



Town of Pepperell Planning Board

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MINUTES

Monday, August 25, 2008

Pepperell Town Hall

Members Present: Nick Cate, Dennis Kane, Mark Marston, Rick McHugh, Steve Themelis

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Steven Brittain, Assoc. Member

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Cate called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

VOUCHERS:

- Payroll vouchers were endorsed. (8/30/08; 9/6/08)
- MA Fed of Planning & Appeals Board - \$90 – the Board opted not to renew this membership due to lack of use of the services offered

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

- M/S/V to approve minutes of August 11, 2008.

BUILDING &/OR OCCUPANCY PERMITS:

- None

ANR PLANS:

- Nashua Road – Dee (2 lots)
The Board reviewed the ANR plan for 30-32 Nashua Road. Mr. McHugh mad a motion to endorse the plan, Mr. Marston seconded, all voted aye.

APPOINTMENTS/HEARINGS:

- 7:00pm – Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates, Review of Pepperell Downtown Report prepared with DHCD grant funds

Mr. Cate introduced Ms. Barringer to the audience. Ms. Barringer began with a brief overview of the report that explained some of the sources for the data in the report and some of the reasoning behind the breakouts and breakdowns of information and numbers.

She explained that the report focused on the entire downtown district which includes Railroad Square, Groton Street, different areas on Main Street, and the former mill site. She was questioned about the separation of Groton Street from the Railroad Square area and

explained the separation was based on the fact that the Groton Street businesses are more vehicle oriented with adequate parking areas, especially at the RiteAid and the Lowell Five Bank. She went on to say that a restaurant could be a very large pull for people to come to Pepperell but that with the current businesses no one is coming just for them.

Ms. Barringer reviewed some data that shows Pepperell with a large recreation component and a very low vacancy rate in housing, below the average of 5% at 2%. She said Pepperell also has a high median income level and a high per capita income level with a 79% rate of home ownership. The residents of Pepperell also have high education levels.

She explained that Pepperell is above average in many of its expenditures. The sales leakage is what is spent out of town. The only category with minimal leakage is drug stores and this can be attributed to the variety of items now offered in places like RiteAid.

Again, Ms. Barringer pointed out that there is big potential for a full service restaurant in town. She also stated that she felt that putting retail in the mill area might not be the best solution and other uses might do better such as light industrial, offices, research and development, recreation (gym, etc.) and it might be smart to guide a market analysis in this direction. She stated that there should be some control over these types of uses however, by not allowing them to put in their own food services which would take away from the local businesses.

It was questioned what the town would do with this report and she explained that it would be a good source of information for a market analyses which she understands is the next step the town is taking with the mill site. It was confirmed that an RFP is being created to request a market analysis.

Ms. Barringer stated that residential could certainly be included for the mill site but she pointed out again that she did not think the retail use was the best use with one of the biggest drawbacks for the retail use being the lack of visibility. It was also stated that maybe the access for the site should not be concentrated on Main Street and that the Mill Street side should be the primary access.

There was concern that the report did not offer any strategies or ideas or solutions for the mill site. It was explained that the report was through the DHCD office and it was through the downtown initiative program and therefore had to include the whole downtown area in the report, not just the mill. It was also pointed out that Ms. Barringer met with town representatives and the report followed the scope that was agreed upon.

Ms. Barringer was thanked for her attendance and reporting at the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- SP 2008-03 Decision
The Board reviewed findings and conditions for the Special Permit for a common driveway for Thomas Dee at 30-32 Nashua Road. Mr. McHugh made a motion to endorse the Decision with Mr. Kane seconding the motion. All members voted 'aye'.
- SP 2008-04 Decision
The Board reviewed findings and conditions for the Special Permit for access through other than lot frontage for Jim Casella at 71-73 Lawrence Street. Mr. McHugh made a

motion to endorse the Decision with Mr. Marston seconding the motion. All members voted 'aye'.

- North Village Estates update

The Board was adamant that they wanted the road paved prior to winter. The Board agreed that the lack of cooperation by Mr. Berube is troubling. They asked that an e-mail be sent again asking for the as-builts that were promised on Friday. They also discussed the possibilities of taking the bond money to have the road paved.

CORRESPONDENCE & DISCUSSION:

Mail was reviewed.

CLOSE MEETING:

With no further business to discuss the Board adjourned the meeting at 9:25pm.

APPROVED:

Nicholas A. Cate

Mark F. Marston

Dennis A. Kane

Richard C. McHugh, Jr.

Stephen C. Themelis