

Town of Auburn, Massachusetts
Minutes of the Meeting
Planning Board
Auburn Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room
April 09, 2019– 7:00p.m.

Members Present: Wendy Steinhilber, Ron Brooks, Scott Wrenn, John Regan, and Nicholas Lynch

Members Absent: Steven Chambers

Also Present: Adam Menard - Town Planner, Rachel Pressey- Staff Assistant

Ms. Steinhilber called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The Town cable staff was present, and the meeting was recorded and televised. No other attendee was recording the meeting.

Public Hearings:

Waiver Request- ZPT Energy Solutions II LLC 347 Rochdale Street: Landscaping Plan, 11.2 and Lighting Plan, 4.16

7:00pm Applicant: ZPT Energy Solutions II, LLC, a request for a Site Plan Approval and a Special Permit under Section 3.10.2.3 of the Zoning Bylaws for the use of a large-scale ground-mounted solar energy systems, on property located at 347 Rochdale St., Auburn, MA. Map 29, Parcel 7.

Mr. Brooks recused himself from the public hearing.

Kevin McGarry of Fuss & O'Neil, Paul McLean of ZPT Energy Solutions, and David Kelley of Meridian Associates were present at the meeting. Mr. McLean reminded the Board of plans to develop a 15-acre 4-megawatt ac solar array on a 45-acre parcel, with a 26-acre disturbance. The project has been granted Conservation Commission approval, a Special Permit from Zoning Board of Appeals, and all peer review comments have been satisfied.

Ms. Steinhilber expressed concerns about waiving landscaping requirements due to the elevation of the solar array and the visual impacts on surrounding residents. Ms. Steinhilber asked that visual impacts be as minimal as possible, as stated in the Bylaw, and recommended visually impacted residents be notified and concerns mitigated.

Mr. Regan asked about the elevation of the proposed solar arrays.

Mr. McGarry explained that existing vegetation provides optimal screening and additional landscaping would have no impact. Mr. McGarry stated that the northern array has a 66-foot elevation difference and the southern array has a 75-foot elevation difference.

Mr. McLean informed the Board that all direct abutters have been notified and concerns addressed and asked how visually impacted abutters is determined.

Mr. Wrenn stated that lot development is inevitable, as is the visual impact.

Mr. Brooks raised concerns about using his vegetation as screening for the solar arrays.

Mr. McLean stated that there is a 130 feet of buffer between the solar array and Mr. Brooks' property.

Joanna Launderville of 3 Aurilla Street asked if the quantity of proposed solar projects is of concern to the Board.

Ms. Steinhilber explained that the elevation of the proposed site is concerning.

Dominique Kerins of 25 Wellman Street asked if Leicester Street and Bryn Mawr Avenue residents have received notification.

Ms. Steinhilber stated that only direct abutters received notification.

Mr. Regan expressed concerns about visually impacted abutters' property values and suggested contacting the Town Assessor to determine those impacts.

Mr. Kelley asked if property value assessments is a component of the Solar Bylaw.

Mr. Menard stated that visual impacts is a component of the Solar Bylaw and determining those impacts is at the discretion of the Planning Board.

Rich Durand of 61 Wallace Street asked if planting evergreens would improve screening and if ZPT Energy has any similar development that could be looked at for impact comparison.

Mr. Regan explained that evergreens would not improve screening due to the elevation.

Ms. Steinhilber suggested notifying Leicester Street, Bryn Mawr Avenue, Waterman Street, and surrounding visually impacted abutters and mitigate any concerns. Ms. Steinhilber also recommended finding additional means to minimize the visual impact of the arrays.

Mr. Regan made the motion to continue the public hearing to the April 23, 2019 Planning Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Wrenn. ***The Board voted 4-0 in favor.***

7:10pm Creation of a new Section 12 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaws establishing and governing the Drury Square Village District (DSVD); Amending section 2.1 adding Drury Square Village District to the Classification of Districts; Amend Section 3.1 adding Drury Square Village District to the table of uses; Amend Section 9.6.1 adding the Planning Board as the Drury Square Village District Special Permit Granting Authority; Amend Section 5.4 adding Drury Square Village District to the dimensional table; Amend the Auburn Zoning Map defining the boundaries of the Drury Square Village District

Mr. Regan recused himself from the public hearing.

