



## Planning Board

### Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2022

#### Board Members:

**Present:** Casey Campetti, Chuck Walkovich, Joyce Morrow, David Ganong, Al Patenaude

**Staff:** Jenny Gingras (Town Planner), Cheryl Lutcza

#### 1. Call To Order:

**7:00P.M.** The remote public meeting (recorded for future broadcast by Pepperell Community Media) was called to order by Mx. Campetti.

#### 2. Acceptance of Minutes:

- a. April 4, 2022: Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Ms. Morrow motioned to accept the meeting minutes of April 4, 2022, as written, seconded by Mr. Ganong. All in favor. Mr. Patenaude abstained as he did not have a chance to review.

#### NMCOG Updates (taken out of order):

Ms. Gingras spoke briefly on the NMCOG updates and said that they had met with DHCD regarding 40R Zoning Analysis. She said that the meeting went well and they discussed potential opportunities for Railroad Square and some of the surrounding areas, and that the group is still working on this. Ms. Gingras said when a final decision is made, they will need to schedule a pre-eligibility hearing with the Planning Board, and then it would need to go back to DHCD before an article can be put before Town Meeting.

**3. 7:05 P.M. Public Hearing: 11 Sartelle Street (John J. Hills) – Special Permit – Two Family:**

Mx. Campetti opened the public hearing.

Ms. Morrow read the Notice of Public Hearing/Legal Notice into the record.

Mx. Campetti provided a brief overview of the requested relief and the hearing process to those in attendance.

Mx. Campetti invited the Applicant's representative, Seth Donohoe (Dillis & Roy Civil Design Group) to address the Board. Mr. Donohoe stated that the Applicant, John Hills, was also present. Mr. Donohoe provided an overview of the proposed application for a two-family dwelling. He explained that the Applicant had previously received permits from both the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Conservation Commission. The building is a fairly modest-sized building and consistent with the neighborhood, there are four other two-family dwellings in close proximity to this size. The property is to be serviced by both town water and town sewer.

Applicant, John Hills, addressed the Board and said they made the building smaller and there is a two-family directly across the street.

Mr. Donohoe said he would be happy to take any questions from the Board.

Mx. Campetti said that the Board received official review comments from some Town Boards and Departments, as well as from an abutter.

Ms. Morrow read the following review and abutter comments into the record:

- Ken Kalinowski (DPW/Town Engineer)
- Paul Brinkman DPW Business Manager)
- Paula Terrasi (Conservation Agent)
- Robert and Marcia Estes (Abutters)

Ms. Gingras read the portion of her Staff Report, relative to the proposed application, into the record.

Mx. Campetti invited the Board Members to ask questions.

Mr. Patenaude asked if the plan of the proposed application could be put up via screen share.

Mr. Walkovich asked if the Conservation Agent's (Paula Terrasi) review memo indicated any potential problems with the wetlands, given the size of the footprint being contemplated. Mx. Campetti read Ms. Terrasi's response memo and said that Ms. Terrasi did not express any lingering concerns. Mr. Walkovich asked if the Board could identify trees on the site that should not be cut down. Mr. Donohoe spoke in response to this. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Morrow said that with any new development we are looking at lighting and she inquired at to what type of lighting the Applicant is proposing for this new building. Mr. Donohoe responded and said that the proposed lighting is the minimum required by the Building Code. He said that the Applicant uses downward lighting with no spotlights and that they would have no problem adhering to what the Planning Board is looking for in regard to lighting.

Mr. Patenaude spoke and referred to four other homes in the area that were two-family and asked what the lot areas were on these homes. Mr. Donohoe responded and said that direct abutting lot to the East is a vacant field area of roughly 2 acres, however he does not have the numbers for the other abutting lots.

Mr. Patenaude was curious what the overall increase to impervious areas would be, as this area is a little wet. Mr. Donohoe responded and said that the existing conditions on the site are various and the current driveway and large gravel areas have zero stormwater controls. He said that they will be adding stormwater controls to the site and that the total area of impervious area for the two new driveways that will be created is around 1500 square feet and that the existing gravel areas far exceed that.

Mx. Campetti inquired as to what the Applicant was proposing for landscaping elements. Mr. Donohoe said that they do not have that information at this time, however they are open to discussing landscaping with the Board. Mx. Campetti asked if the Applicant would be amenable to using native species. Mr. Donohoe said that was incorporated in their agreement with the Conservation Commission. Mx. Campetti said she would suggest that for plantings on the site in general. Mr. Donohoe said that the Applicant is fine with that.

