

## **BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD**

Selectmen's Meeting Room

Town Hall

**Minutes**

**January 28, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jacinda Barbehenn, Chair, Mark Siegenthaler, Shawn Hanegan, Amy Lloyd and Jeffrey Cohen

**STAFF PRESENT:** Tony Fields, Planning Director; Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Emily Mitchell (Select Board); David Powell (Finance Committee); Ryan Doucette, Bedford Citizen; Bopha Malone; Steven Hagan; Yen Tran; Sheena Santos; X. Pan; Heather Panhahn; Ellis Kriesberg; Armen Zindjian; Robert Batt; Rick Rosen; Syd Anderson; Diane Hestey; Dot Bergin; Theresa Stevens; Lee Stevens; Barry Coanel; John Pimentel; Kevin Curran; Kristine DiFiore; Carlton Quinn; Steve Soillis; Ed Pierce

Chair Barbehenn called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Evacuation Notice read by Member Cohen

### **DEVELOPMENT SESSION**

**330 South Road**—preliminary discussion of multifamily housing by Comprehensive Permit

A potential Chapter 40B application is being presented for informal discussion as the applicants seek a favorable recommendation from the Planning Board prior to a future presentation to the Selectmen about Town support for this redevelopment so that it would be a “friendly 40B”. The final approval will rest with the Zoning Board of Appeals, but on its way will be reviewed by the Bedford Housing Partnership, Planning Board and Selectmen.

Materials available are:

- package consisting of a cover letter from Attorney Pamela Brown dated January 15, a concept site plan for the development by Ganek Architects (updated from the previous November, 2019 version with a new building), architectural illustrations and concept floor plans, and a summary of buildings, unit types and sizes;
- comments from Fire, Code and Health Departments;
- GIS plans of site and surrounding area supplied by staff.

The property at 330 South Road currently consists of a farmhouse and 4 outbuildings, most used for various businesses. The property owner proposes to create 24 units of multifamily housing by converting the 2 large barns and farmhouse into 18 housing units, demolishing the 2 existing smaller garages, and constructing one new building with 6 housing units. A mixture of 1-, 2-and

3-bedroom units is proposed, including some ground floor units that would enable 1-floor living. 25% of the units would be affordable as required under the 40B criteria.

Chair Barbehenn has property owner introduce himself.

Steve Soillis, the property owner, provides a short summary of development efforts since 2018.

Chair Barbehenn opens the matter for Board member comments.

Member Hanegan states that he wants to discuss some things he doesn't see in the paperwork submitted. First he asks for information about any traffic study.

Mr. Soillis states that it is being worked on now.

Member Hanegan asks about having two points of access, noting that only one is shown on the current plan.

Mr. Soillis states that this will also be worked on. It would come out in the traffic study. A one-way system from Summer Street to South Road will be considered.

Member Hanegan asks about the circulation at the top of the hill since it appears awkward and could be a problem. Would need something more detailed with traffic pattern. Would like to see something more robust than what is provided. It is good to see the placement of the houses but need something to actually show how wide the lanes are and what the traffic pattern is expected to be especially for one-ways.

Mr. Soillis states that he will have this provided. The island at South Road has been there for many years, with movements in and out.

Member Siegenthaler states that the plans need to show the surroundings, including an accurate depiction of the road intersection and buildings on neighboring properties.

Mr. Soillis agrees to have that done.

Member Siegenthaler calculates that the proposed density is approximately 12 units per acre; it would be useful to know how that compares to the density of the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Soillis agrees with that.

Member Siegenthaler has no particular objection to the type of project but feels that more specific information should be added to the documents.

Mr. Soillis states that most of the neighborhood is made up of duplex houses on 10,000 square foot lots.

Member Cohen asks why this should be considered a friendly 40B project, inviting Mr. Soillis to make the case.

Mr. Soillis states that this allows the use of some of the existing buildings, enabling them to be preserved. He observes that it is hard to find good, appropriate tenants. Making it residential would be beneficial. There is more than 20,000 square feet of space, that should be used.