Mr. Wrenn made the motion to open the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Brooks. ***The Board voted 4-0 in favor.***

Heidi Murphy of Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission was present at the meeting. Ms. Murphy informed the Board that the addition of Drury Square and its components, will creates a mixed-use, pedestrian friendly, downtown area, that ties in to the Town's long range planning initiatives.

Mr. Brooks expressed excitement about the rejuvenation of Drury Square and acknowledged that it would be a lengthy process. Mr. Wrenn agreed.

Mr. Menard informed the Board that all affected businesses, residents, and town meeting members have been notified, and many attended public hearing with support for the Drury Square project. Mr. Menard added that the Board of Selectmen voted to recommend approval at the April 8, 2019 meeting.

No public comment.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 4-0 in favor.***

Mr. Wrenn made the motion to recommend approval of Section 12 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaws, Drury Square Village District, seconded by Mr. Brooks. ***The Board voted 4-0 in favor.***

7:15opm Creation of a new Section 13 Auburn Zoning Bylaws to define and govern Tiny Homes; An amendment to table of uses 3.1 and 3.2 to add a new section 3.2.2.11 for Tiny Homes; An amendment to Section 3.7 amending 3.7.4 to allow Tiny Homes

Mr. Regan made the motion to open the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Mr. Menard informed the Board that the proposed Bylaw is under Town Counsel review, though he does not anticipate any major changes to the current draft. Mr. Menard added that the Board of Selectmen voted to recommend approval.

Mr. Regan addressed a newspaper article regarding the Tiny Homes petition and inquired about the intention of the petitioners' proposal. Mr. Regan also stated that the Planning Board would oppose the driveway placement proposed in the article.

Bill Kerins of 25 Wellman Street explained that his newspaper statement referencing the driveway was to explain the size of the tiny home, not the location.

Rich Durand of 61 Wallace Street asked if the Tiny Homes would be mounted on foundations or wheels.

Mr. Regan stated that the Building Code would require a structural slab.

Joanna Launderville of 3 Aurilla Street asked if the proposed Bylaw would allow building tiny homes throughout the Town or if each tiny home would require approval. Ms. Launderville also advocated tiny homes as an affordable housing option.

Ms. Steinhilber explained that the proposed Bylaw permits tiny homes in the Town of Auburn and each tiny home will require approval. Ms. Steinhilber further explained that tiny home occupancy is intended for the disabled and to support aging in place.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Regan. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Mr. Regan made the motion to recommend approval with Town Counsel's minor modifications, seconded by Mr. Brooks. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

7:20pm Citizens Petition to allow Tiny Homes amending Auburn Zoning Bylaws Section 3.2, 3.7.4, 9.3; Add language requesting that adherence to the 2015 IRC Mass Building Codes will be in all cases trumped by the 2018 IRC Mass Building Codes for one and two family dwellings; make reference to Appendix Q

Mr. Wrenn made the motion to open the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Brooks. *The Board voted 5-0 in favor.*

Dominique Kerins and Bill Kerins were present at the meeting. Mr. Kerins asked the Board to adopt the 2018 Building Codes to allow for the development of tiny homes.

Mr. Menard stated that the Planning Board's proposed Zoning Bylaw Section 13 for Tiny Homes adopts 2018 Building Codes Appendix Q, which authorizes tiny homes.

No public comment.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Wrenn. *The Board voted 5-0 in favor.*

Mr. Regan made the motion not to recommend the Citizens Petition, seconded by Mr. Brooks. *The Board voted 5-0 in favor.*

7:25pm Applicant: Raymond & Molly Bonneville, a request for a Special Permit under Section 5.3.2 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaws, to create a hammerhead lot on property located at 23 Sunrise Ave., Auburn, MA. Map 8, Parcel 12.

Mr. Menard asked the Board to continue the public hearing as the Site Plan is currently under Zoning Board of Appeals review.

Mr. Regan made the motion to continue the public hearing to the April 23, 2019 Planning Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Wrenn. *The Board voted 5-0 in favor.*

7:35 PM Applicant Jonathan Poulin a request for Site Plan Approval under Sections 3.2.611 & 5.4 of the Zoning Bylaws for the operation of a new landscape business garage on property located at 121 Southbridge St. Auburn, MA. Map 12 Parcel 143

Jonathon Poulin of Poulin Construction, Brian Milisci of Whitman & Bingham Associates, and property owner Christopher Lizewski were present at the meeting. Mr. Milisci shared Site Plan revisions; test pits witnessed by Graves Engineering, MDV trap cover updated, and a water quality unit and water recharge system.