Mx. Campetti asked about HOA's and if they were planning on separate utilities. Mr. Hills said that the exterior maintenance would not have an HOA, it would just be a two-family.

Mx. Campetti asked if the driveway of the property across the street lines up with either of the proposed driveways. Mr. Donohoe said that Sartelle Street has a very odd alignment. He said that the driveway at 10 Sartelle Street is generally slightly to the West of their property.

Mx. Campetti asked about snow storage. Mr. Donohoe said it would be similar to any other residential property in Town, and they have an area to store the snow (a lawn area), and there is sufficient area on the site for this.

Mx. Campetti asked if there were any public comments.

Marcia Estes, 15 Sartelle Street, addressed the Board and said that she wanted to thank Mr. Donohoe for the answer he gave regarding the cutting of the trees, however he didn't address the actual cutting of the trees. Our letter states that the area the house is going to be built on is in all of the dry land on the lot and she thinks that the lot will need to be clear cut. She added that the lot across the street, is a larger lot, but it is higher and drier, and is not a wetland. The proposed house is a smaller lot and is also in a wetland. She said she has concerns with the water, which is already an issue. They have a very real concern with the size of the building being proposed for that area.

Mx. Campetti asked if there were any other public comments. None.

Mx. Campetti asked the Applicant to respond to any of the comments raised so far.

Mr. Donohoe responded and said that the comments were generally related to wetlands concerns. We have already completed the process with the Conservation Commission and they have already issued that permit. There are no stormwaters on the site right now, and everything flows down the back to the wetlands. We will be improving on those existing conditions. He said that he appreciates the abutters are concerned with that, however he feels that the proposal is an improvement over what is existing now.

Mr. Ganong provided a screen share of the GIS Map of the subject property and area. He added that he feels that what is being proposed is an improvement over what currently exists. He said that he would like to see the Applicant retain some of the trees along the street, if possible, and not clear cut the lot.

Mx. Campetti asked what the plan is for clearing the trees along the street. Mr. Donohoe said Sartelle Street has an odd alignment and any trees within the 30-foot window would be selected. They would not be clear cutting the entire site.

Mx. Campetti asked if any of the portion of the stone wall of the abutting property is on the subject property. Mr. Donohoe said that he did not believe that it was.

Mr. Patenaude asked about the size of the abutting properties and it appears that most other properties fall into the two--acre size. Mr. Patenaude commented on the proposed onsite drainage and the paving of the driveways, and that the impervious area is greater than the proposed house

Mx. Campetti asked if the Board was ready to take action this evening, or keep the hearing open and continue to the Board's next meeting. Mr. Walkovich said that he was satisfied with the information that has been presented. Ms. Morrow agreed with Mr. Walkovich, as well as the comments from the DPW. Mr. Ganong and Mr. Patenaude also agreed.

Mx. Campetti asked if there were any waivers requested. Ms. Gingras said there were not.

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to closet the public hearing on 11 Sartelle Street. So moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Ganong. All in favor. None opposed.

Mx. Campetti announced that the Board would move into discussion.

Mr. Patenaude said that it would be appropriate to have a stone infiltration swale along the driveway.

Ms. Morrow said that she wanted to make sure that the DPW has passed muster over any of the plans to ensure that we don't run into any issues with water so that the Applicant, future owners of the property and abutters don't have any issues.

Mx. Campetti said there wouldn't be any harm in having a consistent Condition that any trees or shrubs to be planted are native species recommended in the Pepperell Plant Guide. She would like to see that plantings don't get established during water ban times, so that the plants are going in at an appropriate time of year, and a grass lawn isn't being established during a dry, hot time of year. She said that there isn't a lot of exterior lighting being proposed, however it should be downward facing and fully shielded.

Ms. Morrow asked if they would be putting in an access driveway for use during the construction process. Mr. Patenaude said our regulations require that, and that would be under the purview of the Highway Department.

Mx. Campetti went over some of the Conditions the Board should/could impose. Discussion ensued.

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to grant the Special Permit with conditions as outlined. So moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Ganong.

Roll Call Vote Take as follows:

Ms. Morrow: Aye  
Mr. Ganong: Aye  
Mr. Walkovich: Aye  
Mr. Patenaude: Aye  
Mx. Campetti: Aye

**4. 7:45 P.M. Public Hearing Continuation on Zoning Article:**

Mx. Campetti opened the public continuation hearing at 8:06p.m., and explained that it is to see if the Planning Board will recommend the proposed zoning article that will be going to Spring Town Meeting: To see if the Town of Pepperell will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw by adding in its entirety Section 8900, Adaptive Reuse of Significant Structures.

