REGULAR MEETING **BRIDGEWATER PLANNING BOARD** **DECEMBER 18, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Planning Board convened at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Video version of meeting available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMq7AxRC3iA&t=9653s

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Patrick Driscoll, Michael MacDonald, Steve Geller, Astrid Rojas, Ted Haley, MJ Spagone (associate)

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Rulli, CED Director, Shane O'Brien, Town Planner, Steve Solari, Building Inspector & Greg Tansey, Town Engineer

Chair Patrick Driscoll opened up the meeting and read the Governor's order for remote meetings.

Approval Not Required Plans

0 South St (Map 74, Lot 98) & 722 South St (Map 74, Lot 4 & 102)

Rebecca Baptista, Silva Engineering, presented the ANR Plan to the Planning Board. She explained the ANR Plan with the Leach Family Trust and how it has changed from the previous ANR that came before the Planning Board. Chairman Driscoll asked if the adjacent property owner's had signed the ANR Plan. Ms. Baptista said they had not. Mr. O'Brien explained that Permiteyes sometimes makes it difficult for multiple parties to sign an application.

Motion to endorse, conditioned on receipt of signed application of abutting property owner prior to Chair signature, made by Member Macdonald and seconded by Member Haley

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes

43 Rear Central Square - (Map 34, Lot 66) – Site Plan Review (Section 10.6) and Special Permits (Sections 6.1.4 and 9.6) to convert an existing manufacturing building into a mixed-use building with six (6) units. (Continued from December 4, 2024 meeting)

Patrick Driscoll reiterated the process of opening the public hearing after stating as such at the last meeting when it was continued due to lack of voting members of the Board. He read the public hearing notice into the record.

Larry Silva, Silva Engineering, representing Balsamo Realty LLC, presented a background and site plan for 43R Central Square and presented a rundown of the Locus of the site. He discussed the passageway and how it would be utilized for the Site as well as the allowance of the owner and other parties to utilize the passageway. He stated that part of the building that has been demolished as well how the site was utilized in the past. Mr. Silva provided a description of the proposal for the proposed six-unit mixed-use building showing drainage, parking, and landscaping. He stated that the 20% open space requirement could not be met with the current ordinance due to the necessity of parking on site.

Matthew Holmes, of MJH Architects, presented the architectural rendering of the proposal. He provided a brief description of the appearance of the building which included solar panels for the intention of getting the additional bonus unit as well as for energy utilization based on the roof type. He provided information regarding the interior layout of the building and proposal. He discussed design features and material types to be utilized on the building.

Member MacDonald asked about the overhead garage door and how it could be utilized for uses on the first floor that could incorporate loading or vehicles. Mr. Holmes stated that he viewed the overhead glass door proposed more so for a design feature for like a restaurant or something similar or utilize more so as a window.

Chairman Driscoll stated he had concerns of the access width and asked about the travel width for a vehicle throughout the site. He additionally asked about the rights of the passageway and a legal opinion on the matter. He asked about the 18 feet for the driveway width as well as the requirement for 24 feet for a drive isle width for 9 x 18' parking spaces.

Mr. Silva provided the dimensions around the site regarding vehicle access and making sure there's no issues with travel regarding adjacent buildings and parking spaces. He also discussed the legality of the passageway and the existing utilities that are located in the passageway belonging to the owner.

Chairman Driscoll discussed the parking spaces provided and noted the differences in parking counts between the site plans and architectural plans. He also stated that parts of the commercial space should be counted toward the parking count rather than be excluded. He stated that there is a lack of parking on the site for the commercial and why the special permit should be granted for the reduction as well as parking data that can support it.

Mr. Silva stated that adjacent properties do not have dedicated commercial parking, but stated they can look for additional dedicated spaces, if needed.

Chairman Driscoll stated his main concerns are access as well reiterated that a Variance would be needed from Open Space

Member Geller asked why all the units are three-bedrooms, rather than a mix of unit types.

Mr. Holmes stated that three-bedrooms are the owners' preference in unit types.

Member Geller stated that the building does not seem ADA accessible. He also made a point about snow falling of the roof. He stated that the sand-filled barriers would be ugly and would prefer a planter instead. He also had concerns about the access to site for a fire truck.

Mr. Holmes stated that they had talked to the Access Board that only the commercial space would need to be ADA compliant.

Member Rojas has concerns about the three-bedroom units due to the safety of potential children in that location with the lack of open space at the site and proximity to traffic.

Member Haley asked if the purview of the Board is to look at the project under the impression for parameters of safety for children. He additionally commented of concerns about large trucks coming onto the site with the 18 foot layout.

Jim Balsamo, property owner, stated why he was looking to utilize the site for three-bedrooms.

Member MacDonald reiterated the criteria of Special Permit standards as well as supported the idea of three bedrooms to be located at the site. He also stated that he has concerns about the passageway entrance and how it exists and if the applicant would be willing to take responsibility for the maintenance of the access.

Mr. Silva discussed changes in uses for properties at Central Square based on new regulations and how those properties would need dedicated parking as well. There was discussion about CBD Parking requirements. Steve Solari discussed changes in use from Building Code and Zoning Code.

