

Montague Planning Board

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May 25, 2021 6:30 PM

Meeting held remotely in accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, § 20, relating to the 2020 novel Coronavirus outbreak emergency

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Sicard (chair), George Cooke, Elizabeth Irving, Fred Bowman, Bob Obear, Matt Lord

Staff: Walter Ramsey- Town Planner

Meeting was opened by Chairman Sicard at 6:31. No minutes were ready for approval.

6:32pm Consider amendments to approved site plan #SP 2020-05 issued to Flower Power Growers, Inc. for a marijuana cultivation and production facility at 180 Industrial Boulevard (Assessors Map 17 Lot 58). A revised site plan has been filed by Flower Power Growers, Inc. and will be reviewed in accordance with condition #11 of the approved Special Permit. The proposed amendments will not increase the size of the facility. Votes may be taken.

Present: Josh Goldman (FPG), John Stobierski (FPG), Tony Wonseski (SVE Associates), Theron Fisher (SVE Associates)

Josh Goldman presented the need for the change; the length of the greenhouses were too long for optimal cooling and were therefore shortened. The resulting decrease in square footage prompted a change to the site plan. The major difference is the centralization of the two developments. A two story head house is now in the middle of the complex, and is 10,000 square feet smaller than in the original scheme. Goldman believes the amended plan is a more efficient design. The scope of the approved work is modestly decreasing

Tony Wonseski (SVE) reports that drainage calculations are about the same in the amended plan, with 2-3 feet of basin reserve in the event of a 100 year event. The size and locations of the basins stays the same, but the impervious surface has decreased. The updated set does include revised storm water calculations. Tony concurs with Josh Goldman that the new site plan is far more efficient; only one loading dock and one sewer connection will be needed for example. The sight distance for the curb cut has been improved with 23 more parking spaces and additional greenspace. Dumpsters will be enclosed. Transformers and electrical will be on the east side. At the planners request, SVE provided a limit of clearing plan for the first phase of work, to ensure some natural vegetation will remain before phase II gets built. New layout meets setback requirements.

Ron Sicard: Asks about fire safety and access

T Wonseski: propane is set back to code with protective bollards. Tony points out that emergency access has actually improved; a fire crew can drive nearly around the entire building. There is also more working space in front of the building for an emergency crew.

Elizabeth Irving: asks about possible impacts of the second story lighting in the head house.

John Stobierski: reports that it is not a greenhouse, so no additional lighting impact is expected. To changes to odor control or management will be needed. The building is actually further from the nearby school and theater in the updated plans.

Matt Lord asks if only the length of the greenhouses is being changed. John Stobierski responds yes. Phase 2 will be 40 feet further away from other lots.

Planner reviews the findings of the original conditions with the Planning Board and they are the same. Condition 11 required that these changes be voted on by the Board.

Planner recommends that the proposed changes are consistent with the approved permit. Motion to accept the amended site plan dated May 14, 2021.

MOTION by Bob Obear to make a finding that the proposed changes to the plan set and stormwater management plan revised 5/14/21 are consistent with the scope, findings and conditions of SP#2020-05 issued to Flower Power Growers, Inc and to accept amended plans dated 5/14/21. Seconded by Elizabeth Irving. VOTE: F. Bowman (AYE), G. Cook (AYE), Matt Lord (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), R. Sicard (AYE), B. Obear (AYE) MOTION PASSES 6:58PM

7:00 Planner Report:

- **Canal District planning updates**

The State has a consolidated One-Stop for Growth program for grants. Planner has a meeting with State legislators Comerford and Blais to talk about the partial demolition of the Strathmore to allow for recreation and redevelopment. It's a 2.6 million dollar ask. Sen. McGovern will also visit the site soon. The Planner will make the case for this Federal help.

The gateway project on the canal is also coming together. The Planner is writing a grant for a master plan for the canal district that includes all six redevelopment sites. Unfortunately the bridge project will overlap the General Pierce Bridge project.

Railroad Salvage clean-up is at a mid-point with no surprises. They project should wrap up by September. There is starting to be interest in developing this site, with a new 6th Street bridge planned in the TIP (2026).

- **Potential 40R Smart Growth zoning**

40R is a State incentive program to encourage multi-family housing units. The town is paid up-front to adopt multi-family by right in their zoning by-laws. The town can set conditions like scale, density and design. The Town can also pre-permit the project. The Planner is looking for support from the Board to work with FRCOG for technical assistance to investigate suitable 40R housing for Montague. The process would involve an amendment to the by-laws which would go to Town Meeting. The Board shows support.

- **Downtown Rapid Recovery Plan updates**

Focus groups are scheduled. Specialists will be brought-in to make recommendations such as wayfinding and models for a central business management entity.

Other topics:

- The Planner is applying for a parking management study through One Stop. Experts will make recommendations, especially the winter parking ban. The problem will continue as housing becomes denser downtown. General conversation between Board members about the complications of mixed-use development including the 38 Avenue A project.
- Planner discusses the Planning Assistant Grant through The Office of Economic and Environmental Affairs for Phase 1 of Montague Comprehensive Plan update. If awarded, it will take a year to assemble a committee and complete community engagement and visioning sessions. The Montague Comprehensive Plan was last written in 1999.

MOTION** by E. Irving to ADJOURN. **SECONDED** by F. Bowman. **VOTE:** F. Bowman (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), B. Obear (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), M. Lord (AYE). **VOTE Passes. Meeting adjourned 7:22pm

Approved by: _____ Date: _____