

**Sturbridge Planning Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, September 26, 2023  
Center Office Building**

**Present:**

Dane LaBonte  
Charlie Blanchard  
Wally Hersee  
Sue Waters  
Taylor Stedman  
David Bourbeau  
Brad Goodwin  
Jean Bubon, Town Planner  
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant

**Also Present:**

Lenny Jalbert, Jalbert Engineering  
Ashley Steppic, 60 Main Street  
Michael Caplette, Caplette Law  
Justin Stelmok, Blueberry Hill Estates  
John Stelmok, Blueberry Hill Estates  
Matt Sosik, Berry Farms Road



C. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and read the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes**

August 29, 2023

**Motion: To approve the minutes of August 29, 2023 as written.**

**By: D. LaBonte**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Waters**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

**ANR – 32 Mashapaug Road – Marlene Lazo**

J. Bubon stated that the driveway of 34 Mashapaug Road is right on the property line so the applicant is requesting that some land from 32 Mashapaug Road be conveyed to 34 to give them more space around the existing driveway.

**Motion: To endorse the ANR for 32 Mashapaug Road as presented.**

**By: W. Hersee**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Waters**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

**ANR – 9 Cedar Pond Road – Doreen Grout**

J. Bubon stated that the applicant did not finish the ANR submittal and will be coming to a future meeting.

**Continuation of Public Hearing – Ashley Steppic – 60 Main Street – Site Plan Review**

A. Steppic, M. Caplette and L. Jalbert came before the Board.

J. Bubon discussed the project and gave an update from the Conservation Commission approval. She stated that the easement between 60 Main Street and the abutting property has increased, the applicant is currently waiting for the new owner to sign the agreement. M. Caplette discussed that the 10 ft. right of way has been extended to 20 ft. and they will have the agreement with the new owner signed soon. J. Bubon stated that she recommends approval of the project with conditions.

**Motion: To Close the Public Hearing.**

**By: S. Waters**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: W. Hersee**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

**Motion: To grant the Site Plan Approval as requested with the following conditions:**

- 1. The easement agreement as proposed shall be signed by all parties and recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds and a copy shall be provided to the Planning Department prior to construction of the parking lot.***
- 2. The site plan shall be revised to reflect the new easement area once the easement has been recorded and that shall be provided to the Planning Department prior to construction of the parking lot.***
- 3. All construction and site improvements shall be in conformance with the plans and specifications submitted and approved by the Planning Board.***
- 4. All State and Local Zoning Bylaws, Building Codes and Regulations must be adhered to.***
- 5. All other necessary permits must be obtained prior to the start of construction.***
- 6. The site shall be kept in a neat and orderly condition throughout the construction process.***
- 7. Exterior construction shall only occur during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to Noon on Saturday. No exterior construction shall occur on Sundays or the following holidays – New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.***
- 8. An emergency contact phone list with at least two names and numbers on it be supplied to the Sturbridge Police Dept. and Planning Department to be used by the dispatchers, in case of an off hour emergency, prior to the start of the project. The list must be updated whenever necessary for the duration of the project.***
- 9. The applicant shall notify the Planning Department office forty-eight hours prior to the start of construction.***
- 10. Maintenance is required for all plantings as proposed and existing. The plantings shall be reviewed annually by the owner/applicant and any plant material requiring replacement shall occur.***

**11. An as-built must be provided for all site work including plantings when the work has been completed.**

**By: W. Hersee**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: S. Waters**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

*Documents Reviewed:*

- *Site Plan Application;*
- *A plan entitled "Proposed Site Plan Prepared for Ashley Steppic 60 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA" Plan was prepared by Jalbert Engineering – 54 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566. Plan dated 4-25-23, revised through 7-20-23;*
- *Certified Abutters List;*
- *A plan entitled: "Exhibit A Easement Plan" prepared by Jalbert Engineering – 54 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566, plan dated 9-12-23;*
- *A Document entitled: "Grant of Easement" un-executed;*
- *Town Planner Report;*
- *Departmental Memos;*
- *Legal Notice;*
- *Certificate of mailings*

**Town Planner Report**

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Thai Place – Food truck will be relocated to Yankee Spirits parking lot for the months of September and October. It will be some time before their restaurant is repaired from the fire damage.
- Sawdust Café is expected to open at the end of this week (9/23) if all repairs are completed and inspections made.
- Historic Preservation Plan is complete and should be accepted by the Historic Commission at its next meeting.
- A new Church – Iglesia Pentecostal Y Misionera Luz En Tenieblas has opened at 71 Main Street (in the former Fitzgerald Dance Studio location).
- Next Meeting Dates:
  - October 10<sup>th</sup> –
    - Solar Array – 200 Haynes Street, has obtained quotes for Peer Review of the Stormwater Management System and will be awarding the review to CMG, however, as of this meeting the applicant has still not paid the Peer Review Fee. No review will begin until we have payment. At this point, we anticipate opening the Hearing and letting the applicant make their presentation and then continuing to a later date if something does not changes in the next day or so.
    - EV Charging Stations are being proposed at Pilot Travel Center and this Waiver of Site Plan will also be on the agenda.
  - October 24<sup>th</sup> –

- Cornerstone Bank – 200 Charlton Road – relocate ITM to rear of the lot.

