

IPSWICH PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Remote Meeting using ZOOM
Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Pursuant to a meeting notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a remote meeting of the Ipswich Planning Board was held on Thursday, May 14, 2020 using ZOOM. Board members Keith Anderson, Carolyn Britt, Paul Nordberg, Mitchell Lowe, Kevin Westerhoff and Helen Weatherall were present. Staff, Ethan Parsons, was also present.

Anderson convened the meeting at 7:05 PM with a quorum present.

Anderson requested a roll call for all present. He noted all Board members that were present as well as Planning Director, Ethan Parsons, and minute taker, Odile Breton. Anderson stated that future meetings will continue taking place using ZOOM due to the current state with COVID-19.

Citizen Queries: None noted.

Request by Scott Audette, S&K Homes, for Subdivision Completion and release of final lot at Willowdale Circle

Scott Audette, developer, and Gerry McDonald (H.L. Graham & Associates) were present. Anderson summarized the prior meeting and noted a letter from GM2 Inc. about items that were not complete. Parsons provided a recap of a site visit attended by himself, the Conservation Agent, Audette, McDonald, and Denis Hamel of GM2 Inc., which occurred since the last meeting. H.L. Graham & Associates provided a memo explaining the changed items. Parsons stated the Conservation Commission issued a certificate of compliance. The applicant is requesting a release from the conditional approval agreement.

Audette reviewed several items that were completed since the last meeting. The trail parking area was increased, the missing part of the trail was added, and missing trees were planted. Audette stated he is in charge of the homeowner's association for the next 11 months in order to ensure the survivability of plants and lawn areas. He stated the owners were provided with the conditions of approval.

Britt said she walked the trail behind the houses and noted a very steep slope and asked if the trail could be moved back. Audette stated the trail is located where it is on the plan and moving it is infeasible due to ledge. Parsons noted that the Essex County Greenbelt Association now owns the trail.

Lowe noted that the current owners do not want the playground. He asked what happens in the future if the demographics in the development change and a playground is desired. Audette stated the home owners would have to vote on it. Lowe asked who will pay for the installation of a playground. Anderson noted the Board has a petition from the current owners stating they do not want a playground.

Anderson asked if there were any other questions. None were noted.

Lowe moved to release the applicant from the conditional approval agreement. Westerhoff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Documents:

- *H.L. Graham Associates Memo to Planning Board, Re: Willowdale Circle, dated May 7, 2020*
- *Record As-Built Plan, prepared by H.L. Graham Associates, 3 sheets, dated March 23, 2020*
- *Petition from owners regarding playground, 5/11/20*

New Public Hearing: Request by J&K Realty Trust (Jim Baker) for a Special Permit for a multifamily use for the creation of four dwelling units within the existing building at 195 and 199 High Street (Assessor's Map 21, lot 7A & 93), which is located in the Highway Business Zoning District, pursuant to but not limited to Sections V, XI.J, of the Zoning Bylaw

Anderson opened the public hearing by reading the legal notice. Jim Baker presented for the applicant. Baker provided background of the property and summarized the proposed plan. He stated that second floor commercial space has been difficult to rent over the past several years. The proposed project is to convert the second floor to rental apartments. There will be three 2-bedroom units and one 1-bedroom unit. There are 74 parking spaces on site and each residential unit will have two parking spaces. Residential parking will be in the front of the building. Parking spaces will be numbered. Exterior changes will be limited to the windows for the apartments.

Lowe asked how many units will be handicap accessible. He asked how many units meet the requirements of 521CMR, the Commonwealth's Accessibility Code. Baker stated the units are Group 1, adaptable, under 521CMR. The total number of units, with the four being proposed, will be 23 units. Lowe thought 5% need to meet Group 2 requirements, which include additional requirements for accessibility. (Lowe clarified at a subsequent meeting that Group 2 applies when 20 or more units are present.) Baker stated the units are group 1, adaptable, under 521c. The total number of units, with the four being proposed, will be 23 units. Lowe thought 5% need to meet group 2 requirements, which include requirements for clearance. He asked the applicant to look into this with his architect. Lowe also asked how many units will be affordable. Baker stated there are two existing affordable units and there will not be any additional affordable units. He will pay the inclusionary fee to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Anderson suggested Board members drive by the site individually. Anderson asked Parsons to prepare a draft decision for the next meeting.

Nordberg moved to continue the public hearing to June 11, 2020. Lowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Documents:

- 195 High Site Development Permit Plan, prepared by Morin Engineering, May 4, 2020

Continued Public Hearing: Request by Symes Development & Permitting LLC for Special Permit and Definitive Subdivision approval for a 35-unit Open Space Preservation Zoning (OSPZ) Development at 173 Linebrook Road (Assessor's Map 29D, Lot 21), located in the RRA District, pursuant to Sections V, XI.A and XI.J of the Zoning Bylaw and the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in Ipswich

Jeff Rhuda of Symes Permitting and Development and Rich Harrington of Williams and Sparages were present. Anderson asked Rhuda and Harrington to provide an update. Anderson said the discussion of the trail needs to continue this evening.

