



PLANNING BOARD

Town of Ayer

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Minutes of October 11, 2022 - Ayer Planning Board Meeting

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Meeting was recorded and then broadcasted on APAC

Members Present: Jonathan Kranz, Chairman, Ken Diskin, Vice Chairman; and Geof Tillotson, Clerk Julie Murray and Nathan King

Also Present: Mark Archambault, Town Planner

Chairman Kranz called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:15 PM.

General Business

Approve the Agenda

Chairman Kranz mentioned that the August 8th minutes are not complete but the Board should be able to vote on the August 23rd minutes which are complete. Chairman Kranz also mentioned that under the Stratton Hill discussion he would like to move the Conservation item to the next meeting and focus on the traffic study.

At 6:15 PM Ms. Julie Murray made a motion to approve the agenda amended. Ms. Julie Muarry seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Covenant and Bond Releases - None

Public Hearing– Site Plan Review, 109 Central Ave, Platt Builders

Present: Halsey Platt, Owner

At 6:16 PM Chairman Kranz read aloud the public hearing notice opening the public hearing for the Site Plan Review for 109 Central Ave, Platt Builders.

Mr. Mark Archambault mentioned that Platt Builders has been looking to relocate to Ayer for the past several months and has finally settled on a location at 109 Central Ave, the former location of Ayer Moving and Storage. The Site Plan application falls under change of use of a non-conforming structure. There are no proposed changes that would make the building more non-conforming and no exterior building changes are proposed. The proposed parking meets the Boards requirements, and the application has been reviewed by other Town Departments; the only comment received was from the Department of Public Works stating that the proposed parking change along Central Ave is an improvement.

Mr. Archambault mentioned that there are a few waivers requested as part of the Site Plan Review including Stormwater Report, Traffic Study, and Lighting Plan. Since there is no change to the existing

building and the proposed business moving into the site will have less traffic these requirements are not needed. Mr. Archambault suggested that if the Board would approve the Site Plan this evening, he has one only one special condition to include along the general conditions.

Mr. Halsey Platt gave the Board a brief background of his company and mentioned that they needed more space for the company to grow so they purchased the property at 109 Central Ave. Mr. Platt stated that he is before the Board for a change of use and there are no proposed changes to the footprint of the existing building. There will be some changes to the interior of the building to add more office space and there will be an addition of a fuel tank in the back of the building.

Chairman Kranz asked about the time frame for the business.

Mr. Platt mentioned once the Site Plan is approved, they can apply for their building permit for the interior changes and hope to be moved in by February 2023.

Mr. Nathan King asked if there were any proposed lighting changes to the site.

Mr. Platt mentioned that the property already has lighting on site that will continue to be used and does not need to add any additional lighting.

Mr. Ken Diskin asked if the parking area would be restriped.

Mr. Platt stated for the exiting parking lot at the left of the building remain the same. Mr. Platt mentioned that the DPW did request that the parking along Central Ave be parallel to the road, and they will add parking to the right and back of the building. Mr. Platt mentioned that the business does not have a lot of customers coming to the office so the parking will be mostly for employees.

At 6:28 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to accept the Site Plan application and plans for consideration. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Chairman Kranz opened the meeting to the public for comment.

Ms. Beth Suedmeyer, resident on Nashua Street, requested that the Board look at requiring some planting to be installed on site to make more green space on the property.

Chairman Kranz thanked Ms. Suedmeyer for her comment and suggested to the Board that they vote on the requested waivers.

At 6:32 PM Mr. Ken Diskin made a motion to grant the waiver for a Stormwater Report as requested. Ms. Geof Tillotson seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

At 6:33 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to grant the waiver for a Traffic Study as requested. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. Discussion: Chairman Kranz stated that the proposed business will have few trips. Mr. Tillotson stated that the DPW also requested change to the parking in the front of the building which Mr. Platt has included in his plan. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

At 6:35 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to grant the waiver for a Photometric (Lighting) Plan as requested. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Mr. Archambault went over his findings for Site Plan approval that are listed in the Town Planner Report.

At 6:39 PM Chairman Kranz made a motion to find that the Site Plan for 109 Central Ave meets the requirements as read in the Town Planner in his report. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Mr. Archambault went over the special conditions as listed in the Town Planner Report.

At 6:44 PM Mr. Ken Diskin made a motion to approve the Site Plan for 109 Central Ave as requested. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

At 6:46 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to close the public hearing for 109 Central Ave. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Continued Public Hearing, Stratton Hill Preliminary Subdivision Plan

Present: Attorney Bob Collins, Stan Dillis, Engineer from Dillis and Roy, Derek Roach, Vanasse & Associates and Brian Zamocha, Nitsche Engineering

At 6:46 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to open the public hearing for Stratton Hill Preliminary Subdivision Plan. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Attorney Bob Collins requested that the Board review a newly revised version of the preliminary plan before reviewing the traffic study.

