

Foster Planning Board / Joint Meeting with the Town Council
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday February 15, 2006
Eddy Building 7:00 pm

The Planning Board meeting convened at 7:10 pm, present was John Lewis – Chair, Julia Parmentier – Vice Chair, Helen Hardy – Secretary, Mike Carpenter, Patricia Moreau, Robin Fish, Don Moyer and Richard Grant – Administrator of Subdivisions and Land Development. In the audience were Christopher Gorham, Brian Carpenter, David & Cheryl Laferriere, Edward Alsfeld, Maria Alsfeld, Bill Alsfeld, Robert Moreau, Ron Cervasio, Linda Walden, Jane Gurzenda, Linda Tibbetts, Gordon Rogers, Tom Mooney, Martin Helfgott, Thomas Grabbert, William Gibb, John Gustafson, Donna Mansolillo, Lynne Rider, Charles Borders, Tom Mercier, Town Council members Heidi Rogers, Steve Bellucci, Ralph Berkowitz and Colette Matarese. Phil Marcello from the Providence Journal was also in attendance.

Minutes

Helen Hardy moved to approve the minutes of February 1, 2006 as edited, Julia Parmentier seconded, motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

Correspondence

1. Charter Review Committee meeting schedule – Julia Parmentier will attend, anyone with comments should communicate with Julia.
2. Affordable Housing Information.
3. Capital Budget recommendations from the Planning Board to the Town Council.
4. Additional request for an ordinance revision from Gail Danilowicz.

Reports

Patricia Moreau – Reported on the information that she had gathered regarding the fee for a Commercial Site Review in surrounding towns. Providence charged \$50.00, South Kingston had no fee and Scituate's was minimal also. The reason the fees were so minimal is that it's up to the developer/applicant to hire an engineer to have the plan done for them.

Bob Moreau mentioned that in Scituate the developer is responsible for having the plan done, they charge for the processing of the application and then an engineer (their planner) reviews it at an hourly fee. Burrillville and other cities and towns employ the same individual. The consultant fee should be left open or "as required".

Robin Fish notes that these procedures ensure that the towns should not be paying for the expense of the applications.

Richard Grant suggests a fee of \$50.00 to \$100.00 and a checklist of required items for the plan.

Don Moyer differentiates between having the developer supply the consultants and that the town should have some control over the engineers.

Bob Moreau clarifies that the town hires a person to review the plan and passes the cost onto the applicant.

John Lewis requests that Richard come up with a proposal and bring it back to the Board for a vote. He asked Richard to check our checklist against those of other towns.

Public Hearings

None

Subdivisions

1. Final Review of the minor subdivision for Christopher and Gemma Gorham, Plat 4, Lot 24, Cucumber Hill Road, following the discussion, Julia Parmentier moves to approve the minor subdivision/residential compound for AP 4, Lot 24, with the original lot consisting of 51.14 acres, into Sublot A +/- 10.04 acres, Sublot B +/- 5.00 acres and Sublot C +/- 36.1 acres as shown on the Class I survey plan by Norbert Therien, dated 12/05, Patricia Moreau seconded, motion unanimously passed 7-0.

Commercial Site Review

None

Old Business

1. Ordinance Revisions: Patricia Moreau moved to table this item until the next meeting, Don Moyer seconded, motion unanimously carried 7-0.

2. Scenic Roads: Julia Parmentier passed out the proposal for the scenic roads grant that she had written so that the Board could review it. If anyone has comments they should e-mail them to Julia, Town Council support is also required.

Don Moyer moved to have Julia and Rick organize the scenic roads grant proposal and submit it by the deadline, Robin Fish seconded motion unanimously carried 7-0.

The Planning Board recessed at 7:38 pm in order to start the Joint Meeting.