Also allows for the provision of affordable units.

Member Cohen asks how these buildings add to the affordable housing stock, in terms of numbers of bedrooms in the affordable units, and states that the Town will look at the mix. Asks about location of affordable units within the development.

Mr. Soillis states that the affordable units will be spread throughout the project.

Member Cohen also asks about what appears to be a lack of landscaping.

Mr. Soillis describes where green space will exist. Not currently shown on the present plans.

Member Cohen also asks about site amenities since none appear on the drawings. What kind of demographic is expected?

Mr. Soillis states that amenities will be detailed on updated drawings.

Member Cohen discusses change of use. Agrees that some impact of businesses could be alleviated. Also need to discuss residential use of vehicles and need for emergency vehicle access.

Member Lloyd discusses what is lacking on the drawings with respect to neighbors, need elevation drawings and density, etc. Must be shown. Not categorically opposed to higher density, and welcomes reuse of buildings but need more information as to what will actually be done with respect to replacing foundations and whether any authentic barn features will remain. Also, issue about access and egress is very important here. Also, earlier version of this project included use of two other existing house lots. They appear not to be included in these plans. Seems like they should be for a better project. Basically seems to see not a lot of greenspace, a whole lot of asphalt and buildings tucked wherever because you are not using all the space you could potentially use. Also question the owner's reference to this being a village style complex. Does not see this as a village layout. Would encourage you to wrap in the other two properties, think about access/egress and think about how all three parcels could be used in a much more pleasing example to the community. Would prefer to see some small cottages included rather than the large new building. As far as traffic study is concerned, not as concerned about traffic along road, more about egress. The road intersection is dysfunctional and it is what causes most of the issue. Sight lines and safety are important. Also, believes the site design could be redone to provide more of a village green concept.

Mr. Soillis states that the Historic Preservation Committee was fine with the concept for the barns remaining. 11 Summer Street, as a two family house, will be designed to look consistent - like a farmhouse with a barn attached.

Member Lloyd also believes that more single level units for use by downsizers should be included in the project. The sloping ground allows two walk-out levels which should help.

Barry Ganek, architect, agrees. He wants a sense of the density acceptable. He could look at integrating work on all parcels. The historic buildings are an asset to the neighborhood. Wouldn't use vinyl or aluminum siding. Windows would be appropriate scale. Interiors are true barns. Experienced in adapting historic buildings, and can meet goals Ms. Lloyd is expressing.

Member Siegenthaler discusses potential for redistributing buildings through use of 9 and 11 Summer Street, reducing impact on neighborhood at other side. Also, should provide more specifics as to other Zoning Bylaw requirements from which you will be asking relief, e.g. setbacks. Will make it easier to review and understand, and will be required if the project moves forward as a friendly 40B. Need to prepare a listing of all waivers that will be sought.

Member Hanegan discusses what the Bedford Housing Study stated to be the needs of the town, such as not a lot of stock available for downsizing seniors, not a lot of stock for young couples just starting out. When you come back, you should be able to show how your proposed mix of units matches the actual needs of the town, in terms of sizes, accessibility etc.

Member Cohen asks how 49 parking spaces was derived as the number to provide.

Mr. Soillis states it is based on two spaces per unit plus a bonus space.

Member Cohen notes that does not provide much, if any, guest parking.

Member Lloyd states that another approach to parking might be to provide just one guaranteed space per unit, plus a limited number of additional ones by payment/ demand and some visitor parking.

Chair Barbehenn opens the discussion to the public audience.

John Pimentel, 26-28 Gennetti Circle. Lives at the back of the barns. Trying to jam a lot on only two acres of land. He does a lot of developing in the City of Boston. Has a problem with there not being enough space, and the development being on a hill. Also problem with the location of the road, noise and other issues. Trying to jam too much into the area. Traffic is very bad, including that generated by the soccer field. There are no sidewalks. Safe bus pick-ups will be needed. They will be attempting to use #9 as a second means of egress. Will trash pick-up be noisy? There are no answers being given here so why are we here?

