2022

7:00 PM (recorded)

Online participation via Zoom

Written Minutes

(Not verbatim - comments can be heard on recordings available at www.southwickma.org)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Doherty, Chair
Marcus Phelps, Vice Chair
Richard Utzinger
David Spina
David Sutton
Jessica Thornton, Associate
Jon Goddard, Town Planner
Meghan Lightcap, Secretary

ABSENT:

The meeting of the Planning Board was scheduled via *Zoom* only and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Doherty. There were approximately 20 people online. He stated that the meeting was being recorded and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting.

PLANNER'S REPORT: 7:00 p.m.

1. Mr. Goddard received a call from Bob Grimaldi regarding Hudson Solar, who sought contact information for the project as related to his understanding of the energy system network's capacity for new solar arrays.
2. Mr. Goddard shared that the Town had been provided with documentation regarding a proposed sale of land under Chapter 61 at 72 Mort Vining Road (land of Diane and Art Pinell) and the option to exercise its right of first refusal. The Planning Board identified that this property was not on its priority list of sites for protection/acquisition and moved to not recommend acquisition of the property.
3. Mr. Goddard invited members of the Planning Board to review a draft of the proposed submittal to the Annual Town Report.
4. Mr. Goddard reported that a District Local Technical Assistant Grant application had been submitted to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for funds related to "Phase II" of the Master Plan effort.

5. Mr. Goddard reported that a draft of the Depot Square as-built plans had been submitted to Planning and DPW and were currently in review.
6. Mr. Goddard reported that he spoke with Ed Gaunt and Edwin Gauthier regarding a contemplated used car sales facility to be located at 445 College Highway.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 7:05 p.m.

No public comments were presented.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:10 p.m.	370 North Loomis St.	<i>Stormwater Management Permit Public Hearing</i>
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Mr. Utzinger recused himself as a personal friend to the subject property and Mr. Doherty designated Mrs. Thornton as a Voting Member. Mr. Goddard read the Notice of Public Hearing and Mr. Ryan Nelson, a representative from R. Levesque Associates, Inc. shared his screen to show plans for the property. He said there is a perennial stream across the front of the property, with wetlands, floodplain, and a designated floodway as well as endangered species. The applicants Scott and Diane Hodges propose to build a single-family home in the upland area. Mr. Nelson said they have submitted a Notice -of-Intent to the Conservation Commission that is currently under review and they've submitted an application to Natural Heritage for Endangered Species and they received a Conditional No-Take letter back from them. They will build a bridge over the stream and floodway with some of the wetlands backfilled. There is an emergency pull off with the addition of retaining walls near the steep grade. They have received DPW comments but haven't made plan revisions. Mr. Doherty read the comments by DPW and some residents: Brian Dryzka who asked some questions about the plans and Constance Kellogg who expressed her opinion on the property remaining untouched. Mr. Phelps asked what the driveway material would be and suggested bituminous concrete in the written decision. Mr. Phelps asked what type of trees would be cleared and Mr. Nelson said white birch and white pine and they had to be cleared although the residents wished to leave as much wildlife undisturbed as possible. Mr. Spina asked to see what the bridge abutments look like and if they were in the flood zone. Mr. Nelson said they are awaiting the Conservation Commission meeting next week to proceed. Mr. Doherty decided to continue the public hearing to await the Conservation Commissions decision and have a draft decision waiting to go over at next meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps and **SECONDED** by Mr. Sutton to continue the public hearing for 370 North Loomis Street Stormwater Management Permit to February 15, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Goddard read the Notice of Public Hearing and introduced Mr. Nelson again who was the representative from R. Levesque Associates, Inc. for the applicant, Kenneth Eggleston. Mr. Nelson shared the plans and explained that they want to install 3 docks for a total of 60 slips. He said that they don't have enough parking to meet required use so they are asking for a reduction in them; there should be 68 and they can provide 59. Mr. Doherty read the comments from DPW, Fire, Police and Lake Management Committee as well as a resident and Mr. Nelson addressed them. Mr. Phelps suggested they ask the Town to grant them an easement for parking spaces along Congamond Road and also had they considered some type of reservation system for the marina. He also said it was preferable for them to utilize privacy fencing since the property line is so close on the south and west side, to reduce headlight traffic shining on residents' homes. Mr. Phelps also said handicap spots should not be used for snow containment and Mrs. Thornton and Mr. Spina agreed with him. Donna Cabana of 140 Congamond Rd. said parking and safety is an issue as there is not enough parking there. Jennifer Tibbets of 19 Beach Rd. has concerns about the marina because of traffic and it being so close to the Town Beach. Suzanne Slabota of 43 Congamond Rd. said she has parking concerns as well as paddle boarders maneuvering through that area near a potential marina. Derek Cabana of 5 Beach Rd. said he is opposed to a marina as it's too large for this site.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to continue the public hearing for 141 Congamond Road Special Permit Amendment & Site Plan Approval to February 15, 2022 at 7:45 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Andy Reardon discussed the changes he would like made to his original permit with the Board. Mr. Reardon said that at the last meeting the Board agreed that he could take out the minimum roof pitch requirements and Mr. Doherty said that was fine. Mr. Reardon went to item number 14 on the list he had given the Board, where he was required to install fencing prior to Conservation Commission approval and Mr. Doherty agreed they could talk about that. Other items were perimeter fencing, handicap spots, commercial and retail sales. Mr. Doherty asked the Board members to weigh in on outside storage and Mr. Phelps said it should be allowed with conditions that outside RV's, boats etc. should be registered and some provision added for outside spills as property is over the Well-head Protection District. Mr. Reardon said he is only interested in non-motorized storage. Mr. Goddard shared some pictures on a screen provided by Mr. Reardon. Mr. Doherty said Mr. Goddard and he would draft a decision to vote on for the next meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps and **SECONDED** by Mrs. Thornton to continue the public hearing for 1 Hudson Drive to February 15, 2022 at 8:00 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

