

RECEIVED

MAY 10 2016

TOWN CLERK
ACTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND SEWER COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

March 7, 2016

Francis Faulkner Room 204

Regular Meeting 7:00 PM

Present: Katie Green, Peter J. Berry, Janet K. Adachi, Franny Osman, Town Manager Steven Ledoux, and Lisa Tomyl, Recording Secretary

Absent: Chingsung Chang

Chairman Green opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Citizens' Concerns: None.

Chairman's Update and Operational Update:

Ms. Green: Various updates, including about upcoming solar event, West Acton Village event, Acton Area League of Women Voters candidates forum on 3/9, local elections on 3/29, start of Annual Town Meeting on 4/4.

Mr. Ledoux: Finalizing Memorandum of Understanding with Associated Environmental Systems, including provision for Town right-of-refusal on 20K of proposed leased space. Collective bargaining negotiations with fire union for FY17-19. Town staff Fitbit challenge.

Public Hearings and Appointments

7:10 PM Change of Officers and Director, Not Your Average Joe's: Motion to approve, seconded, All Ayes.

7:10 PM Site Plan Special Permit #01/08/15 – 461 18 Wetherbee Street: George Dimakarakos of Stamsky & McNary, engineer for applicant Onyx Corporation, which provides site-preparation and landscaping services, presented a proposal for construction of a 9K ft² building and associated parking on a property zoned EAV-2 that currently includes a trade shop, shed, paved parking and residence. Nashoba Brook runs along the easterly side of the property. The new building would provide space for offices, currently located in a building on the abutting Sports Authority property, and a new trade shop, which would be adjacent to the future Bruce Freeman Rail Trail on the westerly side. Motion to approve the proposed project with 3 conditions: 1) installation of sidewalk from entrance drive to BFRT within one year after completion of BFRT; 2) landscaping along BFRT-side of new building; 3) accept feedback from Design Review Board (which the general request for department and committee comments inadvertently omitted) regarding proposed landscaping. Seconded, All Ayes.

Board of Selectmen

March 7, 2016

Page 1 of 6

8:00 PM Acton Center Traffic Study Presentation: Joe SanClemente, an engineer with consultant Howard Stein Hudson Associates, provided a summary of the history of the study and presented study conclusions. In 2001, there was a study of Route 27, with additional traffic data in 2014. In 2015, the consultant met with the Historic District Commission. Traffic volume drops pre- and post- rush-hour, with no spike mid-day; volume is down slightly since 2001. The speed zone is 30 mph but drivers usually go faster, around 38 mph but with some traveling at much higher speeds of 60 mph+. The crash history indicates the greatest number of collisions on the western end at the junction of Newtown Road/Route 27/Concord Road.

The first public forum, about existing conditions, was on 1/29/2015; the 2nd forum, about existing conditions and several alternatives, was on 6/1/2015. The need for a traffic signal depends on volume and various other factors, and Acton satisfied only one, so Town should focus on other ways to address traffic issues. Among the alternative concepts, Concept 1 sought to resolve the conflict at the 4-way intersection by converting it to a 3-way intersection; Concept 2 aimed to slow traffic with raised crosswalks; Concepts 3a and 3b did not address the 4-conflict issue. The consultant received lots of feedback and pushback regarding the idea of reversing travel direction on Newtown and the raised crossings.

The consultant's recommendations are for phased-in improvements:

1)

- relocate utility pole on Route 27 that blocks sight lines
- reinforce speed limit sign with flashing sign that shows actual speed and records data on volume, time of day for transmittal to the Police Department.
- narrower sight lines, wider shoulder

2) raised crosswalks

3)

- one-way segment on Concord
- add left-turn lane (to left of horse trough) onto Route 27 from right-hand branch of Concord
- make Woodbury Lane right-turn-only onto Route 27

David Shoemaker, 14 Newtown Road – Likes change of triangle to roundabout. But concern about crossing Route 27. Should reduce speed to 25 mph as in Chelmsford and Maynard town centers and move 35 mph sign farther from where 30 mph zone starts. Mr. SanClemente: Speed limits are based on the travel speed of 85%, which in Acton's Town center would mean increasing the current speed limit. That is why the need to make physical changes to reduce speed.

Nigel Godley, 10 Wood Lane – Hikes Nagog Hill Road, has to cross Route 27 which is very dangerous. 1) move speed sign farther away, 2) what about police enforcement of speed limits, such as on-site during peak times, 3) how does making Concord 1-way with new left turn by horse trough help? Mr.

Board of Selectmen

March 7, 2016

Page 2 of 6

SanClemente: The changes would reduce one source of conflict at the Newtown Road intersection. 4) Concern about cars racing down Concord Road and into crosswalk near Wood Lane. Mr. SanClemente: Original speed zones set by MA Department of Transportation based on earlier study and 85% standard. So speed was 35 mph as far as Town center, where speed dropped to 30 mph. Problem today is that actual speeds don't match posted limits.