Member Cohen states that the discussions to date have been preliminary. Will have to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for approval. Planning Board can review the idea in principle and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Board of Selectmen would have to approve of concept before applicant can move forward before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a Comprehensive Permit.

Member Siegenthaler states that these preliminary hearings are conceptual only. That is the point of a friendly 40B concept. The Board is gathering information and giving some input. Housing needs have to be considered too.

Theresa Stevens, 23 Summer Street. Her concerns are the traffic and the school buses. Son is in high school. He has difficult time now getting to the school bus, which stops at Neillian Street. Another bus stops at the road intersection. Add more cars, up to 40 more cars, coming out of the complex right at the intersection. No sidewalks. It can take her 32 minutes to get from her house to the center of town. You are adding much more congestion. Very difficult for children.

Chair Barbehenn states that there is a traffic study being prepared which should provide more detailed information.

Ellis Kreisberg, 49 Winterberry Way. Having trouble understanding what other potential uses exist if the current proposal is denied.

Mr. Soillis states that there are only two alternatives. One is to try to return back to what it was before and which wasn't working from the perspective of trying to manage small businesses such as landscapers. Other alternative would be to take everything down and put up single family houses. Would be interested in any other concepts.

Member Hanegan states that the underlying zoning is Residential C which is one unit per 25,000 sq. ft. Location is not large enough to be considered for a cluster development. So the options are either you take what you currently have as grandfathered uses or take everything down and put up three large houses.

Heather Randhahn, 20 Fayette Road. Has concerns about the character of putting a large rental property next to our neighborhood. Would prefer single family homes. Rental complexes are transient. Also have concern with the traffic in the area for the reasons stated by others tonight. Not comfortable with so many rental units.

Barbara Anderson, 35 South Road. Concerned with parking. Because of small parking area at soccer field, there are often cars parked up and down the street. Since this complex seems to have very limited guest parking, what happens when someone has a function or party. Will these extra cars end up parking on South Road?

Armen Zilkjian, 9 Hartwell Road. Wants the traffic study published when completed and explanation should be provided as to how the study was done and what are the results. Same for density. The Board seems to be willing to deal with heavier density sometimes but where is the threshold for that and when does it become uncomfortable.

Member Hanegan states that certainly would want the traffic study to be published. It may not show a big percentage increase. Would require that the study address the safety of the area and what should be used for mitigation of any safety problem. Density would be a judgment call, with a need to consider how different the density would be from the neighborhood, whether it meets the needs of the town, etc.

Dick Williams, School Street. Are the current buildings rented now?

Mr. Soillis states that all are rented. Building B is just unheated storage, currently vehicles stored for winter. Building A is rented to businesses, currently a plumber. The buildings are not commercial grade, which affects rents.

Member Siegenthaler states that Mr. Soillis has been before the Historic Preservation Committee which voted that Buildings A,B and C were preferably preserved, in September 2018.

Mr. Soilliss agrees.

Member Cohen asks about proposed price points for the rentals.

Mr. Soillis states he can gather that information and provide it to the Board.

Member Cohen asks if Mr. Soillis would like to come back before the Board after having an opportunity to prepare responses to the numerous questions asked tonight.

Mr. Soillis agrees that he would like to do that.

Member Siegenthaler agrees. Would suggest coming back next month or possibly in two months.

Assistant Planner Perry draws attention to recommendations in Bedford's Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan for improving safety in the vicinity of the project. It suggests a roundabout at the road intersection and sidewalks along the roads. Chair Barbehenn agrees and mentions next large sidewalk project to be along South Road from near the town center to Liberty Road which would not reach as far as the intersection in question.

**209 Burlington Road** – CMT Realty Partnership – Site Plan Review – Proposed parking lot expansion in support of Industrial Mixed Use at 213 Burlington Road

Carlton Quinn and Steven Lee of Allen & Major, Christine DiFiore and Kevin Curran of Curran Management for Petitioner.

