

The regular meeting of the Bridgewater Planning Board virtually convened at 6:30 pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Driscoll, Chairman, Mr. Ajemian, Ms. Guarino, Mr. Geller, and Mr. MacDonald

TOWN STAFF PARTICIPATING: Elijah Romulus, Assistant Planner; Jennifer Burke, Director and Ms. Dorr, Office Administrator

TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Mr. Colombotos, Mr. Chase and Mr. Wood

Mr. Driscoll read from prepared text on Governor Baker's order of 3/12/2020 and how the meeting will be conducted and how to be able to speak at the meeting. He advised the audience that this meeting is being recorded and will be posted within 48 hours on the Town of Bridgewater website or social web page.

Ordinance D-FY21-003: Zoning Map Amendment -Joint public hearing

Mr. Colombotos opened the council portion of the hearing at 6:37.

Mr. Driscoll opened the Planning Board portion of the hearing also.

The Ordinance is to Amend the zoning map to change the boundary of the Industrial E by rezoning the lots listed to Business B: Map 71, Lots 12, 16, 18 – 23, 44, 47, 66 – 69, 76 – 78, and Map 84, Lot 43.

Ms. Burke read the notification of the hearing that was published in the Enterprise.

Copy of memo received from the CED to the Planning Board:

This ordinance seeks to amend the Zoning Map by changing the zoning of 18 lots to Business B. All the lots front on Pleasant Street between Elm Street and Route 24 and are zoned Industrial E. The area is built out with the exception of two undeveloped properties. Most of the current uses do not conform to Industrial use, but are uses allowed in Business B. As a commercial entry to Bridgewater, these parcels are not appropriate as Industrial properties and are more appropriately zoned Business. For example, the lot on the corner of Elm and Pleasant has been rumored to be developed as a Five Guys, Panera, hotel, convenience store with gas station, and a tool rental among other things. Under current zoning, these uses are not allowed or require a special permit. Changing the zoning to Business B will make more of these uses allowable, thereby increasing the desirability of the parcels along this stretch and allowing the highest and best use. This proposed change also removes a small piece of the Gateway District which slices through Map 71, Lot 20.

Ms. Burke indicated that this started with a conversation with the owner of Map 71. Lot 20, on the corner of Elm and Pleasant Street which has been vacant for quite a while. It seems that when several of his proposed tenants, when they have gone thru our zoning technical difficulties here

She spoke about when Ron Emma wanted to put a restaurant in the old Bridgewater Savings Bank, he needed a special permit even though it was right next door to an existing restaurant. It didn't make sense in coming in off the highway, not to allow some business uses by right. There is one vacant lot at

the corner of Elm and Pleasant and one vacant lot next to Home Depot. They reached out to all the property owners that would be affected, and they heard back from two owners who were very much in favor of this; they have heard no negative feedback.

Mr. Colombotos questioned what would happen to the residential lot that would be changed? (Map 71, lot 47.) Ms. Burke said that is one of the owners who was in favor of the change and very appreciative that the Town was taking a proactive initiative to bring those lots into conformance with their present uses.

Mr. Driscoll raised an issue that Map 84, lot 43 has a leg that goes out to Old Pleasant Street that would give access out to a Residential district from a business; it also appears that in of itself, if changed, it could become a separate business lot. Mr. Chase questioned if those people on Old Pleasant Street were notified of this proposal? Ms. Burke said no, it is not required by Mass. State Law. Mr. Driscoll suggested dividing the lot and keeping that leg section Residential and the Pleasant Street side as Business. Matt Rushton, one of the sponsors of the Ordinance commented that the Chairman makes a good point; he would not want to see an access for a business on to a residential street; he would support the suggested change.

On a motion by Mr. Colombotos, seconded by Mr. Chase, it was unanimously voted by the CED committee to amend the ordinance by keeping the leg portion of the lot as residential

Ms. Burke advised everyone that the small lot shown as Map 71, lot 46 (at top of map) was not listed; it is owned by the State; the Ordinance needs to be amended.

Mr. Driscoll suggested that this change would allow a solar project and Ms. Burke noted that the lot size in Business is 10,000 sq. ft and suggested that no solar would come to such a small lot.

Pat on tape about the fact he does like a special permit as it allows the board to make conditions, especially when it abuts a residential area. Jen

Pat Neary expressed concern that property owners near zoning changes were not notified. Ms. Burke explained that there is no requirement under Mass General Laws. She advised Ms. Neary that she can file with the Town Clerk's office to be notified of any zoning changes.

Mr. Ajemian made a motion not to recommend the Ordinance as proposed, but, the Planning Board would be in favor if it was amended to change Map 84, lot 43 by dividing zoning on the lot to Business at the street frontage on Pleasant St. and keeping the rear leg of the lot as Residential. It was seconded by Ms. Guarino and unanimously voted by roll call vote.

The CED Committee voted 3-0 the passage of the Ordinance with the amendment.

The hearing closed at 7:14 pm.

OLDFIELD ESTATES, I EXTENSION REQUEST

The applicant, Paula Lehtola had requested a two-year extension for subdivision approval. According to the conditions of approval, the construction of all ways and services and installation of all municipal services shall be completed within a period of two (2) years from the date of endorsement of the plan. The subdivision was approved on January 4, 2017. A previous extension was granted by the Board on October 17, 2018 that moved the expiration date from January 4, 2019 to January 4, 2021. The applicant

cites the current pandemic and associated economic ramifications as reason for the request (letter attached). The Department suggests granting a two-year extension from January 4, 2021 to January 4, 2023.

Mr. Ajemian questioned the need of a two-year extension. Ms. Burke noted that the State has tolled all permits anyway.

On a motion by Mr. MacDonald, seconded by Mr. Geller, it was unanimously voted by roll call vote to grant the two-year extension requested to January 4, 2023

Tree discussion-Mr. Ajemian advised everyone that there was a meeting last week with the Town Manager and he will set-up a tree board; The new committee will work in conjunction with the CED to decide on the proper functions of a permanent board. Issue of mitigation will go to the Town Council; they will all come together in January; no need to keep putting this on the agenda.

An ad hoc tree board would be set up by Michael (Town Manager). He will look to the community for volunteers. The new committee will work in conjunction with the Community and Economic Development Department to decide on the proper functions of a permanent board. There seemed to have been some disagreement as to whether the planning board could require any mitigation. Michael will have Jason (Town Attorney) look into it. They will be meeting again in January.

No one had read the minutes of 10/14/20. Acceptance of those minutes was tabled to the next meeting.

On a motion by Ms. Guarino, seconded by Mr. Geller, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: 12-2-20