

# Montague Planning Board

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**January 28, 2020 6:30 PM**

Town Hall – **Second Floor** Meeting Room

One Avenue A

Turners Falls, MA 01376

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Matt Lord (associate), Fred Bowman (Vice- Chair), George Cooke, Elizabeth Irving, Ron Sicard (Chair)

**Members Absent:** Bob Obear

**Staff Present:** Walter Ramsey-Town Planner

### **Recorded**

Meeting was opened by Ron Sicard at 6:30PM

**6:30 Approval of Minutes:** *Motion by R.S. to approve the December 17, 2019 Minutes. Seconded by E.I. MOTION PASSES.*

**6:32 PUBLIC HEARING: SPECIAL PERMIT #2020-01** submitted by Nathaniel Cook pursuant to Montague Zoning Bylaw Sec. 7.4.2 to allow vehicular access to a planned single family home with frontage on Federal Street over a side lot line on Ripley Road. The property is identified as 16 Ripley Road, Montague MA, Assessors Map 49 Lot 16.

Present for the applicant: Nathaniel Cook

George Cooke recused himself because his employer conducted the survey that was submitted with the application.

W.R. notifies the Board know that the meeting was publicly advertised and abutters were contacted. Montague Center Fire Department gave Walter verbal confirmation that they no concerns with the proposal. W.R. described the site, and wetland cosntriants and “long driveways” requirements in the Zoning Bylaws. Nathaniel Cook notes that there will be no clearing of trees and there is room for a turn-around and passing. W.R. asks petitioner about electricity service, which is planned to come from Ripley Road and run underground- parrall to the driveway. W.R. observed that a Federal Street driveway would be steep, be closer to wetlands, would affect agricultural area, and possibly be a public traffic hazard on Route 63. The proposal will not affect and identified wetlands resource areas or their buffer zones.

R.S. asked planner how the “long” driveway requirement of bylaw section 7.4.5 apply. W.R: Applicant will need to demonstrate that those performance criteria will need to be met prior to issuance of a Cert of Occupancy. It can be required in the Special Permit Conditions. The proposed drive can easily accommodate the performance requirements.

N. Cook shared his plans to permission to build a 30' x 48"x 17' accessory building to the house. That building would be installed prior to the house. Mr. Cook was advised to contact the Inspector's Office.

No "down sides" to the proposal were observed by the Board

**Public Comments:** Mark Johnson of 484 Federal Street has "no problem" with the special permit. Mike Dickson 459 Federal Street has no issues and agrees that Federal Street traffic is too fast for a driveway.

*MOTION by R.S. to close the public hearing. E.I. seconds the motion. MOTION PASSES 6:46PM*

W.R. recommended two findings 1) the side lot driveway will not create any significant adverse effects to the neighborhood as identified in Zoning Bylaws section 9.2.3 and 2) the plan retains scenic views and productive agriculture land located off Federal Street which is part of the Connecticut River Scenic Byway.

*MOTION by R.S. makes a motion to approve issuance of a Special Permit to Nathaniel Cooke pursuant to Montague Zoning Bylaw Sec. 7.4.2 to allow side lot line vehicular access to a planned single family home at 16 Ripley Road with following conditions:*

- 1. The planned driveway shall meet the standards in Zoning Bylaw section 7.4.5 because the planned residence is set back more than 500 feet from the road.*
- 2. Standard condition for amendments to approved plans*

*Board votes to approve R.S. (yes) F.B. (yes) E.I.(yes), M.L. (yes) MOTION PASSES 6:49PM.*

**6:50** George Cooke rejoins the group.

#### **6:52PM PLANNER REPORT:**

- **Preview/ preparations for 2-1-20 Downtown Livability Plan** event at Great Falls Discovery Center. W.R. presents on overview of the PowerPoint including population, housing, employment and transportation data. General conversation around housing and zoning conversation. General conversation about development on Second Street.
- **Planning Department FY21 Budget proposal/ staffing plan.** Presentation of the new Assistant Planner position which combines the RiverCulture position and the Planning Clerk position. Responsibilities include town-wide placemaking. EDIC stipend position would be added to planner responsibilities so that he may adequately staff that quasi-governmental agency.
- **Topic not anticipated:** Fred Bowman wants to study the pros/cons of a tax free bus garage building vs. an industrial building at Sandy Lane. To be explored a future meeting when/if FRTA's proposal re-surfaces.

*MOTION by R.S. to adjourn. Seconded by F.B MOTION PASSES 7:4PM*

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_