Meeting of the Planning Board
Thursday, December 5, 2019

The 11th meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2020 was called to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Blute conference room of Milton Town Hall.

Present: Planning Board Members Cheryl Tougias (Chair), Denise Swenson (Secretary), April Anderson, Richard Boehler and Kathleen O’Donnell; Planning Director William Clark, Assistant Town Planner Allyson Quinn, Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

1. Administrative Items: Ms. Tougias observed that the agenda had incorrectly listed an executive session prior to the start of the meeting. The Board discussed the role of the Planning Board in considering an application for a comprehensive permit for a 40B development at 485 Blue Hills Ave., known as the Ice House, which had been submitted by 485-487 BHP Trust LLC. The Board was asked to weigh in on site applicability concerns, which would be communicated in a letter to the Select Board as part of the preliminary application process. Mr. Clark stated that other Town boards and officials had been notified of the application and would weigh in as well. A site walk at 485 Blue Hills Parkway was planned for December 11th and Mr. Clark mentioned that the full 40B application had been posted to the Town’s website. The Board’s next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, December 17th, following an executive session.

2. Citizen’s Speak: No one spoke.

3. 919 Blue Hill Ave. Informational Discussion, Little Sprouts Preschool

Attorney Edward Corcoran introduced childcare developers Jim and Kevin Brady, architect David Silverman and site engineer Jessie Johnson. He presented a slide show on the history of the school, which has multiple locations throughout eastern Massachusetts, and described the approximately 40,000 SF property abutting the Atherton St. fire station. He discussed past usage of the site, which included a mix of residential, commercial and educational uses. He noted that under the Dover Amendment the development would be exempt from zoning bylaws although subject to density, scale, height and setback restrictions. Two neighborhood meetings had taken place to discuss the project. The proposed plan included 33 parking spaces and a 1-story 10,000 SF building with a play area on the Atherton St. side. Traffic flow patterns and peak volume calculations were discussed, as well as the effects that exiting and entering the site might have on Rte. 138 traffic circulation. Safety and emergency considerations were discussed, and Mr. Corcoran noted that Milton’s Chief of Police, Town Engineer and Fire Chief had reviewed the plans. Similar Little Sprouts locations in Norwood, Dedham and Hingham were considered and Mr. Brady said the school was expected to have approximately 100-130 students. Architectural features, floor plans and elevations were discussed. It was noted that the application would need to go before the Board of Appeals.

Public Comment:

Thuy Le, 227 Atherton St., expressed concerns about high density and asked if a density study had been conducted. She said she wanted to see the Rte. 138 DOT traffic study.

Mr. Corcoran mentioned that a developer could build a 10,000 SF structure by right without waivers. Ms. Tougias recommended adding buffers and removing several parking spaces to increase green space. Access to delivery areas and dumpsters and the option of closing off Atherton St. were considered.
Jessie Johnson of Bohler Engineering discussed topographical challenges and how they would be accommodated. Setback waivers, parking design standards, overflow parking, street views and fencing were discussed. Ms. Tougias requested a site section plan be provided to better illustrate the topography.

4. 475 Adams St. Landscaping Plan Discussion

Owner Steven Connelly stated that grading issues at the rear of the property had required the placement of a retaining wall along property line of the abutter at 16 Babcock St. but that the property layout had remained the same. He said that he had reached an agreement with the abutter to plant additional Arborvitae and to change the lighting on the exterior of the building to better buffer the mixed-use building. He said that Building Commissioner Joseph Prondak had conducted a final inspection and that a summary of the agreement had been provided to Mr. Prondak and Mr. Clark. On a motion by Ms. O’Donnell, seconded by Ms. Anderson, the changes were accepted as De Minimus, 5/0/0.

Ms. O’Donnell asked about a mile marker on the property that had been discovered missing after construction of the building. Mr. Connelly stated that he did not know its location.

5. 131 Eliot St. PUD Building Materials Review:

As required by the PUD’s Special Permit, owner Steven Connelly discussed materials to be used for the lintels, siding, trim, windows, bays and shingles of the building. Samples of the materials were provided. On a motion by Ms. O’Donnell, seconded by Ms. Anderson, the Board accepted the materials 5/0/0.

6. Planning Board Annual Budget Discussion

Mr. Clark reported that the proposed Planning budget remained level at $50,000. Expenses for planning studies in East Milton and Milton Village and the Board’s involvement with Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) initiatives were considered. Ms. Tougias described the two budgets as “fluid” for collaborative projects. Budgeting architectural renderings and expanding the scope of work of East Milton Planning Consultant Judi Barrett was discussed. Ms. Swenson proposed conducting a fiscal impact analysis of Milton’s commercial districts and Ms. Anderson suggested that Ms. Barrett conduct a brief economic assessment of Milton Village to provide insight into the possibilities for future economic development.

On a motion by Ms. Swenson, seconded by Ms. Anderson, the Board voted 5/0/0 to request $50,000 for planning studies. On a motion by Ms. Swenson, seconded by Ms. Anderson, the Board voted 5/0/0 to request $30,000 for the MPIC budget funding.

Mr. Boehler left at 8:58 pm.

7. Other Business: The Board briefly discussed the potential for commercial development at the site of a former paper mill off of Truman Highway. Ms. Tougias mentioned that the MPIC had considered a medical overlay for Milton Hospital. Ms. Anderson asked about approaching the Select Board with a request to appoint a study committee to look into the establishment of a Milton Village Historical District. Ms. Quinn said she would draft language for the proposal.

8. On a motion by Ms. Anderson, seconded by Ms. O’Donnell, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Denise Swenson, Secretary

12.5.19