Harrington reviewed the updated path sketch. He discussed the width and grading of the path. Anderson noted the Police Chief does not like the location of the crosswalk because of insufficient sight distance given the motor vehicle speed on Linebrook Road. Rhuda asked if the Police Chief received the traffic engineer's report. Rhuda stated that there is more than enough sight distance based on the traffic engineer's report. Harrington noted two possible locations for relocating the crosswalk. Westerhoff noted the Board received a letter from the Open Space Committee stating a preference for Option 1.

Anderson reviewed additional concerns from the peer reviewer related to the layout of the interior Phase 3 road. Harrington stated it is a low use road and explained the curves in the road will help reduce speed. Lowe asked if the roads will accommodate the needs of fire trucks. Harrington said they would. Anderson asked if the Fire Chief has seen the updated plans. Parsons said he will forward the updated site plans to the Fire Chief for comments. Harrington reviewed additional responses to peer review comments. Anderson asked if Symes had responded directly to the peer reviewer. Harrington said not yet because they wanted to discuss and review the responses with the Board first. Rhuda stated that several items the peer reviewer is questioning relate to subdivision regulations, which conflict with open space development principles.

Harrington discussed soil testing and stormwater recharge. He said the response to the peer reviewer will note that additional soil testing is not necessary.

Britt asked about the lighting specifications. Rhuda said the development will use the lights suggested by the Ipswich Electric Light Department. Britt asked if street lights are necessary. Rhuda said that street lights are necessary at the entrances to the site. Anderson suggested there should also be street lights at the crosswalk and at the entry to the path. Anderson requested the light specifications be presented at the next meeting.

Britt asked if home buyers could have a choice between electric heat and propane heat. Anderson asked if the applicant discussed the option of electric heat with the Ipswich Electric Light Department. Rhuda said there had been no discussion of electric heat with the department. Anderson suggested he contact Jon Blair at the ELD.

Anderson acknowledged receipt of a letter dated May 12, 2020 from the Open Space Committee.

Anderson stopped the discussion in order to continue at the next meeting. He asked for an extension of the timeline for action to at least June 15, 2020 as the next meeting is on June 11. He asked Parsons to draft a decision with a focus on conditions for the next meeting but informed the applicant that the Board may not necessarily vote on the decision at the next meeting. He also requested a checklist of items that still need to be completed by the applicant.

Anderson also acknowledged receipt of a letter from Latham Law Offices, LLC as Symes' proffer of the open space land behind Phase 1, at 178 Linebrook Road, to the Town. He said the open space land is being transferred but the letter did not specify to which entity. Rhuda stated the land is being proffered to the Town of Ipswich.

Britt moved to recommend that the Select Board accept Symes' conveyance of the open space land to the Essex County Greenbelt Association. Westerhoff seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Lowe abstained.

Nordberg moved to continue the public hearing to June 11, 2020. Westerhoff seconded. The motion passed 4-0. Lowe abstained.

Documents:

- *Letter from Latham Law Offices, LLC to Select Board and Ethan Parsons regarding proffering of Phase 1 open space to Town, dated April 29, 2020*
- *Letter from Open Space Committee to Planning Board, dated May 12, 2020*
- *Symes Associates' response to May 12, 2020 Open Space Committee Letter, May 14, 2020*

Consider Report to 2020 Town Meeting on proposed zoning amendment articles (adult use and medical marijuana and clarification amendments)

Anderson said that the Select Board is unsure when Town Meeting will occur due to the current public health emergency and he suggested the Planning Board postpone discussing its Report to Town Meeting.

Adopt minutes 3/12/2020 and 4/2/2020 meetings.

Britt moved to accept the minutes of March 12, 2020. Nordberg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Westerhoff moved to accept the minutes of April 2, 2020. Lowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- *Documents: Draft Planning Board Minutes of March 12, 2020*

Anderson announced that the DPW is submitting a grant proposal to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for climate resiliency. The DPW is seeking a letter of support from the Planning Board. Parsons added that it is related to the Argilla Road project.

Britt moved to support the grant proposal. Nordberg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- *Documents: Draft letter of support to MA Office of Coastal Zone Management, May 26, 2020*

Anderson reminded the audience of the online survey for the Community Development Plan.

Adjournment

Westerhoff moved to adjourn at 9:13 PM. Lowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting notes taken by: Odile Breton

Adopted on: July 9, 2020