Joint Meeting with the Town Council and the Planning Board regarding the Town's Affordable Housing Plan:

The primary reason for this meeting was for the Planning Board and the Town Council to address the recent comments from Rhode Island Housing regarding the Town's Affordable Housing Plan. (See the attached Memorandum for detailed breakdown of the comments).

John Lewis reported on the meeting that he and Julia Parmentier had attended with Statewide Planning and Rhode Island Housing on February 3, 2006.

Anne Irons arrived at 7:42 pm in order to setup the recording equipment for the Town Council.

John Lewis mentioned that while Foster is the only town in the State without an Affordable Housing Plan (AHP), we have been working diligently and have an extension until February 28, 2006.

Discussion now started regarding the attached comments from RIH:

Ralph Berkowitz questioned what was affordable housing and expressed concern about the density being less than 4.59 acres for a buildable lot size.

Ron Cervasio made the comment that either of the RIH proposals would be viable.

Julia Parmentier mentioned that this type of construction would only be allowed in delineated areas in town, not town wide. The State has reached the end of its willingness to do any compromising. The town house option requires less area. The compound option would require more land to comply with the requirements.

If the Plan is approved then the State will respect our housing plan.

Gordon Rogers asked about the time frame and the location of the affordable housing areas.

John Lewis mentioned that after the plan is approved the town has one year to work on identifying the areas/zones.

Bob Moreau reported on attending a workshop at which multi-unit developments were shown that were designed to blend in with the different regions. In some cases existing houses were modified to be multi-family so to also blend in with the existing neighborhoods.

John Lewis explained the number of units from each category to attain the affordable housing goal and the areas in town designated for this type of housing.

Chris Gorham explained the formula used to define low to moderate income designations and ways in which the State is able to make houses affordable.

Various people (Marty Helfgott, Lynne Rider) spoke to rewriting the towns zoning ordinance for the affordable housing nodes.

John Lewis asked the Town Council to come to a decision.

Steve Bellucci moved to allow an increase in density up to eight bedrooms per acre in the zones specified for affordable housing, as determined by RIDEM based on soils, only in zones specified for affordable housing, Colette Matarese seconded, John Lewis moved the question, motion unanimously carried, Steve Bellucci, Ralph Berkowitz, Colette Matarese and Heidi Rogers voting yea.

There was a five minute recess at this point.

**Planning Board Meeting reconvened at 8:45 pm –
Subdivisions Continued:**

2. Pre-Application review for the proposed minor subdivision for Edward & Maria Alsfeld, Plat 4, Lot 62B, Goldmine Road – the original lot having +/- 23.2 acres; the new lot has the required frontage, acreage and an approved ISDS. The wetlands are flagged and the planner has no problems with this subdivision proposal.

3. Pre-Application review of the proposed minor subdivision for David & Cheryl Laferriere, Plat 18, Lot 27, Hartford Pike – the plan presented has adequate frontage and acreage and meets all the towns' requirements for a subdivision. The Board suggested that the applicants consider a residential compound as this lot would be eligible.

Affordable Housing:

John Lewis will make the needed changes to the Affordable Housing Plan that were approved at tonight's meeting and submit it to the Statewide Planning Office by the February 28, 2006 deadline.

Don Moyer asked to table any further discussion until the next meeting.

Future Agenda Items

1. Driveway location for Plat 12, Lot 60, Central Pike/Ponagansett Road
2. Request to have RIDEM conduct a Septic System workshop
3. Subdivision regulations pertaining to alternative septic system designs
4. Ordinance revisions
5. Scenic Roads
6. Conservation Development
7. Possibility of having a Subdivision Suitability workshop
8. New School progress report from the School Building Committee
9. Planning Assistance
10. Economic Development Advisory Committee Recommendations
11. Commercial Site Review Applications

12. Review of the Prior Gravel Bank Erosion & Sediment Control Plan

Adjournment

Robin Fish moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 pm, Patricia Moreau seconded, motion carried 7-0, meeting adjourned at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Helen Hardy
Secretary