Ms. Stienhilber asked about outstanding Graves Engineering Peer Review Comment 4 requirement for 12 inches of crushed stone.

Mr. Milisci stated that the updated plan increased the crushed stone from 6 inches to 12 inches.

Mr. Regan asked about the catch basin contour line and discharge location. Mr. Regan raised concerns that the berm may not be sufficient with heavy rain and overflow may run onto Route 12. Mr. Regan also suggested a hydrophilic seal on the oil and gas trap outlet.

Mr. Milinski stated that as long as the crowned drain remains clear, it would adequately drain runoff.

No public comment.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Mr. Wrenn made the motion to approve the Site Plan, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 4-0-1 in favor; Mr. Regan abstained.***

Member Discussion:

117 Washington Street- Lundgren Collision minor modification

Mr. Menard shared Site Plan modifications for inclusion of a second transformer servicing the second building.

Mr. Regan asked that bollards surround the transformer pad.

Mr. Regan made the motion to approve the modifications with 6-inch bollards surrounding the transformer pad, seconded by Mr. Wrenn. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

476 Leicester St.-Lot 1 Site Plan/Stormwater changes

476 Leicester St. Bridge-structural review

Pedro Rodriguez of Seaboard Solar Holdings was present at the meeting. Mr. Rodriguez informed the Board that Graves Engineering is satisfied with the stormwater modifications and there are no outstanding peer review comments. Mr. Menard added that the bridge structural review is still under peer review.

Mr. Brooks asked about the bridge's weight capacity and anticipated structural improvements.

Mr. Rodriguez explained that the bridge may require decking repair and will likely be constructed of wood or precast concrete. Mr. Rodriguez was uncertain of the bridge's weight capacity.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to approve the stormwater modifications, seconded by Mr. Regan. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Reliant – signs

Mr. Wrenn recused himself from the discussion.

Jason Parillo, representing Reliant Medical Group was present at the meeting. Mr. Parillo shared plans to add 2 Endoscopy Center signs on the Reliant building to guide vehicle and pedestrian traffic to the department entrance.

Ms. Steinhilber asked if the proposed signs have back lighting.

Mr. Parillo stated that the larger sign on the corner would be backlit.

Mr. Brooks made the motion to approve the minor modification to include additional signage, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 4-0 in favor.***

188 Oxford Street N- Site Plan Amendment

Reverend Nicolas Gonzalez Jr. was present at the meeting. Rev. Gonzalez shared Site Plan revisions replacing landscaping frontage with fencing. The proposed fence will have 2 man gates.

Mr. Brooks asked if the rear wooded area is a part of his property.

Rev. Gonzalez stated that the wooded area is on the property and added that he aims to build a parking lot there in the future.

Mr. Regan suggested additional signage for handicap parking.

Mr. Regan made a motion to approve the minor modification, seconded by Mr. Wrenn. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Blaker Street- Ashworth Hill Subdivision

Mr. Menard informed the Board that a representative from the Ashworth Hill sent notification stating that they could not attend the meeting, due to prior commitments.

Mr. Wrenn asked if Town Counsel advised next steps for the Planning Board.

Mr. Menard informed the Board that the Department of Public Works has the authority to issue a stop work order. Mr. Menard added that the developers are currently complying with the Department of Public Works Director's requests.

Ms. Steinhilber recommended a thorough review and potential revisions to existing bylaws to determine the scope of Planning Board authority and compliance enforcement.

Ms. Steinhilber asked the Board to forward concerns to the Town Planner prior to the next Planning Board meeting.

Briarcliff Estates – Subdivision

Ms. Steinhilber shared photos and videos sent from Briarcliff Estates residents showing torrential runoff and property flooding. Ms. Steinhilber also explained that residents' attempts to resolve with Gallo Builders have been unsuccessful.

Mr. Menard informed the Board that he would be visiting the site on April 10, 2019.

Ms. Steinhilber asked Mr. Menard to add Briarcliff Estates to the next Planning Board discussion.

Minutes:

03/26/19

Mr. Regan made the motion to approve the March 26, 2019 Planning Board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Lynch. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Adjournment

Mr. Regan made the motion to adjourn at 8:45pm, seconded by Mr. Brooks. ***The Board voted 5-0 in favor.***

Next meeting will be April 23, 2019 at 7 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachel Pressey, Staff Assistant to the Town Manager.

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