



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

PLANNING BOARD

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

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S. PETER KANE, DIR. OF COMM. DEV.
ANDREW LEVIN, ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER

AUGUST 14, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:10pm – 9:45 pm
Location: Swampscott Senior Center, 200 Essex Street (rear)
Members Present: B. Quinn, G. Potts, A. Ippolito, J.R. Young
Members Absent: B. Isler
Others Present: Drew Epstein (Resident), Geoffrey Boland (Resident), Chris Drucas (Attorney), Holly Grace (B'nai B'rith Housing New England), Max Glikman (Project Manager), Joe Peznola (Civil Engineer), Jim Podesky (Architect), Norma Works (Resident), Marilyn Hurwitz (Senior Center Director), Andrew Levin (Assistant Town Planner)

Chairwomen of the Board A. Ippolito called the meeting order at 7:10PM.

The meeting minutes from the previous July 10th meeting were reviewed, on a motion by G. Potts, seconded by B. Quinn, the July 10th meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION – ZONING WARRANT ARTICLE HEARING

A. Ippolito began by explain that the intent of the proposed article is to rezone properties in the A3 district, creating a new A4 district. The new A4 district would be the same as the A3 but with some limitations on the allowed uses. A. Ippolito stated that this proposed article is similar to an article previously presented to the public, before the previous Spring Town meeting, but that this new proposal is revised.

A. Ippolito read the article to the audience.

Peter Kane, Director of Community Development, reiterated that the proposed article will create a fourth residential zoning district (A4 district), and that a specific list of properties, potentially 80 properties, will stay in A3. P. Kane clarified that dimensional requirements will stay the same, but that the uses allowed will change, (single-family homes will be allowed by right, and up to three-units by special permit) adding 4-8 units would not be allowed.

A. Ippolito added that the intent of this proposed zoning change stemmed from a 2009 Zoning change, which allowed 3-units by right, and 4-8 units by special permit. A. Ippolito explained why in the proposed article the areas picked to change were chosen, these reasons included density and small streets.

A. Ippolito stated that the Planning Board at their July meeting had discussed this proposed article and decided it would be better to rework the article and revise it in a way that would make it simpler.

A. Ippolito explained that the Board had listened to the public's comments at the previous public meetings, (concern over the loss for the ability of two and three-unit homes) and used these comments to revise and rework the proposal.

A. Ippolito explained that in the proposed new article (discussed at the July meeting), everything in A3 will stay zoned A3, and dimensional requirements will stay the same, the change will be that only up to three units will be allowed by right, and that there will be no more special permit process for the addition of more units. A. Ippolito continued that there will potentially be an A4 district as well, but it would be permissive and would not have a specific location on Zoning maps.

A. Ippolito mentioned that there are multiple areas in Town that currently allow for density, and reiterated that the revision of allowing only three-units by right, will simplify the needs of the proposal. P. Kane clarified that currently, the A3 district allows up to two-units by right, and three units by special permit.

A. Ippolito stated that her recommendation is to vote to indefinitely postpone and rework the proposed article currently in front of the Board, and revise it to state what she had previously described. A. Ippolito explained that the Board would hold a public meeting on the reworked article and seek public comments again.

G. Potts mentioned that the Board had presented a lot of information and was wondering if the Board members could help clarify or answer questions from the audience. P. Kane clarified that the Board can only talk about the article that was advertised. B. Quinn mentioned that the public's comments will help the Board rework the article.

Drew Epstein of 99 Rockland Street stood up and mentioned that his concern is with off-street parking and congestion on the roads, specifically traffic to and from Boston, and mentioned he is not in favor of adding more density. P. Kane clarified the process and regulations of adding units and parking, and A. Ippolito added that the concern over density in these specific areas is what led to the Board proposing this change.

Jeffrey Bowlen, Rockland Street, asked about the process of reworking the article, A. Ippolito mentioned the article would go in front of Fall Town Meeting, if all the appropriate prerequisites are met. A. Ippolito added that the Board believes this to be an important change, and if the article is ready, then she would like it on the Warrant for the Fall meeting. G. Potts added that the public hearing allows the Board to hear feedback and to potentially rework their proposal. B. Quinn clarified the changes in the allowed uses.

Norma Works, a resident, asked how properties can add units to existing homes, G. Potts, A. Ippolito, and P. Kane all mentioned possible ways this can be done.

B. Quinn mentioned that some of the homes on Rockland Street are large houses and that units were not added on, A. Ippolito responded that the additions still add cars.

Chris Drucas, from the audience mentioned that the map shows some outlying lots, and wondered what the process was to create the map. A. Ippolito stated that the map would be going away, and clarified that the A3 district will stay A3, and that the A4 district will get added to the Bylaw, but there would be no map for it. A. Ippolito explained that the A4 zoning will give opportunity to areas that might not have been addressed by an overlay district.

G. Potts mentioned that the Board is looking for public comment that would be objecting to the downzoning, as well as comments on where 4-8 units should be allowed. A. Ippolito added that the public will be able to discuss this further at the public hearing.

MOTION : by B. Quinn to indefinitely postpone the article and rework for the warrant and propose a new article with discussion heard from the public, seconded by J.R. Young, unanimously approved.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – PETITION 17-16 (35 BURPEE ROAD)

A. Ippolito read a description of the petition to the audience, and explained that this is a site plan review only and that the Board will review and comment on the plans and will make a negative or positive recommendation, but they are not the Special Permit Granting Authority.

Attorney Chris Drucas introduced himself and stated he is representing the petitioner, and mentioned that also present with him was: Holly Grace (Senior Project Manager, B'nai B'rith Housing), Max Glikman (Project Manager, B'nai B'rith Housing), Joe Peznola (Civil Engineer, Hancock Associates), Jim Podesky (Architect, The Architectural Team).

Attorney Drucas explained the projects background, and stated that the petitioner worked with the neighbors and Board of Selectmen (BOS) regarding details of the project, and added that even though the petitioners filed for a site plan waiver, the petitioners still made a serious effort to address the concerns outlined in a Site Plan Review.

Holly Grace, senior project manager for B'nai B'rith Housing, introduced herself and stated that B'nai B'rith is a housing non-profit organization, whose mission is to alleviate the housing crisis, particularly in senior housing, focusing on keeping residents active. Ms. Grace continued that B'nai B'rith has a long-term view on what they work on and are excited about the location of the project and Town amenities (mentioned Jackson Park, Bus line, and the Senior Center).

Ms. Grace stated the proposal is for 38-units of affordable rental senior housing, and that each unit will have one bedroom and one bathroom. Ms. Grace continued that the building will have a community room, computer room, laundry room, and that the main entrance will be accessible by all, and added that some of the units will be fully wheelchair accessible. Ms. Grace explained that there will be three staff members; a property manager, residence coordinator, and a maintenance worker. Ms. Grace briefly explained some of the other amenities the buildings residents will have access to.

Ms. Grace stated that the building will be for 55 years old and up, but with a preference for 62 and over, and that the units will have income restrictions on each, and explained the max incomes for individuals and couples.

Ms. Grace explained that they have received many calls from perspective building residents, and that there will be a local preference for the buildings residents with 70% of the units reserved for current Swampscott residents.

Ms. Grace stated that the proposal is to improve the existing 1920's part of the current building, and demolish the existing 1960s addition and construct a new addition in its place. Ms. Grace explained there would be a 20-foot wide access easement for to Jackson Woods. Ms. Grace continued that the proposal includes 48 parking spaces and explained where the spaces would be, and mentioned the construction of a retaining wall. Ms. Grace stated that they have done studies on parking and found they have prepared for sufficient parking.

Ms. Grace continued that the proposal calls for landscape improvements in the front and around the site, and added that the lighting will be shielded downwards so that it does not spill.

B. Quinn asked if each unit will have a full kitchen, Ms. Grace responded they would, and added the units will be one bedroom, one bathroom, and a kitchen/living/dining room. Ms. Grace mentioned that the community room will have a "warming kitchen", and explained its use.

G. Potts asked the size of the units, Ms. Grace responded that they would be on average 650 sf, but would range due to the differing classroom modifications. G. Potts asked if there will be asset restrictions on the residents, Ms. Grace responded no, and explained how the units will be restricted, BOS Chairwoman, Naomi Dreeben was present and helped clarify. B. Quinn asked if the parking spaces are handicapped and if they are deeded, Ms. Grace responded some will be handicap and that the spaces will not be deeded.

Jim Podesky, a project architect, began his presentation by showing a proposed view of the property from Burpee Road on a large map. Mr. Podesky explained the design of the new addition will complement the existing school in its massing, rhythm, and grouping of windows. Mr. Podesky explained the new addition will have a masonry/brick base to tie in with the existing 1920's addition. Mr. Podesky continued that they had worked with the Town on proposed colors, and that above the brick the material used will be hardy plank.

Mr. Podesky explained that the new addition being proposed will be lower than the existing 1920s addition by about four feet, and that some floors will be off and need stairs. Mr. Podesky showed a map of the retaining wall and explained that it will be brick, with a safety rail on top, and mentioned plantings will be added as well for a buffer.

Mr. Podesky explained that the existing main entrance is currently not accessible by all, and that the proposal is to remove the stairs, and drop the grade at the entrance. A. Ippolito asked how far the setback of the new addition will be, Mr. Podesky responded that the existing addition will be closer to the road. Mr. Podesky mentioned the building will be fully sprinkled and that there will be one elevator, Ms. Grace added that in regards to the Fire Department the building will fully meet code. A. Ippolito asked about air conditioning and the housing for the units and mechanicals, Mr. Podesky mentioned the housing will be near the elevator penthouse and another unit by the corner of the roof, and the plan is to use a solid aluminum corrugated screen, and have units as low as possible. A. Ippolito, Mr. Podesky, and Ms. Grace briefly discussed the screening. Ms. Dreeben added that B'nai B'rith has been receptive to the BOS and the neighbor's concerns. Mr. Podesky explained there will be a trash compactor inside the building, and a dumpster outside on the back corner of the parking lot with a fence screen.

Joe Peznola, of Hancock Associates and the projects civil engineer showed the Board the existing conditions and proposed plans for the property, explaining size and parking details. Mr. Peznola explained there will be a new curb cut off of Burpee Road, and showed where the handicap spaces and trash will be located. Mr. Peznola continued to briefly explain the proposed trash and parking details. A. Ippolito asked about the path to Jackson Woods on the West side of the property, Mr. Peznola mentioned it will remain, and that this path is the buffer. Mr. Podesky explained there will be landscaping enhancements and plant screening on the property, adding year-round cover. Ms. Dreeben mentioned the BOS were concerned with the amount of screening in front of the retaining wall, and mentioned evergreens will be added.

Mr. Peznola explained the current and proposed grading changes, and briefly explained the drainage plan, mentioning the plan fully meets MassDEP's guidelines. Mr. Peznola explained the retaining wall in the back, and mentioned there will be some grading and landscaping in the park area to help buffer the wall. Mr. Peznola mentioned the proposed plantings for property, and added that the retaining wall will be a large block wall and will extend a little above the pavement to act as a guardrail, and also have a safety fence atop it.

Mr. Peznola explained that the lights in the parking lot will have shields on top and back to make sure lighting goes down on the parking lot. A. Ippolito asked about exterior lights on the building, Mr. Podesky responded that the egress doors by code will have lights, and potentially decorative lights at doors.

Mr. Peznola explained that a full storm water report was done, and the proposal is fully complying with MassDEP, and the project engineers are working with the Town's Department of Public Works.

A. Ippolito, Mr. Peznola, and Ms. Grace briefly discussed proposed traffic, Mr. Peznola explained the need for cars will be small, due to ride sharing and pick up services. Ms. Grace explained the results of a "trip generation study".

B. Quinn asked about roof drainage, Mr. Peznola explained that it will follow the current conditions, and drain to the rear of the building, and added that a capture study showed the proposal is sufficiently sized on the recharged requirements. Mr. Peznola stated that the flow to Burpee and flow to Jackson Park was analyzed and the proposal has reduced rate during all storms

P. Kane mentioned that some Town Committees had provided comments, and that the Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission both recommended that no invasive species be planted on the site, due to problems with invasive species in Jackson Woods.

A. Ippolito then went through the site plan review concerns (outlined in the Bylaw), beginning with the removal of trees on the property. Mr. Peznola explained that the proposal calls for taking down a 30-inch maple tree as well as some other smaller trees, but that the planting plan includes adding American Elms.

A. Ippolito and Mr. Peznola briefly discussed access points on the building, as well as the types of lights and what is being done with them.

A. Ippolito explained her comments about the petition, and mentioned that the Planning Board is working to improve affordable senior housing, and is in support of improvements and the adding of affordable housing, as well as in support of rehabbing and adapting existing structures. A. Ippolito mentioned that she is comfortable with the traffic flow and safety, and that she agrees with the number of parking spaces. A. Ippolito continued that the utilities look fine and that keeping the 1920's addition will help keep with neighborhood character. A. Ippolito brought up the site plan review concern regarding the fiscal impact, Ms. Grace stated that the group has entered a 99-year ground lease with the Town with a lumpsum payment of \$500,000, and that the building will have assessed property taxes.

J.R Young asked about transportation to and from the Senior Center for the buildings residents, Ms. Grace responded that the buildings residents will be able to utilize the sidewalks, Marilyn Hurwitz, the Director of the Swampscott Senior Center was present and added that there will be a van to pick up the buildings residents.

A. Ippolito continued with the site plan review and concluded that she did not have any concerns, and asked the Board for comments. J.R Young mentioned that he believed the plans and petition were well thought out.

