

PLANNING BOARD

DATE: August 14, 2014
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Large Meeting Room
FOR: Regular Meeting
PRESENT: Jonathan Hankin, Chairman; Jack Musgrove, Brandee Nelson; Malcolm Fick
Chris Rembold, Town Planner

Mr. Hankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

FORM A'S:

There were no Form A's presented.

MINUTES: JULY 10 & 24, 2014

Mr. Musgrove made a motion to approve the minutes of July 10, 2014 as amended, Ms. Nelson seconded, all in favor.

Mr. Fick made a motion to approve the minutes of July 24, 2014 as amended, Mr. Hankin seconded, all in favor.

COMMON DRIVEWAY: DOMANEY

Joe Domaney was present to discuss his common driveway application along with Nick Anderson from Berkshire Engineering and Ed Domaney.

Joe Domaney said he wanted to shift the location of the driveway at 6 Abbey Hill Road to reduce its impact on a new house he is building, which would bring it back to where it was originally located. Moving the driveway would reduce the slope.

Mr. Anderson said the slope at the top would be 16%.

Mr. Fick said it appears the slope at the top will change very little.

Ms. Nelson suggested a stilling basin if it can be accommodated. She said this would slow the water that runs off and allow it to disperse more slowly.

It was indicated that it would be possible to provide the stilling basin.

Mr. Anderson said there is a deeded easement with the neighbor.

Joe Domaney said he had provided the neighbor with a sketch of the proposed driveway. There was some concern about the hairpin turn. The Mr. Anderson was asked to make the curve as gentle as possible and he was able to accommodate the request.

Ms. Nelson asked if the driveway maintenance is shared.

Ed Domaney said there is a new easement. Joe Domaney will maintain the common portion of the driveway and the neighbor will maintain the driveway where it splits off. The neighbor is in agreement.

Mr. Rembold said the driveway meets the required standards of section 153. The DPW Superintendent has reviewed and approved the plan. The Fire Chief has reviewed and approved the plan. The Board of Selectmen has reviewed the plan and sent a positive recommendation. Town Counsel is reviewing the legal documents for form. Comments from Town Counsel have not been received. Mr. Rembold suggested approving the plan subject to Town Counsel's comments, that DPW will approve the work and Ms. Nelson's condition for the stilling basin.

Joe Domaney said he did not want to misrepresent the neighbor's comments. He said they have verbally agreed to the plan but he didn't have anything in writing.

Mr. Musgrove made a motion to approve the common driveway as shown on the plan dated August 14, 2014 subject to Town Counsel's review, DPW inspection and a stilling basin to slow down the water. When the agreement has been approved by Town Counsel it will be signed by the abutter and filed with the deed. Mr. Fick seconded, all in favor.

SPECIAL PERMIT: 433 STOCKBRIDGE ROAD

Narain Schroeder was present to discuss the special permit application for Berkshire Natural Resources Council for work in the floodplain at 433 Stockbridge Road. Mr. Schroeder said the driveway grade needs to be elevated for approximately approximately 16 feet from the road to provide a level landing to improve vehicular safety in entering Route 7. Compensatory storage will be provided by reducing the size of the existing parking area. The front of the property will be cleaned up to look better.

Mr. Rembold said the Conservation Commission has reviewed the plan and determined they are removing more than what is being put in. The Conservation Commission is ok with the plan. The Board needs to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Musgrove made a motion to send a positive recommendation to the Board of Selectmen for work in the floodplain at 433 Stockbridge Road, Ms. Nelson seconded, all in favor.

SITE PLAN REVIEW: 83 BROOKSIDE ROAD

Architect Pam Sandler was present with Nick Anderson from Berkshire Engineering to discuss the site plan review application for Camp Eisner, 83 Brookside Road, for new construction of a dormitory. This is a by-right use so site plan review is required.

Mr. Anderson said the building will be two stories and 8400 square feet. It will be the team leadership center. The building will be within the coverage requirements for zoning. The building will have full municipal water and sewer. The building will have a sprinkler system. Storm water drainage will be dealt with on site. There will be minimal impact on the landscaping; all exterior lighting will be contained on the parcel.

Ms. Sandler said there will be no additional parking. There will be no additional campers, as this will replace existing dormitory space. The character will be similar to the manor house in style and color. The building will be used year round for weekend retreats.

Mr. Hankin asked about the lighting.

Ms. Sandler said we know we have to control the lighting. The fields will not be lit from the new building, as was suggested at the site visit.

Mr. Rembold said the lighting from the camp can be seen from upper Castle Hill and Knob Hill. The preference is for pole lighting, not building mounted lighting.

Ms. Sandler said the lights are currently on poles.

Mr. Musgrove said the lights must be downward directed and turned off when not in use.

Ms. Sandler said there will be egress lights mounted in the ceiling of the porch.

Ms. Nelson said the ceiling will provide the cut off.

Mr. Musgrove read through site plan review.

Mr. Musgrove made a motion to approve site plan review with the condition that all lights will have full horizontal cut-offs, Ms. Nelson seconded, all in favor.

TOM DOYLE: MAIN & MAHAIWE STREET

Tom Doyle was present to discuss his property located at the corner of Main Street and Mahaiwe Street. The property has been part of a land court case for the last 6 years. The appeal was thrown out due to inaction so the approved special permit can now be implemented within two years.