Board packets include cover letter dated January 22 from Pam Brown, plans from Allen and Major dated January 15, drainage summary report from Allen and Major dated January 17, comments in briefing memo from Planning Director Fields, and memo dated January 24 from DPW Civil/Environmental Engineer Kristin Dowdy concerning flood plan issues.

Ms. DiFiore states that Attorney Brown could not attend this meeting.

Ms. DiFiore states that in November two different packages were submitted with parking data. The Board asked for some scaled drawings which they had an architect prepare with actual measurements for tenant useable spaces which were provided at the end of November.

Mr. Quinn states that since the last meeting they have submitted a set of engineered site plans accompanied by a drainage report for review. The main part of the whole project is on the board, being the additional parking lot we are looking to get approved. We had an arborist come in for a review of the trees and got a recommendation from the arborist as to how far to keep the parking lot back from the trees.

Mr. Quinn also states that the traffic engineer has showed the traffic improvements in the parking lot and the additional exit lane and safety signs that were proposed as part of the recommendation and in coordination with the town. For the parking lot we have 37 new parking stalls. Also have a pedestrian access over to the restaurants.

This whole area is located within a flood plain and hope to have our Notice of Intent submission made this week to the Conservation Commission. Because of the flood plain, the best proposed design is to use porous pavement. This porous pavement design is all inclusive as a low impact development because it doesn't add any impervious area. We provided a drainage report with storm water calculations. We also have some landscaping plans at the end of the site plans. Planting details could change but the design will be similar. Also have provided additional drainage information based on a porous pavement design. Under-drains are not required but the Conservation Commission wanted them on a prior similar project, so have included them. In the drain report at the back of the report we have provided some flood plain calculations to show that we have not reduced the flood storage volume. Have made it better.

Member Lloyd asks about an O&M plan for the pervious pavement because that needs to be part of this.

Mr. Quinn notes that the plans submitted state that this will be provided. Hoping to provide an O&M plan in conjunction with the Conservation Commission filing, similar to what was approved for 54 Middlesex Turnpike about 18 months ago on a similar design.

Member Lloyd states that the Board will need to see documentation dealing with the easements that will apply if one of the properties is sold.

Planning Director Fields states that the easement was put into the 213 Bedford Road decision as a condition and we can add similar language to this decision for 209 as well.

Planning Director Fields comments that the landscaping plan and plantings are good. Also notes that the parking table on the plans makes reference to 41 parking spaces rather than the current number of 37; this should be corrected. Current parking utilization is affected by the vacant space in 213, but he is comfortable with the 37 spaces being added. Also suggests that any drainage issues that might remain here can be left to the Conservation Commission. Also notes that the concerns we had about the internal intersection have been handled by a redesign.

Planning Director Fields also reports that Planning notified Attorney Brown that the MBTA has agreed to allow us to set up a formal bus stop in front of 209 Burlington Rd. and that we will take up Mr. Curran's offer to provide a bus shelter there. Will need to have a site visit with DPW to establish exactly where the bus stop should be located.

Chair Barbehenn provides her thanks to Mr. Curran with respect to providing the bus shelter. Member Siegenthaler states that the bus stop details will need careful consideration.

General agreement that a location toward the west of #209 will serve the whole block well.

Member Lloyd asks if the applicant will create a walkway to it. Mr. Curran agrees.

Members discuss next step. Agree to move to vote.

Motion to approve the Site Plan Review contingent upon: the Conservation Commission approving the corresponding Notice of Intent; given that the developer has agreed to install a Bus Stop shelter and path, working with Town staff to finalize the details; and easement language similar to that included in the decision for 213 Burlington Rd with respect the potential future sale of one of the two properties, by Member Hanegan.

Second by Member Lloyd

Vote: 4-0-0 (Member Cohen leaves prior to vote)

Motion carries.

### **18 North Road – Big Red Tree LLC – Site Plan Review**

Motion to continue this matter to February 25, 2020 without testimony, at the applicant's request, by Member Hanegan.



