

Montague Planning Board

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MEETING MINUTES

August 23, 2022, 6:30 PM

Held in person at Montague Town Hall and via ZOOM

Members: Ron Sicard, George Cooke, Bob Obear, Matt Lord

Absent: E. Irving

Staff: Walter Ramsey.

This meeting was recorded

6:30pm MOTION by R. Sicard to accept the minutes of July 26, 2022. Seconded by G. Cooke. VOTE Sicard (AYE), Cooke (AYE), Obear (AYE), MOTION PASSES 6:31PM.

TABLED- ANR 2022-04 Subdivision Approval Not Required Endorsement filed by James M. Leveille et al. affecting 7 Walnut Street (Assessors map 13 parcels 92 and 25). Filing was not considered because it was not complete at the time of the meeting. Tabled to next monthly meeting.

Special Permit 2020-05 Flower Power Growers, Inc. 180 Industrial Boulevard. Consider revised landscaping plan and amended construction phasing plan for a previously issued special permit (granted 11/24/2020) for a cannabis cultivation facility in the Industrial District.

Present: Ezra Hagerty and Michael Cohen (Flower Power Growers)

Ezra Hagerty presents two changes as detailed in the request dated 8/15/2022: 1.) landscape plan, 2.) drainage plan for the NE of the site. The Special Permit allows for minor amendments such as this to be considered and approved by the Board in open session.

Landscape Plan-

EH: Flower Power has been working with local landscaper Kevin Humphrey to design a native variety planting scheme along the Industrial Boulevard frontage. Hagerty notes that there is an underground electric easement for Eversource. Some movable boulders will be placed in that area which will also serve as the access point during the 1B of construction. Decorative boulders to be distributed throughout the planting area for additional security and buffering. Hoping for a Fall 2022 installation, Spring 2023 may be necessary.

Planner: The proposed screening is dense, but low. Maximum solar exposure to the greenhouses is the primary consideration. The plan mix is all native species. The Planner discussed the design challenges of a narrow site. No existing vegetation was able to be retained. Few trees that the planned asked to remain where left exposed and vulnerable to winds. Virtually all the trees along the frontage were removed with an understanding that the applicant would submit a revised landscaping plan for the frontage along Industrial Boulevard.

ML: thinks the plan is a good compromise considering the limitations of the site. Board concurred

Amended Construction phasing-

Phase 1A consisted of the head house and four greenhouse bays. Phase 1B will consist of six additional greenhouse bays. The applicant requests its permit be amended to reflect that the swale on the northeasterly corner of the lot does not need to be constructed until the second part of phase one (six additional greenhouses) is completed. The project engineer SVA associated has produced calculations that confirm that the phase 1A can be supported by the planned 1A drainage. It would remove trees and be unnecessary to build the drainage for phase 1A and 1B at this time.

GC: Will the landscaping plan get torn up once phase 1B is constructed for six greenhouses and additional swale? Response: there will be some disturbance at that time, but egress will be limited. The affected area will have to be restored in kind.

EH: The propane tanks, originally proposed for above ground have been buried for a cleaner look.

The Planner has been monitoring the erosion control, which appears to be in good order. Haggerty confirmed that there are no erosion issues on the site.

MOTION by M. Lord to accept the minor amendments to Special Permit 2020-05 Flower Power Growers, Inc. 180 Industrial Boulevard relating to the landscaping plan and amended construction phasing plan as shown on the 8/15/22 submittal. Seconded by G. Cooke. VOTE Sicard (AYE), Lord (AYE), Obear (AYE), Cooke (AYE). MOTION PASSES 6:42pm.

Canal District Master Plan Updates

WR reported that the second public workshop was well attended. Many detailed photos of the building were shown to the audience who has a clearer expectation about possibilities for the site. The consultants are fleshing out their proposals, based on market analysis and community participation. There was considerable conversation at the Master Plan about “access” to the island; there does not seem to be a magic solution. A third meeting is scheduled for the Great Falls Discovery Center Thursday, October 27. The consultants are recommending housing at the Griswold site.

Comprehensive Plan Updates

FRCOG is helping with the survey with more targeted outreach this fall. The town has received funding for the second phase of the plan via an \$80,000 MVP FY23+24 Action Grant. That will allow the town to finish the plan.

Overview of Winter Emergency Parking Proposal

WR gave an overview. The Select Board previously endorsed the proposal as presented by the planner. Next step is to formalize the proposal and budget for signs and outreach.

Correspondence: Attorney General Approval of Battery Energy Storage Bylaw

WR reported that the AG approved the bylaw, (approved by May 5 Annual Town meeting) with several caveats. The town should work closely with counsel when an application is submitted because there are several other intersections of the law at play. The details are highlighted in the correspondence.

MOTION by R. Sicard to ADJOURN Seconded by George Cooke. VOTE Sicard (AYE), Lord (AYE), Obear (AYE), Cooke (AYE). MEETING is ADJOURNED 7:28pm.