### **Covenant Release – Fiske Hill East Realty Trust aka Berry Farms Road**

M. Sosik came before the Board. J. Bubon discussed the release of Lot 3 (Blueberry Hill Estates) and read the Lot Release Certification.

M. Sosik stated that there would be no other lot release until after the road is paved, saying that there are waiting for a MassDOT permit for the water connection. Once all the utilities are in then they will pave the road.

**Motion: To Sign the Lot Release Certification for Lot 3 Berry Farms Road.**

**By: D. LaBonte**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: W. Hersee**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

*Documents Reviewed:*

- *Blank Lot 3 Release Certificate;*
- *Recorded Covenant for Fiske Hill East Realty Trust aka Berry Farms Road;*
- *Registry Recorded Subdivision plan entitled “Berry Farms Road Definitive Subdivision Lotting Plan located at 30 Main Street & 20 Fiske Hill Road Sturbridge, MA 01566 owed by Fiske Hill East Realty Trust 97 Arnold Road, Fiskdale, MA 01518” prepared by McClure Engineering (119 Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507) Dated 4/6/22, Sheets 2-6;*
- *Town Planner Report;*

### **Blueberry Hill Estates – Phasing Plan and Surety**

Justin and John Stelmok came before the Board. J. Bubon stated that the Blueberry Hill Estates project has been approved by the Conservation Commission. Justin Stelmok gave the Board an update on final approvals and discussed what is left to do in the next couple of months.

S. Waters asked if the developers would be in charge of plowing the roads in the winter or if they would be plowed by the Town. J. Bubon stated that the owners would be in charge of plowing since it will be considered a private community, like Crescent Gate.

**Motion: To Enter into the Covenant and sign the documents for recording.**

**By: S. Waters**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: W. Hersee**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

*Documents Reviewed:*

- *A spreadsheet entitled “Copy of Current Bond Numbers – Sturbridge 8.28.23”*
- *A plan entitled “Special Permit and Site Plan “Blueberry Hill Estates” Lot 3 Berry Farms Road Sturbridge, MA 01566 prepared for Justin Stelmok 557 Southwest Cutoff Worcester, MA 01607” Sheet C19 of 31 “Phasing Plan” Dated 7/12/23;*

- *Registry Recorded Planning Board Decision of Special Permit & Site Plan Approval for Blueberry Hill Estates;*
- *A document entitled "Proposed Timeline of Sturbridge Project Build Out – August 15<sup>th</sup> 2023".*

### **Old/New Business**

W. Hersee asked about the following:

- An update on Interstate Towing. – J. Bubon gave a brief update and discussed the mitigation due to heavy rainfall.
- An update on the new Mexican restaurant going in at 178 Main Street. – J. Bubon stated that they are working on finishing up the inside of the restaurant.
- An update on the Noble project. – J. Bubon stated that they are still working on the utilities, the stop control access, and are waiting for MassDOT final approval. She discussed the MassWorks Grant and that it was on track to be at 75% designed by December by Solli Engineering. She also discussed Alrig which MassDOT would like to be accessed by making a u-turn at the signal and that Solli and Noble are willing to work with Alrig and asked the Board to stay tuned for more information.

The Board discussed the traffic mitigation on Route 20 and other Route 20 projects.

B. Goodwin asked about requirements around Open Space with manufactured homes and construction. J. Bubon stated that there are Open Space requirements within the Subdivision Control Regulations and the Manufactured Homes Bylaw and she discussed requirements but said that it is definitely something that we can look into in more detail.

T. Stedman asked if the Thai Place wanted to be at Yankee Spirits. J. Bubon stated that they did, so that they are more visible then they would be behind the currently Thai Place Building.

T. Stedman gave an update to the Board about the recent CMRPC conference and discussed the draft CMRPC economic plan and survey. J. Bubon mentioned that there was funding available in the budget if anyone on the Board wanted attend CMRPC training.

C. Blanchard brought up the issue of feather flags around town. J. Bubon stated that businesses in town are allowed one feather flag per business. They discussed that previous signage violations had been sent to Nelson Burlingame (Zoning Enforcement Officer) to look into and that a follow up should be done. W. Hersee asked if there was a fine for signage violations and J. Bubon stated that Nelson had a process. J. Bubon said that she would send Nelson a letter to follow up with previously found signage violations. D. LaBonte stated that if we get any feedback from business owners on changes we should look into updating the regulations. D. Bourbeau asked if there were any other signage considered temporary. J. Bubon discussed what types of signs were allowed in town, and gave more detail in regards to flag signs and keeping them in good condition. D. Bourbeau stated that business owners may not be aware of the bylaws. C. Blanchard stated that the Zoning Enforcement Officer needs to go through the signage enforcement process.

## **Adjournment**

**Motion: To adjourn meeting.**

**By: D. LaBonte**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: W. Hersee**

**Vote: All in Favor (7-0)**

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy