

**STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2017
CENTER OFFICE BUILDING**

Ms. Gibson-Quigley called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:30 PM.

Ms. Gibson-Quigley noted the members present:

Present: Russell Chamberland
James Cunniff
Penny Dumas
Heather Hart
Sandra Gibson-Quigley, Chair
Susan Waters, Clerk

Also Present: Jean M. Bubon, Town Planner
Rebekah DeCoursey, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Charles Blanchard

Ms. Gibson-Quigley opened the meeting at Town Hall and read the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Made by Mr. Chamberland to approve the draft minutes of October 24, 2017

2nd: Mr. Cunniff

Discussion: None

Vote: 6 – 0

ANR – ROUTE 15/MASHAPAUG ROAD

Materials presented:

Form A – dated November 11, 2017

Plan of Land – 531 Route 15 – owned by Silvertree Realty, Inc. – prepared by Tauper Land Survey Inc. (710 Main Street, Oxford, Ma 01537). Plan date 11/2/17 – DWG: 17-188
Route 15 Sturbridge.

Ms. Bubon stated the plan shows the division of land into Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the remaining land. Ms. Bubon stated that the plan does meet all requirements and recommended that the Board endorse the plan.

Motion: Made by Mr. Cunniff to endorse Plan of Land – 531 Route 15 – owned by Silvertree Realty, Inc. – prepared by Tauper Land Survey Inc.

2nd: Mr. Chamberland
Discussion: None
Vote: 6 – 0

Ms. Waters signed the plan.

EXTENSION OF SITE PLAN APPROVAL MEACHAM HEATING, COOLING & ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Mark Meacham from Meacham Heating, Cooling, and Energy Solutions is requesting extension of time for Site Plan Approval of 51 Technology Park Road. The applicant's original Site Plan Approval allows for the construction of a two story industrial service building at the property with a footprint of 10,000 square feet, a 30,000 gallon underground propane tank with an equal tank expansion area and related site improvements.

Ms. Bubon stated she had no concerns with granting this extension due to the personal situation that caused the delay of construction, and the fact that there has been no change to the Bylaws that would impact construction of the site plan. Thus, there does not seem to be cause to review the original site plan and grant approval to commence construction by November 30, 2019.

The Board has the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- Mr. Meacham clarified that there have been no new changes or modifications to the original site plan.
- Ms. Dumas was not at the meeting approving the original site plan and was concerned if she should vote on granting the extension on the project. Ms. Bubon stated that this would be fine, some projects are revisited by the board years apart and it is not unheard of for board members to not be present for all motions, thus Ms. Dumas should vote tonight.
- Have there been any changes in regulations to underground propane tanks? Mr. Meacham stated no. There have been changes to above ground storage, but that will be addressed when the construction commences.

Motion: Made by Mr. Chamberland to approve the extension of time to commence construction of the project at 51 Technology Park Road as approved by permit # SPA2013-5 until November 30, 2019.

2nd: Ms. Waters
Discussion: None
Vote: 6 – 0

LAUREL WOODS – ACORN LANE

Materials presented:

Metes and Bounds of Acorn Lane in Sturbridge, MA.

Street Acceptance Plan Sturbridge, MA – prepared for Escape Estates, Inc. by Thomas R. Fancy (5 Hastings Rd., Spencer, MA 01562) dated October 12, 2017

Acorn Lane is located within Laurel Woods; a subdivision located off of Cedar Street that was approved by the Planning Board in 2006. The development contains 9 lots and the last of these lots were built upon in the past year. All conditions of the approved subdivision plan have been complied with and the appropriate inspections have been completed. Additionally, the bounds have been set.

Ms. Bubon and Mr. Morse from DPW are recommending that the Planning Board Petition the Board of Selectman to accept the roadway as a public way. Mr. Randy Bercume has worked to complete the subdivision project, inspections have been completed, and Escape Estates has completed the as-builts as well as metes and bounds.

Motion: Made by Ms. Waters that the Planning Board Petition the Board of Selectmen to begin the process to lay out Acorn Lane as a town way in accordance with Chapter 82 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as shown on the layout plan of land entitled “Street Acceptance Plan Sturbridge, MA” prepared for Escape Estates, Inc. by Thomas R. Fancy Land Surveyor and dated October 12, 2017.

2nd: Ms. Dumas

Discussion: None

Vote: 6 – 0

TOWN PLANNER UPDATE

Ms. Bubon read a letter written by Penny Dumas of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The letter invited the Planning Board to share ideas and participate in dialog regarding the needs of Sturbridge as they relate to the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPC is interested in studying the needs of the Town regarding community preservation and looking for suggestions from municipal boards, including the Planning Board, to identify priority community needs in town.

The following questions and comments were discussed:

- Is this like a Master Plan? Not so much, this is more to encourage the public to share ideas. The CPC does not create proposals; they review proposals and determine which most satisfy the community needs.
- What sort of projects has the CPC recommended or approved previously? The Town Hall is one example. Projects are broken into four categories: Historic,

Housing, Open Space, and Recreation. Recreation has no percentage of designated fund automatically reserved, while the other three are designated at least 10%.

- Can money be used to renovate privately owned buildings? This can be a gray area and the Town Council would be involved.
- The Historic Commission has evaluated 190 homes in Town for possible inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. They have conducted a two phase evaluation, and are considering if they should do a third phase of inventory or work with the first two phases and evolve the study from there.
- Is it possible to hire a housing consultant to work on a housing plan for the Town? Housing is a topic that needs to be addressed in Town, we don't currently have an active housing committee, and it is a goal addressed in our Master Plan, so can we use CPC funds to help this project move forward?
- Community Block Grant money has previously been used to help senior residents rehabilitate their homes. Maybe CPC could be used in a similar way.
- We could create funding for first time home buyers in Town, or seed money for Town employee home buyers that could count towards our affordable housing.
- Funds could be used to scan paper plans onto microfilm as needed for public record. While some of these plans are not old enough to be "historic" they someday will be and it could be beneficial for long term historic records of the Town.
- A board member observed that at Town Meeting, there is a lot of support for recreation related projects, and perhaps to help move forward on other projects the CPC funding could start with recreation projects to set a good tone for residents supporting other projects.
- Housing money has previously been spent on Habitat for Humanity. It was used to buy the land, supplies, and legal fees, but most of Habitat for Humanity money must be fundraised.
- Ms. Dumas stated there is a guideline on how a town can spend CPA funds, and she would provide that to the Planning Board at the next meeting.
- Has the Town looked at the Plimpton property for recreation? No, because right now their focus is on the Town Barn.
- Renovation of the Senior Center: does the Council on Aging know about the CPC funds and potentially using them to renovate the current Senior Center?
- The Town Highway Garage – built in the late 1960s and in need of upgrade, could that be a possible project? Possibly, but most likely not.
- The CPC funding cannot go towards maintenance and upkeep – it is designed for historic preservation and preservation.
- The CPC will be meeting early 2018 – probably February – to open the dialogue to public participation and any suggestions the Planning Board has before that time can be directed towards the CPC.

Ms. Bubon informed the Board that Tim Reardon, who has been working on the subdivision of Draper Woods, has had Palmer Paving finish up the paving on the road. Mr. Reardon came in for a release of funds paperwork and Ms. Bubon informed the Board that she would like to call a special meeting to release those funds so the client doesn't have to wait until the New Year to collect payment. Tentative date and time for this will be December 13th at 4:30pm.

Ms. Bubon encouraged the Board members to look at the Town's website. Ms. DeCoursey is working to update the pages, including "Recent Filings" for Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Design Review Committee. As applications are coming into the office, they are being scanned and put online, making it easier for abutters and community members to access projects that are going on in town. Ms. DeCoursey is also working on our online Maps Library, compiling a collection of various Town maps for public access.

OLD TOWNE WAY

Materials presented:

Letter from George & Davis P.C. representing the Sturbridge Woods Homeowner's Association (Old Towne Way) dated 11/27/17.

Department Memo from the Conservation Commission regarding Stormwater Management along Old Towne Way dated 11/20/17.

Metes and Bounds prepared by Para Land Surveying, Inc. (349 Ashland Avenue, Route 131, Southbridge, MA 01550).

As Built Plan and Profile of Old Towne Way Sturbridge, Mass – prepared by Richard Para – Dated December 8, 2004 Updated December 1, 2017.

Old Towne Way is located within Spring Hill Estates; a subdivision located off of Glendale Road that was approved by the Planning Board in 1995. The development contains 21 lots and the last of the lots were built upon quite some time ago. There is documentation in the project files that the conditions of the approved subdivision had been met in 2004, however, there was an issue with lack of school bus turnaround and a notation that the Conservation Commission had requested an additional retention basin be installed. It is important to note that the approved subdivision plan does not show a school bus turnaround.

