

BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD
Online Meeting, hosted on Zoom

Minutes
April 7, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jacinda Barbehenn, Jeffrey Cohen, Amy Lloyd, Shawn Hanegan, Steven Hagan

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Emily Mitchell, Select Board member; Rick Rosen, COA Board member; Pam Brown, Brown & Brown; Meredith McCulloch, The Bedford Citizen.

Chair Barbehenn opened the meeting at 5:20 PM.

BUSINESS SESSION

Reorganization of Officers of the Board

Shawn Hanegan made a motion nominating Jeffrey Cohen as Chair. Seconded by Amy Lloyd.

Roll call vote:

Hanegan	Aye
Lloyd	Aye
Cohen	Aye
Hagan	Aye
Barbehenn	Aye

5-0-0

Amy Lloyd made a motion nominating Shawn Hanegan as Clerk. Seconded by Jacinda Barbehenn.

Roll call vote:

Lloyd	Aye
Hanegan	Aye
Barbehenn	Aye
Hagan	Aye
Cohen	Aye

5-0-0

Board members thanked Ms. Barbehenn for her service as Chair during the last year.

Isabella Lane – Request for release of lots in exchange for surety

Attorney Pam Brown represented Onivoi LLC, developer of the four lot conventional subdivision. She stated that the road and related work have been completed, except for a few street trees which are to go in soon. DPW staff has drawn up a schedule of the remaining work and its estimated costs. The applicant has submitted a check for \$8,000 as a cash bond, corresponding to the value of the remaining items (including trees, document preparation for street acceptance and contingencies), together with a completed Form I for release of all four lots and the street parcel from the Covenant.

Board packets included a copy of the Covenant, the landscape plan sheet from the signed plan set and a briefing note from Director Fields.

The Chair asked if staff had any comments.

Catherine Perry reported that she visited the site today and the work was neat looking and almost complete. Four street trees, which are proposed on the two lots that remain undeveloped, will need to await construction of those houses. She observed that there did appear to be some differences between the planting that has been done and what was shown on the landscape plan, although the number of trees is greater rather than less in total. Any revisions to the plan should be submitted to staff.

Tony Fields commented that the bond provides some cover for details to be sorted out. Ms. Perry concurred that there is no need to hold back the release of lots.

Motion proposed by Amy Lloyd: that the Planning Board authorize the release of all lots and the street right of way in the Isabella Lane definitive subdivision from the restrictions on sale in the Covenant dated March 31, 2014, recorded at the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 63617 Page 436, in exchange for surety in the amount of \$8,000 and further authorize the Planning Director to endorse the Form for such release on behalf of the Planning Board during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Seconded by Shawn Hanegan.

Roll call vote:

Lloyd	Aye
Hanegan	Aye
Barbehenn	Aye
Hagan	Aye
Cohen	Aye

5-0-0

Mr. Fields undertook to sign the form on the Board's behalf, have it notarized and filed with the Town Clerk, and then return the original to Ms. Brown.

The question of whether street acceptance could occur at the 2020 fall Special Town Meeting was discussed briefly. It was noted that usually all items are complete before street acceptance.

REPORTS

Jeffrey Cohen reported that he has volunteered to be the liaison to the Chamber of Commerce's new Business Recovery Task Force. The Task Force had a conference call on March 30 to brainstorm ideas on helping businesses through the COVID-19 crisis. It will reach out to the wider business community in town.

Pam Brown commented that some small businesses are struggling, including ones that are closed and ones that are deemed essential but are operating under constraints. Barrel House Z, a new tenant at 54 Middlesex Turnpike, is looking into operating with pick-up rather than restaurant food service.

Jacinda Barbehenn reported that she has spent some time recently on planning-related remote learning. She suggested that while many people in town are working from home or furloughed, it might be a good time for the Planning Board to try out remote participation techniques, on some non-critical topic.

Other members felt that this was not a good time to launch new initiatives and that it was important to prioritize getting to grips with operating remotely for more time-sensitive items. Demands on other departments' staff would need to be managed.

For the Select Board, Emily Mitchell said the advice is to go slow in terms of what boards try to do under present circumstances.

Ms. Barbehenn said she will circulate links to some materials she found of interest from around the country.

OTHER BUSINESS

Steve Hagan asked who advises businesses on applying for financial assistance related to COVID-19, and if the Planning Board or any other Town board has an involvement.

Chair Cohen responded that it is not a Planning Board role. The Chamber of Commerce has offered help. He is not sure if Alyssa Sandoval is the point person for the Town. He invited Ms. Brown to speak for the Chamber.

Ms. Brown reported that the Chamber of Commerce has a new Director. A core group of people is discussing matters and there may be more volunteers coming forward. More clarity is needed on the Paycheck loans rules. Some businesses have a formal involvement in applications. The Chamber will try to offer advice.

Rick Rosen drew attention to an article recently published in the Bedford Citizen that identifies resources for businesses, including links supplied by Ms. Sandoval.

Emily Mitchell confirmed that Ms. Sandoval is the point person among town staff, and that it is not a role for the Select Board. Mr. Cohen recalled that the Economic Development position was suggested in Comprehensive Plan discussions, recognizing that there is a need for a dedicated

person, separate from the Planning Board, and commented that it is good to know that the position is active.

Shawn Hanegan asked about the outlook for Town Meeting, following the postponement of the March Annual Town Meeting, referring to Director Fields' briefing note. Mr. Fields reported that the plans are not yet settled but the thinking is to try to pass a budget before the end of June if possible. Ms. Mitchell stated that the current date for the Annual Town Meeting is May 4 but it is expected to be further delayed. If it is held before June 30, the agenda will probably be streamlined, delaying the rest of the warrant items (including ADUs) to the fall.

Chair Cohen asked about deadlines. Ms. Mitchell stated that legislation has passed that (amongst other things) enables municipal spending to move forward into FY21 at current levels, one month at a time. [copy of final act "To address challenges faced by municipalities and state authorities resulting from COVID-19", based on House bill 4598, signed by Governor on April 3, was circulated to Board by email]

Other items in Board packet:

Webinar slides and two briefing notes on emerging rules for operation during COVID-19 crisis

MAGIC Healthy Aging Healthy Living Plan, March 2020, and summary by C Perry relating it to Bedford;

Boston Globe article by John Laidler, "Missing Middle: Big houses, small apartments – where's the home in between?", March 27, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Amy Lloyd to adjourn. Seconded by Shawn Hanegan.

Roll call vote:

Barbehenn	Aye
Lloyd	Aye
Hagan	Aye
Hanegan	Aye
Cohen	Aye

5-0-0

Time 6:15 PM

Minutes submitted by Catherine Perry