Meeting of the Planning Board  
Thursday, November 12th, 2020

The seventh meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2021 was called to order at 7:05 p.m. via the Zoom virtual meeting software.

Present: Planning Board members April Anderson (Chair), Denise Swenson (Secretary), Cheryl Tougas, Kathleen O’Donnell and Richard Boehler; Town Planner Tim Czerwienski, Assistant Town Planner Allyson Quinn, Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

1. Administrative Items: Upcoming meetings were confirmed for November 18th and December 10th. Chair Anderson relayed the terms of the Open Meeting Law under the Governor’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law relating to the novel Coronavirus outbreak emergency. She noted that the meeting was being recorded and televised and provided directions on how to remotely join. On a motion by Ms. Swenson, seconded by Ms. Tougas, the November 29th, 2020 meeting minutes were approved by rollcall, 5/0/0.

2. Staff Update: Mr. Czerwienski discussed plans initiated by the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) for a town-wide bicycle and pedestrian master plan scheduled for the spring of 2021. He said that the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) would be working to develop design guidelines for the Milton Village overlay. He said that he had been working to secure funding from the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Community Connections Program for the building of bike shelters at public transit stops. Ms. Quinn said that she had been researching grants tied to transportation improvements as identified by MPIC.

3. Citizen’s Speak:

Sandra Dasilva of 37 Amor Rd. expressed concerns about the high density of the proposed 40B development at 16 Amor Rd. She mentioned a lack of frontage and open space, increased traffic, and the large number of trees to be razed which she believed would ruin the character of the neighborhood. She mentioned dangerous, icy conditions at the intersection of Amor and Brush Hill Road (BHR) which would be worsened by the removal of the trees.

Attorney Robert Galvin, representing neighbors of 936 BHR, mentioned a letter he had provided to the Board stating the concerns of his clients.

Maureen Bisognano of 939 Brush Hill Rd. said that her home had been built in 1800 and expressed concerns about traffic, pedestrian safety and diminishing property values.

Gina Brown of 71 Amor Rd. stated that three deaths had occurred on BHR in recent years and believed the proposed 40Bs for 16 Amor Rd. and 936 BHR would exponentially increase traffic and unsafe conditions. She said there would be no play area for children, suggested alternative locations for 40Bs in Milton, and recommended that the intersection of Amor, Brush Hill Rd. and Truman Parkway be signalized.

Laurie Macintosh of 77 Cushing Rd. noted that there are speeding cars and no sidewalks on BHR and worried about safety. She said that 380 additional cars would add to traffic counts daily and that the area was not a family or pedestrian-friendly environment.

Becky Simonds of 1053 Brush Hill Road said that much development had taken place in the area in the 33 years she has lived there, particularly by Curry College, which had involved the
neighborhood in the process and accepted feedback, unlike the 40B developers (Tamposi Brothers). She expressed opposition to the development, noting that BHR is a scenic, historic, winding road with blind corners, no sidewalks, much speeding and no access to amenities or public transportation. She believed the size and density of the units would ruin the neighborhood and cause property values to drop.

Vesper Gibbs Barnes of 27 Amor Rd. noted the significant, "lush" trees on the property, which she said would be a major loss to the neighborhood. She asked if sidewalks would be installed on Amor Rd.

Charles Neumann of 939 Brush Hill Rd. thanked the Board for their work and expressed concern over the lack of an official 40B plan, which had left the town exposed to unwanted development. He opposed the height and density of buildings in a residential area, and discussed the sloped topography of the site which would further add to the massing of the buildings.

Ms. Anderson discussed initiatives undertaken by the Board to add affordable units where possible in Milton in an effort to create a "stay" on 40B developments.

4. Discussion of 40B Comment Letters

16 Amor Rd.: Ms. O'Donnell discussed a letter to be submitted to the Select Board (BOS) on behalf of the Planning Board to be incorporated into the Town's response to MassHousing regarding the 40B proposal at 16 Amor Rd. She mentioned that the architects had been open to considering architectural adjustments on the November 4th site walk to improve design standards, which the Board agreed lacked consideration for tree preservation, density, and site sensitivity. Parking within the units was encouraged, as well as greater setbacks with thicker buffers and a reduction of driveways. Green practices, sustainability, dark sky compliance, affordable housing, open space, fire safety and protection of pervious areas were discussed.

936 Brush Hill Rd.: Steep topography and the need for multiple retaining walls planned for the edge of the property line were discussed. It was agreed that parking areas should be contained within the buildings and that a greater setback and tree protections were necessary. The board agreed it was a poor design of extremely high density and not well suited to a historic, dangerous, and scenic road with no sidewalks. Effects on tree root systems and storm water runoff were discussed. It was noted that there are no convenient amenities or public transportation available in the area, nor play areas for children, and that significant willow trees would be destroyed. The board addressed Mr. Galvin's letter to the BOS, which described the development as incongruous with the neighborhood and as dense as possible. On a motion by Ms. O'Donnell, seconded by Ms. Swenson, the Board voted by rollcall to approve the Planning Board's letter addressing the 16 Amor Rd. and 936 Brush Hill Rd. 40B proposals for submittal to the BOS, 5/0/0.

5. 2021 Zoning Articles

Wolcott Woods Zoning Amendment: Attorney Edward Corcoran, representing Northland Residential, discussed adjustments to a zoning change proposal to allow for exemptions to the age 55+ residential terms of the complex. He discussed edits to the zoning language to include 12 week stays for young adults with permanent 55+ residents and discussed the terms of other elderly housing developments in Milton. He said that Northland was not in agreement with
members of the neighborhood, who were being represented by Attorney Anthony Cichello, and asked that the Planning Board advance the language for inclusion in the warrant, to be further discussed and adjusted before the February 2021 Town Meeting. Mr. Cichello stated that he believed the language was not ready for the warrant and needed further consideration and input from his clients. The Board discussed priorities and believed that further discussion and neighborhood feedback was needed.

Condominium Conversion Bylaw: Ms. Tougias discussed edits to an article proposed for the February 2021 Town Meeting. Setbacks, land coverage and open space requirements were discussed. Digital renderings of potential developments on applicable parcels were considered. It was agreed that acceptable properties would need to be 4,000 SF, built before 1930, with a minimum open space requirement of 30% with 75% of the open space on a grade of less than 8% and a maximum lot coverage of 20% and a 10% affordability rate. Site design and scale considerations were addressed. Architectural compatibility and protections for existing historic dwellings with consideration for abutting properties would apply. Review and approval of condominium developments would be at the discretion of the Planning Board. It was suggested that the article be reviewed by certain developers for feedback. On a motion by Ms. O'Donnell, seconded by Ms. Tougias, the Board voted by rollcall to submit the language to the Select Board for inclusion in the Warrant, 5/0/0.

6. On a motion by Ms. Swenson, seconded by Mr. Boehler, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 pm.

Denise Swenson, Secretary