Second by Member Lloyd

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

### **BUSINESS SESSION**

#### **Evergreen Meadows PRD – Surety Reduction**

Melanson Development is nearing completion of the 17 unit PRD that extended Evergreen Avenue. Packets include email request dated January 10 for surety reduction, comments in briefing memo from Planning Director Fields, and copy of tri-party agreement, “Performance secured by funds retained by lender; release of covenant”. Widening of the street at the approach to the extension project, and ongoing review of draft as-builts remain the main items to be completed. The DPW has submitted a Memorandum dated January 22 with a summary of the project status and recommendation on the amount to release.

Director Fields notes that the developer has received a copy of the memo and knows that the amount recommended for release is less than requested.

Motion to release \$179,000 from the Evergreen Meadows PRD surety to the developer of Evergreen Meadows, by Member Lloyd.

Second by Member Siegnethaler

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

#### **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) – Outreach Strategy**

Chair Barbehenn and Planning Director Fields discuss that the Town Meeting preparation schedule puts presentation of zoning articles on the Selectmen agenda for February 3 and on the Finance Committee agenda for February 6. The warrant will be formally closed on February 10. Any presentation slides to be used at town meeting are due to the Town Manager’s office by March 11. The Board needs to discuss who would like to present at either of these upcoming meetings and the formal presentation at town meeting. Jon Sills was receptive to a joint meeting with the School Committee.

Planning Director Fields has discussed the presentation to be made at Town Meeting with the Town Manager and Town Manager has the final version of the proposal.

Members Hanegan, Cohen and Lloyd agree to attend the Finance Committee. Because this is a majority of the Board, Planning Director will post this as a meeting.

Chair Barbehenn asks who should be the point person for Finance Committee.

Member Lloyd suggests that she and Member Cohen do it. Member Hanegan agrees.

Chair Barbehenn asks who will be attending the Select Board meeting.

Member Siegenthaler states that he will be there and is willing to present. Member Lloyd will back him up.

Planning Director Fields states that he offered for the Board to attend the School Committee meeting in the High School on March 10 to discuss the ADU bylaw. They might like to include discussion of how the proposal could assist teacher housing. Also suggests that if the Board has other business, it can reconvene in an adjoining room.

Staff discusses need to pick a presenter and prepare a presentation of the revised proposal for Annual Town Meeting. Any slides need to be done by March 10.

Member Hanegan states that he believes that last fall it appeared that there was a lot of social media that opposed the then Article and some was not factually correct. Feels that the Board needs to counter that happening again. All members should talk to friends, write letters etc.

Asst. Planner Perry suggests writing a letter (from the Chair) to the print and online newspapers.

### **REPORTS/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Member Hanegan reports that the Community Preservation Committee and the Select Board are discussing options for the Museum.

Member Lloyd reports that the Hartwell Road Committee is preparing to write a report to the Select Board.

Member Siegenthaler reports that HATS had a presentation from Liz Rust about the Regional Housing Services Office.

Chair Barbehenn reports that the Charter and Bylaw Review Committee will continue with its review of the General Bylaw and decided to do half of the agenda for this Annual Town Meeting and the other half for the Fall Special Town Meeting.

Planning Director Fields discusses what is now called the Minuteman Bikeway Extension and that it has moved substantially forward with its design. A week from Thursday will be the 25% design hearing in the Reed Room. State transportation officials will be here. Should move quickly then to 75% design. Hope it holds to 2022.

Development update chart was included in packets by Asst. Planner Perry.

**MINUTES**

November 26, 2019

Member Cohen provided a note of a suggested edit for page 6, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph, removing entire first full sentence and replacing with “Moving the Sign Bylaw from the General Bylaw to the Zoning Bylaw could be a consideration for the Charter and Bylaw Committee.”

Motion to approve the Minutes as amended, by Member Hanegan.

Second by Member Lloyd.

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

Motion to adjourn by Member Hanegan.

Second by Member Siegenthaler

Vote: 4-0-0

Motion carries.

Time: 9:20pm

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John B. Connarton  
Recording Secretary