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Town of North Reading  
Massachusetts

Community Planning

TOWN CLERK  
NORTH READING, MA

### MINUTES

**Tuesday, September 19, 2017**

Mr. William Bellavance, Chairperson called the Tuesday, September 19, 2017 meeting of the Community Planning Commission to order at 7:31p.m. in Room 14 of the North Reading Town Hall, 235 North Street, North Reading, MA.

#### MEMBERS

PRESENT: William Bellavance, Chairperson  
Warren Pearce, Vice Chairperson  
Jonathan Cody, Clerk  
Joseph Veno

#### STAFF

PRESENT: Danielle McKnight, AICP  
Town Planner/Community Planning Administrator

Mr. Bellavance informed all present that the meeting was being recorded.

**68 Elm Street & 6 Stump Avenue - ANR**

Mr. Cody read the public hearing into the record.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Pearce and voted 4-0: (Mr. Hayden absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to endorse as "Approval-Not-Required", the plan entitled "Approval Not Required Plan, North Reading, Massachusetts"; dated July 31, 2017; revised 8/11/2017; drawn by TTI Environmental Inc.

**Minutes**

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Veno and voted 4-0: (Mr. Hayden absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the September 5, 2017 minutes as written.

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

20 Country Club Road – On the petition of Marcial and Danielle Bones for a variance for an addition per the setback requirements.

The CPC recommends considering any impacts of the project on neighbors.

74 Old Andover Road – On the petition of Sheila O'Donnell for a special permit to have 3-5 chickens.

The CPC does not object to the request if no roosters are present.

16 Pleasant Street – On the petition of Rebecca Lowe for a variance for an attached garage per the setback requirements.

The CPC recommends considering any impacts of the project on neighbors.

21 Winter Street – On the petition of Alexander T. Harris, for a special permit to expand a non-conforming use

The CPC has no comment.

Mr. Bellavance again informed all present that the meeting was being recorded.

Rich Wallner of 57 Lakeside Boulevard stated that he presented the "Big Ideas for North Reading 2018" (see attached) to the Board of Selectmen on two occasions. His main point at the time is that the town has some big needs. He suggested to the B.O.S. that a task force be formed to work on these needs. The first time he was told that he should return after town meeting which he did. He was then told by Selectmen, Mike Prisco to work with the Planning Commission. He has been on many boards (Counseling on Aging, Chamber of Commerce, EDC, and the CITSSAT Group) and believes he is well informed. This evening he is not speaking for any groups, but as a resident of North Reading.

Mr. Bellavance stated that the goal for this discussion is to review the report prepared by Rich Wallner for the CPC, review his current conclusions and then measure "agree or disagree" on some of the main take-a-ways. He believes that this is something that they are all working towards.

Mr. Pearce stated that they have reviewed a number of these items a couple of times and he talked about some of these similar concepts, but the sticking point is always the same, and that is to get the Board of Selectmen on board because you can make the best plan in the world, but until some money flows in that direction and the level of support is high enough, you will not get too far with it.

Rich Wallner stated that this is a very unique time in our town. It is not often that the town receives 18 million dollars from a development (Pulte Property – 104 Lowell Rd.). This money has not been assigned to any purpose, along with the 3.5% revenue that the town will receive yearly from this property. The other unique situation is that the town's schools are in great shape. The third item that is overriding is that the senior population, 60+ has been around 20%, but has gone up 24% in one year and is going to go up 40% in the next 10 to 15 years and meanwhile school enrollment projections are going down.

Mr. Pearce stated that they also need to focus on one area that was overlooked when the Lincoln Properties was constructed and that is to increase the police and fire personnel, especially with the proposed construction at 104 Lowell Road (Pulte Properties).

Rich Wallner stated that the Pulte Properties construction is intended to be 55+ and in general are active people and their needs are lesser. The housing that he is talking about is the seniors that live in town and not being forced out.