Chairman Kranz informed Attorney Collins that he would prefer that the Board hear from the traffic engineers first and then review the revised plans.

At 5-minute recess was called at 6:48 PM

At 6:55 PM the meeting reconvened.

Traffic Study Review

Mr. Archambault mentioned to the Board, and everyone present, the process for hiring a traffic consultant for larger projects. Mr. Archambault stated that the applicants traffic engineer, Vanasse & Associates submitted a traffic study report that the Board hired Nitsch Engineering to review. This evening the Board will hear from both engineers about their peer review and comment letters.

Derek Roach, Vanasse & Associates, went over the details of the traffic study that was conducted and shared the table showing the results from the traffic counts. Mr. Roach stated that the counts showed 394 trips at peak on weekdays and 364 trips on weekends. In addition, four intersections were included in the study and site lines were reviewed. The conclusion of the study was that Wright Road and Snake Hill Road meets the level of service with the proposed addition of the Stratton Hill subdivision.

Brian Zamolita, from Nitsch Engineering, stated that he met with the Board to review their concerns for the area to include in their own review of the site. Mr. Zamolita stated that they conducted their own counts using cameras and looked at three times 7-9AM, 4-6PM weekdays and 12-2PM on weekends. They looked at three means of transportation, cars, bikes and walking and the counts collected were

similar to those done by Vanasse. Mr. Zamolita stated that there were some suggestions to help with site lines but there were no major comments on the study.

Mr. Roach stated that they reviewed the comments from Nitsch and have no concerns in addressing their comments.

There were some comments and concerns from area residents in regards to Wright Road and Snake Hill Road and possible road improvements.

The Board had a discussion regarding the two traffic reports and possible improvements which will need to be discussed with the Department of Public Works.

Revised Plans

Mr. Archambault stated that he received revised Preliminary Plans on Friday, October 7th.

Mr. Stan Dillis went over the revised plans which are based on previous discussions and remove all the proposed building lots along the Long Pond side of the road, leaving ½ a mile of road without building lots along the pond side.

Chairman Kranz wanted to verify the amount of open space proposed as part of this subdivision.

Attorney Collins informed the Board that there is approximately 133.8 acres that will be designated as open space.

Mr. Tillotson asked if all the stormwater basins would also be located outside the open space.

Mr. Dillis stated that the goal is to keep all stormwater infrastructure outside the open space.

Mr. Dillis showed the Board and those present a plan comparing the original approved plans from 2000 and the current design plan.

Chairman Kranz stated that the plans were received too late for the Board to comment on them but mentioned that he is pleased to see the improvements made.

Mr. Diskin asked what the proposed lot sizes are for the proposed subdivision.

Mr. Dillis stated that the lots vary from about ¼ acre to ¾ acre lots.

Chairman Kranz opened the meeting to the public for comment.

There were several comments from area residents concerning the proposed lot sizes and the ability to have more duplexes on site to reduce the number of lots.

There was a brief discussion on the lots sizes and housing types proposed for the subdivision.

Ms. Jess Gugino asked about the road length and the question about the road being a dead-end or not.

Mr. Archambault mentioned that the road length along with other waivers that have been requested will be discussed at a later time as part of the definitive stage of the project.

Attorney Collins stated that he will get a new letter to the Board allowing for an extension for decision.

Mr. Archambault gave an update on the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP) permit which is part of the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) and the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) permit which is for work within an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

At 8:07 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to continue the public hearing for Stratton Hill to the next meeting on October 25th. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)

Town Planner Report

Mr. Archambault gave the Board an update on some of the approved subdivisions stating that Shaker Pond Road and Curley Circle have received the building permits for the last few houses in the subdivisions.

Mr. Archambault stated that 22 Fitchburg Road should be coming in for an amended Site Plan approval for the meeting on November 9th.

Minutes August 23, 2022

At 8:13 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 23, 2022 as written. Mr. Ken Diskin seconded. No discussion. Vote to approve 4-1-0, Ms. Julie Murray abstained.

New Business

Mr. Tillotson gave an update from the Affordable Housing Trust Committee stating that there was a presentation regarding the proposed 40b project and suggested that people watch the presentation.

Mr. Tillotson also gave a brief update on the MRPC meeting he attended as the Boards representative.

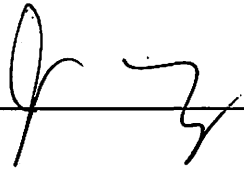
Meeting Adjournment

At 8:23 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to adjourn.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Heather Hampson, Administrative Coordinator

Planning Board Approval _____
Date

Planning Board Chairman (Jonathan Kranz)

 3/17/23