8:00 p.m. Wireless Communications Services District Bylaw Revisions
Continued Public Hearing

Mr. Goddard reported that he spoke with Consultant David Maxson of Isotrope, LLC. Mr. Maxson has provided a revised, signed contract that will be sent to the Select Board for review.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to continue the public hearing for Wireless Communications Services District to March 1, 2022 at 7:10 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously

Discussion: STGRSD Student Submittal: Bicycle Accommodations on Site Plans and at Existing Facilities

Maxwell Austin, a student at STGRSD, is approaching the Planning Board to develop support for the implementation of bicycle parking accommodations as part of site plan requirements. Mr. Austin presented the Board with a series of slides and references to nearby communities that have adopted requirements for bicycle parking. Mr. Phelps recommended he check with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for advice and Mr. Doherty recommended he speak with the Master Plan Advisory Committee and attend one of their meetings. He also advised Maxwell to speak to local businesses to see if they would consider adding accommodations for bicycles.

Sign Permit Review: 535 College Highway, Unit “C” (Business Restricted Zone)

Mr. Goddard shared a screen depicting the proposed signage at the subject property and explained the parameters of the sign compliance; he stated that this sign meets all criteria.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps for a positive recommendation for approval of the sign at 535 College Highway, Unit C and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger.

The motion passed unanimously

Discussion: 0, 772-774 College Highway
Contemplated Off-Street Parking Calculation Revision

Ryan Nelson of R. Levesque Associates, Inc. explained this proposal as a modification to the originally permitted project, having been before the Board approximately a year prior. The applicant plans to reconfigure the residential component of this mixed-use development to accommodate a third unit within the existing permitted footprints. This third unit will require an additional two (2) parking spaces, one of which exists and the other which would need to be accommodated through a minor plan modification. Mr. Nelson noted that the request is an administrative site plan change. Mr. Doherty would like to check with Town Counsel to review the legality of the requested change and will get back to Mr. Nelson.

Routine Business

- Informal Discussion: Draft “Major Development Review” Bylaw. A decision was made by the Planning Board and Ms. Gale to schedule a work session dedicated to this topic for February 10, 2022.
- Informal Discussion: Access to Gregoire Property (Map 142, Parcel 16-Off Lincoln Road). Mr. Goddard said that Mr. Gregoire and his attorney are proceeding with the necessary research and fact finding in order to proceed with this discussion. Mr. Doherty decided to carry this informal discussion over to the next meeting.
- Master Plan Advisory Committee update: Mr. Phelps said they are meeting February 3, 2022 - earlier than intended because they needed to move the scope of services forward with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Mr. Spina said the Committee performed an analysis of the PVPC proposal and next year’s projected need for funding.
- Minutes Approval of Nov. 18 & Dec 16 of the Master Plan Advisory Committee.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Sutton to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 18, 2021.

The motion passed by majority vote.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Sutton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to approve the Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2021.

The motion passed by majority vote.

- Short-Term Rental Subcommittee update. Mr. Utzinger said they met to introduce themselves on January 25, 2022 and that one of the resident volunteers dropped out. Ms. Gale has volunteered to be on the committee; Mr. Doherty thanked Ms. Gale, noting her involvement in several other matters, and asked Mr. Goddard to run an ad to re-advertise the vacancy.

- Minutes Approval: October 19 & November 9

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Sutton to approve the Meeting Minutes of October 19, 2021.

The motion passed by majority vote.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Phelps and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to approve the Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2021.

The motion passed by majority vote.

Being no further business to be brought before the board, a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Sutton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to close the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Next Scheduled Regular (non-Work Session) Meeting is February 15th, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Meghan Lightcap
Secretary Planning Board

Michael Doherty, Chair

Marcus Phelps, Vice Chair

Richard Utzinger

David Sutton

David Spina

Jessica Thornton, Associate