

## Planning Board Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2021

### **Board Members:**

**Present:** Casey Campetti (Chair), Chuck Walkovich and Joyce Morrow

**Not Present:** Albert Patenaude

**Staff:** Jennifer Gingras (Town Planner) and Cheryl Lutzka (Planning Assistant)

**Attendees:** Gerald Couper (Pepperell Community Media), Mark Matthews (Select Board), Margaret Scarsdale (Select Board), Jack Visniewski, and Sherrill Rosoff.

### **2. Call to Order**

7:02P.M. The remote public meeting (recorded for future broadcast by Pepperell Community Media) was called to order by Mx. Campetti.

### **3. Acceptance of Minutes**

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to accept the following minutes, as written:

- August 2, 2021
- August 30, 2021
- September 7, 2021
- September 15, 2021 (with minor correction to a typo)

So moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Walkovich. All in favor.

### **4. Vouchers**

- WB Mason Invoice No. 2232044863 (09/09/21): Miscellaneous Planning Department Office Supplies in the amount of \$28.84. Mx Campetti asked for a motion to approve the Invoice, so moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Walkovich. All in Favor.

**5. Plan Endorsement – ANR – 10 and 14 Cranberry Street (Harbor Classic Homes, LLC; Ronald Koivu)**

Jack Visniewski addressed the Board and stated that he was representing the Applicant. He gave an overview of the proposed ANR Subdivision for 10 and 14 Chestnut Street, stating that Mr. Koivu, Harbor Classic Homes, had recently purchased the property. Lot 3A has an existing house, garage and sheds (sheds to be removed). Lot 3B is being created, it is right on the road and is a vacant lot except for an existing octagonal structure that was used in the past as a storage building. It is a unique building and Mr. Koivu would like to keep it on the lot when a new house is built. The property is partially in the WRPOD. Lot 2A (rear lot) will not be developed at this time, as access to it is rather difficult, so it will be left as is for now.

Mx. Campetti asked Ms. Gingras if she had any concerns. Ms. Gingras said that she reviewed the proposal with Mr. Visniewski a couple of times, and she did not see any issues and it meets all of the requirements.

Mx. Campetti asked if Mr. Walkovich or Ms. Morrow had any questions. Mr. Walkovich asked if the plan had been reviewed by the Conservation Administrator/Commission. Mr. Visniewski said that he had gone before the Conservation Commission with a plan showing the wetlands. He said the Conservation Commission issued an approval of the wetlands in the middle of the property. Ms. Gingras added that this would go through further Conservation review once a project is proposed. Ms. Morrow said that she did not have any questions.

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to endorse the ANR Plan for 10 and 14 Cranberry Street (Harbor Classic Homes; Ronald Koivu), so moved by Mr. Walkovich, seconded by Ms. Morrow. All in favor.

**6. Action Items (None)**

**7. Reports/Correspondence/Discussion (matters that may arise that the Chair didn't reasonably anticipate):**

**Master Plan Implementation Team (MPIT) Update:**

Mr. Walkovich said that MPIT received requests for funds from the Agricultural Commission and the Historical Commission. This has been presented to the Planning Board for their review and approval. Mx. Campetti spoke, and discussion ensued, regarding the approval and recommendation process of the funds set aside for Master Plan activities. Mr. Walkovich discussed the Agricultural Commission's request. He said that he is wearing "two hats" one for the MPIT and one for the Planning Board, so these requests may need to be vetted at a different level. Mr. Walkovich said that the Planning Board owes it to the citizens to do a very good job at vetting these proposals. Discussion ensued between Mr. Walkovich and Mx. Campetti. Mx. Campetti suggested the Board could invite the Agricultural and Historical Commissions to the Planning Board's next meeting to discuss questions the Board may have in more detail.

Ms. Gingras said that if the request is under \$1,000.00, it would go through her for administrative approval. She suggested it might be best to keep the process with her, as Town Staff, so that she could vet the requests to ensure that the appropriate documentation to back up them up has been provided; from there they could go onto a Planning Board Agenda and one of the members from the entity making the request for the funding should be at that meeting to present the proposal. She agreed with Mr. Walkovich that MPIT should not be in the actual recommendation aspect, and that should be handled by Town Staff. Mx. Campetti agreed. Discussion ensued regarding the requests coming through the Planning Office first. Ms. Morrow said that she concurred with both Mr. Walkovich and Ms. Gingras, and she thinks that there should be a main coordinator of the requests and amount of money.

Discussion ensued regarding keeping lines of communication open, setting a process up correctly from the beginning, and also requesting that entities looking into whether, or not, there is grant money available elsewhere; assistance could be provided to those folks going after grants.

Mr. Walkovich said that the MPIT has been discussing changing the request process in the future. Discussion ensued.