There was discussion of the original plan that had five residential units along with office and retail space. There was discussion regarding the zoning and what is allowed. Ms. Nelson pointed out that there is much mixed use in the neighborhood which seemed to fit. The area is a good location for housing as it is easily accessible to walk to town.

Mr. Hankin said when he joined the Planning Board in 1997 mixed use was not a permitted use. Seeing many two story commercial structures, principally on Stockbridge Road, inspired him to draft the first mixed use bylaw to allow for the possibility of more residential units. At the time, 75% of the first floor was required to be other than residential use. This number was revised down to 50% by subsequent ATM, in part, in response to the TOPA development proposal. The separation requirement between multi-family structures, that previously affected this site, has been removed from the bylaw, but mixed use allows for significantly higher lot coverage. The Board discussed different possibilities for what would work on the site from multi-family to mixed use and how to mix the uses. The Board encouraged development of the site and suggested that Mr. Doyle consult with a design professional to consider the options.

Mr. Doyle thanked the Board for its time.

HOUSATONIC ZONING:

Mr. Hankin said he had nothing specific to discuss he wants to keep this discussion on the agenda so the momentum is not lost.

Mr. Fick said there has been a lot of discussion. The process needs to move forward with a draft.

Mr. Hankin said we need to determine what part of the village center should be covered by the overlay, if that is the chosen vehicle, and what can be done to make properties compliant.

Ms. Nelson suggested looking at the 1932 zoning. It may make sense to go back to the original zoning.

Mr. Fick said there seems to be a push to keep the Main Street area residential.

Mr. Musgrove said it may make sense to create an overlay district of the area to allow for mixed use in the area.

Ms. Nelson said it needs to be determined how the overlay will affect the underlying district. We don't want to make it more cumbersome.

Mr. Rembold said it will depend on how the bylaw is written. Mixed use could trigger a special permit allowing for oversight.

Mr. Musgrove said we may need to create a new zoning designation specific to Housatonic. Dimensional requirements need to be small. It would be good to write a bylaw to say everything.

Mr. Fick said existing buildings could be considered conforming but at one point does it become "non-existing"?

Ms. Nelson asked if the current VCOD could be tweaked to apply to Housatonic.

Mr. Rembold said he understands that the goal is to bring existing properties into compliance, allow mixed use by-right and to encourage new commercial and residential uses.

Mr. Rembold said he needs to look at the use table to see what is allowed. We have heard from Housatonic residents that commercial is not desired everywhere. It is important to keep the feeling of Housatonic.

Mr. Hankin said the front yard setback is important to consider. He asked if BRPC determined that the front yard setbacks were a major source of non-conformity.

Mr. Rembold said yes setbacks were an issue in properties being non-conforming. Many of the properties were developed prior to zoning being in place. Mr. Rembold said his next step is to draft something that makes the purpose of the zone clear.

Ms. Nelson asked if the Board is asking Mr. Rembold to write a new zone rather than adapt VCOD.

Mr. Hankin said we need to go around Housatonic with a parcel map and zoning overlay to determine what should be part of the Village Center, whether it is a new zone or an overlay district. Once that has been determined we can figure out what needs to be done.

Ms. Nelson said it is hard to predict patterns of development.

Mr. Hankin said we need to focus on and define the village center.

Mr. Rembold said the B-2 district does not fit Housatonic.

Mr. Fick said there needs to be delineation of where business is and isn't allowed.

Mr. Hankin said he might be easier to have two districts.

Mr. Rembold said Front and Depot Street are very different from Pleasant and Main Street.

Mr. Hankin said the village center needs to be defined then we can figure out a district that deals with the specific areas. We may need to create the zoning in phases.

Mr. Rembold said the first goal is to make non-conforming parcels conforming. Then we can tweak as we need to. We should not rush the process.

Ms. Nelson said we should try to use as much of existing zoning as we can.

The discussion concluded suggesting that it might be helpful to have local historian Gary Leveille bring in old pictures of the village, if he would be willing.

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:

Mr. Rembold said an Environmental Notification Form had been filed for the Rising solar site. The filing is required by Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Mr. Rembold said the application for the solar use on VanDeusenville Road has been withdrawn.

Mr. Rembold said the Town will have a table at the upcoming Summerfest event on August 23. The Town will be looking for interest in filling vacancies on Town boards and committees.

Mr. Rembold said the Town Clerk has finished getting the Town Code on line. The code is now searchable. It is not a PDF. It is a fantastic tool.

ISSUES & CONCERNS:

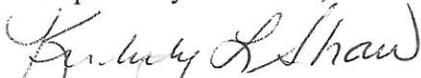
Mr. Fick asked if the Board is interested in have a demolition delay bylaw. He said it could delay building demolitions by 6 months in some instances. He said it could be a valuable tool.

Ms. Nelson asked Mr. Fick to get some information.

Mr. Rembold said the Master Plan suggests considering a demolition delay bylaw.

The Board concluded their discussion. Mr. Hankin adjourned without objection at 9:13 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly L. Shaw
Planning Board Secretary

Materials Presented or Distributed for this Meeting:

Memo from Town Planner dated 8/11/2014

Application and materials from Joseph Domaney

Application and materials from Berkshire Natural Resources Council

Application and materials from Pamela Sandler