Chairman Driscoll stated that he had concerns about the bonus density at the site based on the current layout of the site. He proposed a Site Visit for the site and asked about the owner looking at additional parking.

Member MacDonald discussed the potential of the top floor possibly being one unit. Mr. Holmes stated that certain decisions have to be run by the owner.

Mr. O'Brien talked about the differences in parking based on single bedroom or two bedroom or three bedroom units, however, Chairman Driscoll stated that parking is not based on bedrooms, rather than number of units.

The Chairman open up the meeting to public comments.

Public Comments:

David Moore, 54 Flagg St, also a trustee of the Masonic lodge adjacent to the site, stated that the site is in rough shape and needs improvement, however, he does have concerns of the intensiveness of the development. He had concerns about safety on and off the site. He also provided a letter to the Planning Board to be made part of the record. He stated that a legal interpretation of the passageway should be done. He also talking about the removal of diagonal parking on the common and how that could affect available parking on Central Square.

Donna Jewell, Keith Place, also owner parcels adjacent to the site, asked about the amount of right-of-ways on the site. She also asked about the rights of abutters to the passageway. She asked about employee parking for the commercial spaces and concerns about safety.

Francis Szenowsky, 39 Central Square, had concerns about safety.

Sean Silvia, 43 Central Square, had concerns about parking and safety issues and the size of the development.

Chairman Driscoll stated that the applicant should provide a legal opinion on their rights to the passageway. Mr. O'Brien stated that their private property matters beyond Town control that will need to be addressed regarding the abutting property owners, and the Board's purview should look more so toward meeting Town's standards. Member MacDonald wants to make sure that that what the Board is doing is proper.

Jim Balsamo has information about the deeds and passageway. Chairman Driscoll asked if he can provide copies of the deeds to the Board.

The Board discussed a site visit. Mr. O'Brien stated that a site walk would be placed on the Town's website and would be available to the public and reiterated that no deliberation be held on the site visit. This site visit would probably take place the week of January 6th.

Motion to continue to the January 15th meeting made by Member Haley and seconded by Member Rojas.

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes

Request for Minor Changes of Subdivision Pursuant to Bridgewater Subdivision Rules and Regulations B.7

Bridgewater Preserve (Childs Bridgewater Farm II Subdivision) – Request for changes to waivers to sidewalk width to no less than four (4) feet on constructed subdivision pursuant to Section V.

Required Improvements, B. Improvement Specifications, 2. Minimum Width Requirements (in feet) of the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in the Town of Bridgewater, that the width of the sidewalks is to be five (5) feet.

Lee Castignetti provided a request for continuance to the January 15th meeting, as the striping has not been completed due to weather.

Motion to continue to the January 15th meeting made by Member MacDonald and seconded by Member Geller.

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes

Request for Lot Release from Covenant – Wampanoag Estates aka "Hiawatha Trail"

Mr. O'Brien presented a background summary of the request as the Board had previously approved the release of all lots of the proposal subject to receipt of a surety bond of about $342,000. That surety was never received and therefore no lots have been release. The applicant is coming back with an updated request with additional work being completed as well as a request for some lots to be released.

Attorney Marion McEttrick was here on behalf of the applicant, Jeff Cutter, who is the new owner of the property and provided a letter to the Board. She provided a summary of the request as well as work that has been completed. They are asking for the Board to release Lots 1-4.

Chairman Driscoll stated that a new bond calculation should be given prior to the release of lots. The Board in the past has released one lot in the past regarding model homes.

Jeff Cutter provided an update on the work that has been completed at the site.

Greg Tansey had revised the bond estimate and had a question regarding the wetlands replication area and other work that has been completed.

Jeff Cutter stated that one lot being released would be okay as it would allow for electrical work to start.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the applicant had filed a building permit, whereas he had rejected, as no lot releases had been completed due to lack of surety given nor has all work had been completed.

There was a discussion of selection of a lot that may be released and it was decided that Lot 2 be allowed for release based on work completed and the request prior to additional surety given. There was also a discussion of the work completed and issues that still exist in the subdivision for vehicle safety. Mr. O'Brien stated that he did not want this to become an Arrested Development situation.

A motion to release Lot 2 from Covenant and no occupancy permit be given until a new bond calculation is given was made by Member MacDonald and seconded by Member Haley.

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes

Meeting Minutes – August 21, 2024 & September 4, 2024

Motion to approved minutes made by Member Haley and seconded by Member MacDonald

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes

Board Items for Next Meeting – January 15, 2025

Mr. O'Brien discussed items to be placed on the next agenda as well as the potential of 60-88 Broad St being placed on an upcoming agenda.

Planner's Report

Member Geller asked about the potential of having in-person meetings and discussed if the Chair sent a letter to the Town Manager's office. He summarized the email responses between the Town Manager's office and logistics of meeting in-person with hybrid meetings.

Mr. O'Brien stated a new member, Eric Costa, will be sworn in prior to the next meeting.

Adjournment: **The Motion to adjourn was made by Member Haley seconded by Member MacDonald and it was unanimously voted.**

Roll Call Vote:

Driscoll – Yes, MacDonald – Yes, Geller – Yes, Rojas – Yes, Haley - Yes