Mx. Campetti asked Ms. Gingras for an update on some of the materials obtained since the last public hearing.

Ms. Gingras provided an overview of the comments and concerns from the last public hearing. She said that she worked with Town Counsel and some revisions were made to the draft. Ms. Gingras provided a screen share of the draft, providing an overview of the revisions. Mx. Gingras said she would be happy to answer any questions on the revisions.

Mx. Campetti asked if the Board Members had any questions or comments.

Ms. Morrow said she did not have any comments.

Mr. Patenaude said his biggest concern is regarding the potential future church scenarios. Mx. Campetti agreed with Mr. Patenaude. She said that the revisions get at some of the hypotheticals, and any place we can tighten things up is a positive thing.

Ms. Morrow said that even though we have identified these buildings for adaptive reuse, a proposal would still have to go before the Planning Board for a Special Permit. She added that if a proposal is made that is not done within the scheme of the environment we are trying to create, we still have measures of control in place.

Mx. Campetti asked if there were any public comments.

Diane Temple, 86 Main Street, asked why we are working so hard to do this at this time, to make these proposals for changes. Many members of the community want to see a solution for the use of the "Fitz", however that is one building that the Town wants to make sure will be viable. She said she is not sure there is a great need for more commercial space in our community, which views itself as rural. She asked is there really a great need and will there be success for more commercial structures and are they needed at this time and is there any reason to rush into this at this time. She said that she would recommend that we do these things thoughtfully. Really consider what the Master Plan Committee did to guide our community.

Mx. Campetti asked if the Board Members had any comments.

Ms. Morrow said that she appreciated Ms. Temple's comments. Ms. Morrow said that she had been on the Master Plan Committee and that Master Plans have been revised in this Town over and over again and basically sat on the shelf and nothing happened. We recently have a group of people who worked diligently to provide the Town residents areas they asked for, during the Master Plan, to be able to walk to shops, etc., with a home-town feeling. Zoning in New England is so archaic the Adaptive Reuse and Mixed Use Overlay are vehicles that towns can use to allow these things. It's geared to very few buildings in this Town.

Mr. Ganong said that he echoed what Ms. Morrow said. He said he looked at Adaptive Reuse as "future proofing". He spoke on existing vacant commercial properties, and if they were more attractive, someone might use them. Adaptive Reuse encourages future use and preservation of some structures, as is, and encourages people to not come in and knock down a building and construct something else there, keeping the small town rural character and encouraging that.

Mx. Campetti asked if Ms. Gingras would like to respond to any of the comments.

Ms. Gingras said that the comments from Ms. Morrow and Mr. Ganong were very well said and this article is about preservation of the existing buildings. The exterior of the building can't be changed. She discussed a church that is currently being underutilized. Anything that is not currently allowed in the underlying zoning, is still not allowed unless it is on the list in this Article. So that protects it also. It still has to go through the permitting process with various Town Boards/Departments/Commissions such as Building, Conservation, Planning, as well as the Historical Commission for a recommendation. She encouraged everyone to look at this article a preserving the future of Pepperell and a way of investing in the community

Mx. Campetti said that she appreciated Ms. Temple's comments and questions. The genesis of looking into this question was sparked by questions of how do we address allowing what will happen at Peter Fitz. We were able to see there is actually an opportunity to really expand the good of future opportunities that may come up. She said she was very pleased with how this has come together. She is most looking forward to some of the potential uses, by Special Permit, that will be permitted if this article is adopted by the Town, such as re-developing properties into multi-family housing, that's one of the biggest opportunities we have. This would be to encourage people to reuse some structures, such as historic structures. I believe there has been a lot of thoughtfulness arounds these issues and this has been thoughtfully put together, with some safeguards put in place.

Mx. Campetti asked if there were any remaining concerns over language in the draft article by the Board Members.

Ms. Morrow said that the majority of our thinking towards the adaptive reuse was geared towards the Peter Fitz and the "clock is ticking" for the Peter Fitz. Right now the majority of the costs are being absorbed by the Town. This Adaptive Reuse will help keep the Peter Fitz as a collaborative, which they may not be able to maintain without this.

Mx. Campetti asked if the Board was ready to close the public hearing. Ms. Morrow made a motion to close the public hearing on the Adaptive Reuse Article, as presented and edited today, seconded by Mr. Ganong. All in favor. None opposed.

Mx. Campetti asked if there was any further Board discussion. None.

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to recommend adoption of the Adaptive Reuse Zoning article. So moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Ganong.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Ganong: Aye  
Mr. Walkovich: Aye  
Mr. Patenaude: Nay  
Ms. Morrow: Aye  
Mx. Campetti: Aye

Four in favor and one opposed. Mx. Campetti said that this will comprise our recommendation for Town Meeting.