Mx. Campetti asked if there are any other MPIT updates. Mr. Walkovich said that they are gathering information to get ready for a presentation for Fall Town Meeting.

#### **NMCOG Update/DLTA Funding Request:**

Mr. Walkovich said that Beverly Woods, Executive Director of NMCOG, is retiring and there is a search out for her position. Jay Donovan, Assistant Director of NMCOG, is also retiring. These retirements will leave a significant void in NMCOG. He was not sure on their specific retirement dates. Discussion ensued regarding a transition process. Ms. Gingras said that she recently spoke with Ms. Woods. Discussion ensued about having more meetings with NMCOG before Ms. Woods retires.

#### **Grant Program Updates:**

Ms. Gingras said that they are still waiting to hear on the DLTA and the One Stop for Community Growth. She is putting together a submission for Complete Streets for the May 1, 2022, deadline, and this will probably have something to do with the rotary. Something was sent around about the Safer Streets for Schools Program that is coming up and she will be talking with the School Department to see how they can tie in Complete Streets to what they are proposing. There is also a Shared Streets and Spaces Program coming up through Mass DOT, which would be a great opportunity to receive some funding to renovate and implement some of the designs VHB had come up with for Railroad Square. The grant promotes economic development, which would typically tie

into a downtown area where there is a lot of pedestrian movement, traffic, and bikes. The first thing we really need is a certified survey of the Railroad Square area, this is something we don't have, and she is working on trying to figure out how we can obtain some funds for that, because we would be unable to do any of the projects proposed for that area until that certified survey is done. Discussion ensued regarding the need for the certified survey of the Railroad Square Area, due to encroachments, gas lines, as well as other issues/concerns.

### **Discussion of Draft Adaptive Reuse Overlay District Bylaw:**

Ms. Gingras thanked everyone that she has met with regarding a Draft Adaptive Reuse Overlay District, as well as everyone who has done work on it in the past.

Ms. Gingras shared her screen and provided a draft PowerPoint presentation to the Board on the following:

- What an Adaptive Reuse Overlay District (AROD) looks like
- The meaning of adaptive reuse
- Why adaptive reuse is important
- Some examples of adaptive reuse around the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Criteria for adaptive reuse
- Area of Pepperell that being proposed for adaptive reuse follows the Historic District (River Road, Main Street, Park Street, Heald Street, and somewhat down Townsend Street)
- Structures that would meet the requirements for adaptive reuse (religious buildings, municipal buildings and historic buildings built prior to 1975).

Discussions ensued on various points of the proposed bylaw and presentation, including the following:

- Why proposal does not extend down to Railroad Square
- Being deliberate with the footprint of the AROD
- Proposed uses are very specific
- Flexibility on reuse of buildings, such as the Peter Fitzpatrick building
- Residents that own property in the proposed area would get extra flexibility; however the uses would be limited in scope and there would be provisions that would be specifically designed to protect their quality of life, how they enjoy their property and not lose that neighborhood aspect
- Concern with parking requirements for side and rear of properties due to some unusually large setbacks and wet areas for some of the properties on Main Street
- Historical Commission would have a role to play in this
- Restrictions on how much alteration could be done to a façade to retain historic character

- Retaining ambience of properties along Main Street
- Keeping the AROD to a specific area
- Are there any uses that should/should not be allowed; or allowed by right without a Special Permit
- Could be broadened to include the Commercial District
- Will not apply to every single property in the AROD
- There will be control in the Special Permit process to control the amount of change
- In the future, when this goes in front of the public for comments and discussion, it will be made clear that just because a parcel is in the AROD, it does not mean that you have to use it for something that is allowed; you can absolutely still use it as just a single-family home
- Input will be requested from other Boards and Commissions regarding this
- Proposal targeted to go before the Town next Spring

**Discussion on ARPA Funding:**

Ms. Morrow spoke regarding a request to use some of the ARPA funding Pepperell will be receiving (\$3.6M) to create more visible and better pedestrian crosswalks (repainting, plastic crossing indicators, etc.) along Main Street and down through the Railroad Square area to indicate that pedestrians have the right of way. Ms. Gingras said they are waiting to confirm whether, or not, ARPA funding can be used for infrastructure projects. Discussion ensued.

Mx. Campetti said that she would like request that the Board extend an official thank you and send off to former Planning Board Member, Joe Lonergan, whose resignation became effective the end of last week; as well as the extension of a sincere thank you to former Planning Advisor/Consultant, Lisa Davis, for all that she did for Pepperell in the time she spent with us.

**6. Future Meetings:**

- October 18, 2021
- November 1, 2021
- November 15, 2021

**Adjournment:**

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42p.m., so moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Walkovich. All in favor

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Lutzca, Planning Assistant