Mr. Pearce stated that it is not so much the health of the 55+ people that he is concerned with. The Planning magazine that they receive had a great article on this. When you build a community type place like that there are many diverse people in the same buildings in the same buildings and there is going to be times when there is conflict, and this can't be ignored. He still believes that the town is in need of more resources.

Mrs. McKnight stated that recently she and the town administrator were looking at some information from another town that was going to be having a 55+ and over active community. There was information about the number of police and fire calls that were made. She will send this information to the dropbox for the board to review.

Rita Mullen of 29 Abbott Road stated that if Rich Wallner is allowed to complete his presentation a lot of the questions that the board has, will be answered.

Mr. Wallner completed his presentation. He would like the Community Planning Commission to go to the Board of Selectmen and let them know that they have reviewed and support this concept.

Mrs. McKnight stated that one of the points of potential disagreement of people who are interested in the issue is, or may become controversial is housing, where housing, impact on schools and whether people are willing to take the trade-off of increased vibrancy/support for new commercial, if that means bringing in additional residential population. Aside from this, she thinks there would be a lot of support for the larger concepts Mr. Wallner is presenting.

Rich Wallner stated that he is not proposing that they bring in more housing for kids.

Mrs. McKnight stated that there is a fair housing act that needs to be followed. She is not sure if the town would want to phase out kids.

Rita Mullen stated that she has been town for over 40 years and when she got involved; residents would come to her and tell her what they would like to see in town. The planning department needs to take the role as the major player. She does not want the money that the town is receiving from the Pulte sale to be used right-a-way.

Jeff Yull of 427 Park Street stated that time is of the essence, as well. 18 million dollars sound like a lot of money, but the Board of Selectmen has a lot of things going on which is another reason that this should be brought to the Board of Selectmen, sooner than later, with the CPC's approval.

Mr. Bellavance stated that he is willing to take the lead on this and move these ideas forward. They have been working on this and there are a lot of behind the scenes issues that need to be put in place. He wants to see the money that the town is going to be receiving go towards economic development.

Diane Downing of 29R Duane Drive stated that she has frequently gone on the Town of Reading website and she is very awed by what they are doing with their structure. The CPC and Economic Development are under the same department and they empower each other. The Town of North Reading stands alone. Her husband was on the CPC 40 years ago and she has heard a lot of interesting things. One thing that her husband used to say is that when realtors bring potential buyers into town, they don't bring them down Route 28 and this has not changed. As for Concord Street the assessment was based on buildings. So, one trucking company came in and said they did not need a large building, but they needed a fast parking lot,

for which they were not taxed. This then brought in more trucking companies, she does not know how the assessments are done now, but she hopes that they have changed. She also believes that people who have an apartment situation/in-law apartment should be re-looked at, to allow seniors to have a far more in-expensive place to live. If they knew about parcels that are going into sales the town may be able to make a deal and purchase the property for senior living.

Diane Norris of 240 Elm Street stated that one of her concerns is that the Board of Selectmen will not be as excited about these ideas. When they started a library project they went to every committee/board that they could speak to and when it became a consensus that this was a good idea the B.O.S. came on board. She believes that if this same scenario is done the B.O.S. will be more likely to go forward with it.

**Signage Bylaw - discussion**

Mr. Bellavance stated that Danielle McKnight put together a summary of bylaws from different towns and also captured a lot of what was said at the last meeting. Overall, our bylaw is not that bad that it can't be modified, and with these modifications and cleaning-up he thinks that they can use their bylaws as a base. He would like the members to review the signage bylaws, page by page and make changes that they would like to see and then they can possibly meet in the middle.

Mrs. McKnight stated that they can plan the workshop and Kopelman & Paige will come in to train the boards about the legalities.

Dan Mills of 5 Green Meadow Drive stated that when he was on the board this was something that interested him.

Mrs. McKnight stated that she could send Dan Mills a copy of the memo she put together and he can give her some feedback that he may have.

Adjournment at 10:15PM

Respectfully submitted,

  
Jonathan Cody, Clerk