

Montague Planning Board

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July 25, 2017 7:00 PM

Town Hall – Second Floor Meeting Room
One Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Sicard – Chair, Fred Bowman, George Cooke and Bruce Young

Members Absent: Bob Obear

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey, AICP- Town Planner,

Ron Sicard opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

Approval of Minutes: March 28, 2017, April 25, 2017, May 23, 2017 and June 27, 2017

- *Bruce Young made a motion to accept the March 28, 2017 minutes. Seconded by George Cooke, motion approved unanimously.*
- *Bruce Young made a motion to accept the April 25, 2017 minutes. Seconded by George Cooke, motion approved unanimously.*
- *Bruce Young made a motion to accept the May 23,, 2017 minutes. Seconded by Fred Bowman, motion approved unanimously.*

June 27 and May 2, 2017 minutes are tabled until next month.

Annual Re- Organization of the Planning Board:

George Cooke made a motion to appoint Ron Sicard as Chair and Fred Bowan as Vice Chair and Bruce Young as Planning Board Rep. Seconded by Bruce Young. Motion approved.

PUBLIC HEARING Definitive Subdivision – DS#2017-01 Sandy Lane- (CONTINUATION)

Applicant: Town of Montague, Board of Selectmen

Project includes subdividing a 5 acre and 1.2 acre parcel from approximately 164 acres of land owned by the Town of Montague. The design proposes roadway improvements to 800 feet of Sandy Lane beginning at Turnpike Road. The design team was not ready to present at the last Planning Board meeting so the meeting was continued to this evening.

Guests: Dan Delany – Fuss & O’Neil and Michael Perrault from FRTA, Tom Bergeron – Montague DPW

George Cooke stated that he was not at the May 23, 2017 hearing but came into the Planning Board office and listened to the official audio recording in accordance with the Mullin Rule, so he will be able to vote this evening. His signed statement to that effect has been placed in the file.

Dan Delany from Fuss & O’Neil presented the project materials regarding the road layouts & sidewalks in and around Judd Wire. These materials now include the suggested changes made by Tom Bergeron, Highway Superintendent which included a change to the property line.

The road layout changes included:

1) moving the sidewalk closer to the road and 2) Moving the road out (4') from Judd Wire, thus providing a wider shoulder allowing for better truck access into the site. The sidewalk will be installed along the curb providing adequate ramps and crosswalks for access.

The new design now shows the parcel to be squared off to allow better access for DPW activities to the area while maintaining the 5 acres that FRTA will need for their operations.

It was noted that Judd Wire saw the original plans and did not have any issues with them as previously presented and these changes are an improvement on those plans. The plans have been reviewed by all Department heads including the Board of Health, Water Department and Fire Department with no concerns brought to the Planning Board.

Motion by Bruce Young closes the hearing on Definitive Subdivision DS #2017-01 Seconded by Fred Bowman. **Motion approved.**

Discussion:

Bruce Young had a question about the street trees and why it is not feasible to put them on the narrow green space on the Judd side. Dan Delany responded: that the side of the street has existing pavement and there is only a sliver (3-4 feet) of land which is not suitable for trees. There have been new trees and other bushes and vegetation planted in and around the new parking lot area. Dan also added to meet the regulations there would have to be plantings on both sides of the street which is not possible. Walter added that to add trees to the Judd Wire side would be obstructive and not provide adequate room for maneuvering equipment.

Motion by Fred Bowman to approve Definitive Subdivision DS #2017-01 for Sandy Lane plan dated July 12, 2017 subject to approved waivers to sections of 4.12 and 4.5 of the subdivision regulations. Seconded by Bruce Young. Young – Aye, Cooke – Aye, Bowman – Aye, and Sicard – Aye. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Zoning Workshop – Use and Dimensional Table, Special permits, Zoning Map

Guests: Peggy Sloan and Alyssa Larose– FRCOG

Peggy Sloan from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments joined the Planning Board in presenting the final draft of the dimensional table, special permit and zoning map changes to the zoning by laws. This was presented and done in preparation for town meeting.

These changes were brought about after a more detailed look was done in reviewing the open space and flag lot guidelines earlier in the year. Some highlights of the discussion are included below:

- The Use & Dimensional Schedule Table – The use table is established for the purpose of zoning bylaws and divided by districts.
- Use Table –
 - The general information is that no structure shall be erected or used except as set forth in the use regulations schedule or in section 7 special regulations unless exempted by statute. The Applicability is when an activity might be classified under more than one of the following uses, the more specific classification shall govern; if equally specific, the more restrictive shall govern.
 - The addition of a regulations schedule with key symbols employed. This shows what is allowed in each district. Fred brought up why were golf courses taken out and that is due to the fact that it is now included in the open space plan. Walter noted the zoning designation PS ** and recommend consolidating public/semi public with recreation/education categories (zoning is virtual identical with cemeteries, schools and includes golf courses) and

- unrestricted (land along the river and first light land and Cabot woods) Walter believes it makes sense to combined the categories as there are no clear definition so placing them in the Public/Semi Public area designation seems appropriate..
- Educational uses some are exempt under Chapter 40A under zoning such as schools. Added in were other items found elsewhere in our bylaws such as: campgrounds and mobile homes which are prohibited in our bylaws.
- Dimensional requirements – A new addition of Maximum Lot Coverage was added. Communities were worried about storm water run off, impervious surfaces, so having this type of measure would be helpful for buildings, structures and paving areas. Permeable paving maybe should be included so that it would not be counted into the maximum lot coverage size. Bruce Young suggested a definition might be needed and documentation of how it is counted in these situations.
- In terms od dimensional items not a lot has changed accept for recommending some building height changes – Central Business and Industrial Business (CB & ID) Districts (28 feet to 36 feet) saw an increase in what is allowed. Bruce mentioned about doing a building height definition and to simplify what is stated now. This would help to clarify where the measurements are taken from and then relief in this section could now be granted by a Special Permit.
- Zoning Map –
 - Walter is in favor of a new Zoning Map to clarify zoning districts; currently the use of the Assessors information is what is used as a guideline. Peggy offered her assistance with this going forward. Walter has a GIS data layer system that can be used in conjunction with the Assessor’s Office to make changes for online viewing and use.
 - Bruce thinks including parcels will allow for a historical record while Walter noted that having it parceled based would not be recommended due to the fact it would become outdated faster with subdivisions and development.
 - The group will have more discussions on this issue and procedures to amend the zoning map which would then have to be followed with public hearings and a Town Meeting vote.
- The process and procedures for submitting special permits were discussed and to simplify them so as to be able to reference a specific portion of the zoning map and date for questions and concerns.
- Everything has been combined including OSRD, Flag Lots, Planned Unit Development and then a Special permit section all which can go to Town Meeting.
- Further discussions among the Planning Board, Building Inspector, and ZBA members before going to the Town Meeting for approval will be needed.

Planner’s Report:

Robert and Cathy Fistes to acquire a portion of right of way of former Turnpike Road

Guests: Robert & Cathy Fistes – residents of 186 Millers Falls Road, Montague, MA

Currently the Town owns Robert & Cathy Fistes front lawn located at 186 Millers Falls Road. They would like to acquire the town right-of-way of this land. They previously petitioned the Board of Selectmen on this matter who in turn deferred to the Planning Board for a discussion & decision. There are a couple of other neighbors along Millers Falls Road who have done this in the past. Walter advised that the proper process is to petition the Town to alter a public way. The next step is for the Fistes to produce a survey at their expense. The Board does not have a problem with the idea in concept. A water line easement will need to be retained.

Fred Bowman made a motion at 8:22 PM to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by George Cooke. Motion passed.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____