A. Ippolito asked for public comment.

An Audience member mentioned that she is in favor. Attorney Drucas reiterated that the petitioner has worked hard to address the concerns of the site plan review bylaw. G. Potts asked why hardy board is proposed instead of brick, Ms. Grace mentioned cost and other reasons, P. Kane clarified why mimicking the existing building would be difficult. B. Quinn and P. Kane briefly discussed the property line and landscaping.

MOTION : by A. Ippolito to recommend favorable action on Petition 17-16, 35 Burpee Road, for the redevelopment of the Machon School into 38-units for seniors, additional comment that in support of any and all waivers necessary to accomplish the plan as presented, seconded by J.R. Young, unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION – POTENTIAL STUDY, AGE FRIENDLY SWAMPSCOTT

P. Kane explained that he had spoken with Bob Howell, a member of the Council on Aging, and that he was told of age-friendly studies being run by Northeastern University in communities. P. Kane went through some details the studies provide, which included how to make it easier for residents to age in place. P. Kane stated that these studies are not free, and asked the Board if they would have interest in supporting a capital proposal article at Town Meeting for the study. The Board and P. Kane discussed the potential deliverables of the study. J.R. Young asked if other communities had done these, P. Kane stated that he did not know at the moment. A. Ippolito mentioned that she would like to find out more, and to see what other communities have done. P. Kane mentioned that he believed the deliverables to be similar to the Master Plan study deliverables. The Board and P. Kane continued to discuss, A. Ippolito reiterated that she is interested in finding out more.

Ms. Dreeben mentioned that the Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) are doing a Dementia friendly study for free, and they have offered a packaged program to share with the Town. Ms. Dreeben continued that GLSS provide individuals to caregivers and residents with dementia, as well as provide recommendations to the Town. Ms. Dreeben mentioned that the recommendations provided could be used as a start for the age-friendly study.

The Board continued to discuss potential recommendations, P. Kane mentioned the Dementia-friendly study has an education piece as well. Ms. Dreeben explained that there are certain standards a Town must meet to become a Dementia-friendly neighborhood, but the Town can use these recommendations to learn more on how to become friendlier to people with Dementia.

B. Quinn mentioned that this is a good program, but that it is only one dimension, P. Kane and B. Quinn both discussed how recommendations provided in the Master Plan and Dementia-friendly study could supplement the Age-friendly study, potentially decreasing the price. Ms. Dreeben also mentioned that some of the recommendations in the Master Plan could be extrapolated and used. P. Kane mentioned there is potential for the Planning Board and the Council on Aging to work on recommendations, formed from the Dementia-friendly study and the Master Plan. A. Ippolito and Ms. Dreeben continued to discuss the potential benefits of the study.

B. Quinn mentioned that comments in the past at Town Meetings have been raised about the large amounts of studies the Town conducts and that some residents have concerns with these. P. Kane and G. Potts briefly discussed cost sharing regarding the potential study.

DISCUSSION – ZONING CHANGE TO HUMPHREY STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT, CONNECT TOURIST OVERLAY DISTRICT

A. Ippolito explained the background and intent of the proposal, P. Kane added for clarification that Board could make a modification to the use table in the overlay district, and make a reference to the different allowed types. P. Kane then clarified the next steps for the potential proposal. B. Quinn mentioned that the Board should discuss this. P. Kane and Ms. Dreeben briefly discussed the number of articles on the upcoming Special Town Meeting Warrant, B. Quinn mentioned the Board could wait on this change.

MOTION: by G. Potts for Pete Kane to draft the proposal to discuss at next meeting, second by A. Ippolito, unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD

P. Kane explained that the site plan review for the proposed development for the site of the former Greenwood School will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Board. P. Kane and B. Quinn discussed the next meeting and potential agenda.

B. Quinn brought up a comment made at a BOS meeting regarding the Greenwood proposal, and a brief discussion was had. A. Ippolito mentioned that there are some features from the school that could potentially be saved and displayed somewhere.

B. Quinn and P. Kane briefly discussed the radius of the abutter mailing list, P. Kane explained that there is no requirement for an abutter mailing, but that the BOS are still doing one and will use the ZBA's 300-foot requirement, B. Quinn mentioned he was concerned about the reach of the abutter mailing, given the scope and history of the project.

P. Kane explained to the Board that a Letter of Eligibility was submitted to Mass Housing about a potential Chapter 40B development near Lincoln House Point, P. Kane explained the next steps and processes.

MOTION: by G. Potts to close the meeting, seconded by J.R. Young, unanimously approved, meeting closed at 9:45PM.

Andrew Levin
Assistant Town Planner