Ms. Bubon introduced Julie Horrigan, President of the Homeowner's Association, who had submitted a Petition to the Town Administrator's office for a warrant article for street acceptance. Based upon that request, the Town has been working with Ms. Horrigan to identify any outstanding issues and repairs that would need to be addressed before the Town could consider the acceptance. Ms. Bubon worked with Greg Morse from DPW to determine exactly what was needed from the Homeowner's Associate to move forward with the street acceptance.

During this process, Ms. Horrigan has been in contact with Richard Para, the original surveyor for this project and he has set all bounds and provided as-builts and legal descriptions as required. Additionally, appropriate documentation has been provided showing the "blanket easement" for National Grid for the development. This easement has been recorded in the Worcester District Registry of deeds Book 22681, Page 111.

The subdivision was completed many years ago, and there were some items that required repair before the Town could consider acceptance. On October 7, 2017 Ms. Bubon and Mr. Morse inspected the subdivision and found the following items needed attention:

1. Trim around the stop sign
2. Remove or repair the structures and signs at the entrances to the development (prefer removal)
3. Repair the identified sidewalk locations that have settled or are broken
4. Remove the tree across from house #2 that is overhanging the sidewalk
5. Provide easements for all electric equipment that is outside of the right of way
6. Cut and patch pavement areas that have delaminated
7. Most of the structures in the roadway need repair – pavement should be cut out around the structures, the structure should be checked for soundness, any humps should be removed, and then the pavement must be patched.

At the time of inspection, it was suggested to Ms. Horrigan that she contact the Conservation Commission for review of the drainage structures, because there was a request in the original file that the Conservation Commission had requested the construction of an additional basin. As a result of this inspection, the Commission did request maintenance be performed that has been completed. No documentation was found to indicate the additional basin was required by the Order of Conditions.

When the Commission discussed the drainage at its meeting, an abutter indicated that the stormwater overflows the western side of the structure and damages Lake Road. Ms. Bubon and Mr. Morse inspected the development in a heavy rain on November 22, 2017. During this inspection they found no evidence of overtopping, in fact there was at least an additional two feet of basin area that could have been filled before it reached the outlet. While it may be possible that the structure would outlet during a major storm even such as a 100-year storm, it does not appear that this is an area concern. Driving on Lake Road during this inspection there was no evidence of damage caused by the basin. There is a lot on Lake Road being cleared and this may have been the cause of concern the abutter noticed.

During this inspection, it was noted that all the items that needed attention in October has been satisfactorily corrected. The Homeowners Associate has paid, out of pocket, \$40,000 in repairs. Ms. Horrigan has worked very hard to see this project through with the full support of the neighborhood.

Finally, the issue of the bus stop was reviewed. Ms. Bubon was advised that the school buses actually already go down Old Towne Way except in the winter months. There is adequate room to turn around except when the snow is piled at the end of the street. The route is posted each year and to indicate that buses will not travel on Old Towne Way from Thanksgiving through March. During those months the students must go out the end at Paradise Lane for pick up. Based on this information, the lack of a school bus turnaround is no longer an issue.

The Board had the following questions, comments, and concerns:

- It is not often that the Board sees the Homeowner's Association going the extra mile, and this is truly inspiring.

- How do the neighbors feel? Ms. Horrigan stated that 100% of the members of the Homeowner's Associate voted to support this project out of pocket.
- Ms. Bubon mentioned that DPW has agreed to seal the cracks in the pavement with their other Town work in the spring, and took it off the Homeowner's Association's list of tasks.
- Ms. Horrigan extended her gratitude toward Ms. Bubon and her help with this process. The Town Planner's assistance and availability to help the Homeowner's Association really made the whole thing possible, and Ms. Horrigan was very grateful of Ms. Bubon's ability to help answer any and all questions to get Old Towne Way to the point of being ready for the street acceptance process.

Motion: Made by Mr. Cunniff that the Planning Board Petition the Board of Selectmen to begin the process to lay out Old Towne Way as a town way in accordance with Chapter 82 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as shown on the layout plan of land entitled "As Built Plan and Profile of Old Town Way Sturbridge, Mass" prepared by Richard D. Para, P.O. Box 202, Southbridge, MA.

2nd: Mr. Chamberland

Discussion: None

Vote: 6 – 0

NEXT MEETING

December 13, 2017 4:30pm @ Center Office Building

January 9, 2017 6:30pm @ Town Hall Meeting Room

On a motion made by Ms. Hart and seconded by Mr. Cunniff, and voted 6 - 0, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.