**5. Action Items:**

- a. Adoption of Stormwater Regulations under Section 178-6 of the Code of Pepperell.

Mx. Campetti said the Board has looked at iterations of these regulations several times and had presentations by consultants. She asked if the Board has any concerns regarding the language in the document.

Mr. Patenaude said that it is pretty solid and there is not a lot we can adjust or amend. It is following the State outline. I'm good with it.

Ms. Morrow, Mr. Walkovich, Mr. Ganong and Mx. Campetti agreed with Mr. Patenaude.

Mx. Campetti asked if there was a motion to adopt these Stormwater Regulations as written. So moved by Mr. Ganong, seconded by Ms. Morrow. All in favor. None opposed. None abstained.

**6. Reports/Correspondence/Discussion**

*(Matters may arise that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate)*

- a. **Municipal Energy Aggregation Presentation by Ken Hartlage:**

Ken Hartlage and Renee D'Argento of the Climate Change Committee were present. Mr. Hartlage addressed the Board and asked Ms. Gingras if she could share the presentation on Pepperell Municipal Energy Aggregation via screen share. Mr. Hartlage provided an overview of the Pepperell Municipal Energy Aggregation presentation.

Mx. Campetti asked if the Board Members had questions.

Mr. Patenaude said he loved the concept. He asked if this could help the Town in the future to bring on our own solar farm areas (i.e, the transfer station area). Mr. Hartlage said this is currently a separate program, however there is exploration to try to connect it. There are other grant programs out there that they are looking into for solar energy options.

Mr. Patenaude asked if the other Town's see any savings for their municipal buildings through this program. Mr. Hartlage said that some of the communities they have spoken too said that depending on the program they are offering, they have seen savings over the lifetime of the program. This is the best way to describe it. Rates do change however and there are no guarantees on savings.

Mx. Campetti said she thought this was a fantastic concept.

Mr. Hartlage said that Mr. Walkovich was also a Climate Change Committee member.

Following item was taken out of order:

**c. Master Plan Implementation Team Update:**

Mr. Walkovich said that the Master Plan Implementation Team (MPIT) had send out the draft of the presentation they are seeking the Planning Board's approval of to get ready for Town Meeting. He said they also sent out a couple of letters and recommendations that they are looking for the Planning Board to approve. They are making five or six changes.

Mark Matthews addressed the Board and said there were three recommendations they would like to make, so they can take them off the Master Plan:

1. Master Plan 4.6 (Establish a Bike Share Program) – MPIT recommends that 4.6 is not viable.
2. OSRP (3 items) - Recommendation by MPIT is they cannot recommend pursuing these three items and recommend they be closed.
3. Master Plan 6.3 - MPIT recommends moving this away from the Select Board and reassigning it to the Recreation and Conservation Commissions.

Mx. Campetti asked if this would this mean that these items would be marked as completed or closed out. Discussion ensued. She asked if items could be reconsidered at a later date if marked completed. Mr. Matthews said that they could be marked as completed, with a footnote on the work that had been done. Ms. Morrow said she was on EDAC when these items were addressed, perhaps at a later date it might be viable to think about and is that that something we could notate. Mr. Matthews said he did not see why that couldn't be done. Discussion ensued.

Discussions ensued regarding the three recommendations.

Mr. Patenaude announced that he needed to leave the meeting at 9:30p.m.

Further discussion ensued on the three recommendations:

- Mx. Campetti said that Number 1 could be called complete, but possibly revisited in the future.
- Mx. Campetti said that Number 2 needs no action by the Planning Board.
- Mx. Campetti said that for Number 3 the Planning Board could vote to change the responsible party from the Select Board to responsible parties being the Recreation and Conservation Commissions as appropriate.

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to change the responsible party (Select Board) for Master Plan Implementation 6.3 to responsible parties (Recreation and Conservation Commissions) as appropriate. So moved by Ms. Morrow, seconded by Mr. Walkovich. All in favor. None opposed.

- b. NMCOG Update/DLTA Funding Request (this item was addressed earlier in the meeting by Ms. Gingras).
- d. Inclusionary Zoning Article Review - No discussion
- e. Staff Updates – No discussion

**7. Future Meetings:**

- a. May 2, 2022
- b. May 16, 2022

**Adjournment:**

Mx. Campetti asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. So moved by Mr. Walkovich, seconded by Ms. Morrow. All in favor. None opposed. Meeting adjourned at 9:41p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Cheryl Lutcza,  
Assistant to Planning Board