Roland Bourdon, Simon Willard Road – 1) what about signs that light up when push button, as at West Concord crossings? 2) move horse trough. Mr. SanClemente: Trying to be sensitive to context. Hence raised speed bumps. Historic District Commission says could be some flexibility about horse-trough location.

David Martin, High Street – 1) reverse order of phases; 2) agrees with flashing-sign suggestion.

Mark Forrester, Wood Lane – Abutters near crosswalk hear cars crossing, so hump would cause audible sound. Police cars posted on Concord and High slow drivers. But never posted on Route 27/Town center, except for business at Town Hall. 466 Main Street crosswalk noise a concern, as would be traffic lights, with the constant starting/stopping. Thinks phase-reversal idea good.

Barry Atchison, Alcott Street – 1) question about 85% standard, 2) Fire Department driving out of station will need to loop around.

John, Concord Road and Main – concern about speed bumps because Fire and Police Departments speed to North Acton

Matthew Mehler, 25 Newtown Road – Open process. Was concerned about proposed reverse-flow on Newtown.

The next step is Selectmen authorization to move forward. Town Engineer Corey York proposed to start with Phase I because easier to implement: speed controls, including markings on road, etc.

David Shoemaker, 14 Newtown Road – Would like Selectmen to look into having police on-site to monitor traffic.

Board members expressed support for proceeding with Phase 1.

Selectmen's Business

Commuter Rail Parking Meter Rate: Town Engineer Corey York presented proposed rate increases for bike lockers, resident stickers, senior resident stickers, Jones Field reserved parking and parking meters. Bike locker annual fee would increase from 75 to 100; resident sticker annual fee, for 20 days per

Board of Selectmen

March 7, 2016

Page 3 of 6

month, from 50 to 100, senior resident sticker annual fee, from 25 to 50; monthly fee for Jones Field, from 500 to 100; and daily rate for meters (12 hours) from 2.50 to 5.00. Daily rate at Littleton station is 4. No impact on shuttle cost, which still is \$2.50. No restriction on overnight parking in main lot, except for winter ban 1-5 AM. Some problems with overnight parking in West Acton lot. The new meters should arrive in March, with the new system starting in April, which is when the rates would change. The Board discussed the need for additional publicity and outreach about the proposed rate changes, and perhaps a delay the effective date until 7/1.

David Martin, South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee chairman – 1) the rates have been held to the current level for 10 years, pending completion of construction. So the increase seems large but is the first in a long time. 2) there is concern about Acton rates being too attractive in comparison to West Concord or Littleton. Mr. Martin said SATSAC could help with outreach about the rate changes.

Board agreed to postpone vote, let SATSAC do outreach and get feedback about proposed increases to be effective 7/1.

Acton Leadership Group Update: Consensus regarding FY17 provides for cut of 200K from municipal budget, not using unused tax levy of 985K, limiting reserves-use to 2.54M in FY17, and to 1.3M in out-years, FY18 and FY19, with spreadsheets therefore showing deficits that ALG members for those years will have to address.

Selectmen to Take Position on Warrant Article Assignments and Close the Warrant:

The Board heard updates about and took positions on warrant articles.

- Articles 8-9, Minuteman annual assessment, proposed debt issuance: Kevin Mahoney, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, provided update. 1/27 MA School Building Authority approval of 44M funding of 145M total for new-building project; 120-day period starts for District approval of project; all 16 member-towns approved amended regional agreement, and MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education expected to approve end of this week, at which time amended agreement will be effective, except for withdrawal of 6 members, which will be effective 7/2017; School Committee to vote 3/15 re debt-issuance proposal after which member-towns have 60 days to approve/disapprove, including taking no action which is approval by default. 6 withdrawing towns likely to have debt-issuance on warrants but take no action. Board voted to recommend annual assessment but defer taking position on debt-issuance article.

- Article 27, Electrical load aggregation: Patrick Roach, Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, provided overview of electrical load aggregation. Over 60 MA communities participating. Approval of article will allow Town to look into forming plan, hire consultant to develop plan, provide public review, secure Board approval. MAPC has approved consultant who can work with member-towns, taking small bit of utility bills as fee. All residents included unless opt out, but may opt out at any time before or during program. Mr. Berry: Green Advisory Board members noted that with 3 large energy bills pending

Board of Selectmen

March 7, 2016

Page 4 of 6

in MA Legislature, Town should hold off entering into aggregation agreement until disposition of legislation is clear. Mr. Roach: Town still may move ahead and then wait if market doesn't look good. Mr. Ledoux: Former Acton resident (and GAB member) Tom Michelman has been working with MAPC and could come back to Acton to talk with Board. Mr. Roach: Utility companies set rates every 6 months, but municipal contract typically is 1 year and can be as long as 3 years. Can opt out and in at any time, go back to basic service if opt out. Board voted to recommend.

- Article 5, Acton-Boxborough Regional District Budget: AB School Chairman Kristina Rychlik presented District budget. Board voted to recommend.

- Article 24, Lease Authorization - Senior Center: Senior Center Director Sharon Mercurio and Senior Center Study Committee Chairman Dean Charter provided an update. Strong opposition to the Arlington Street site for a new senior center led to rethinking of proposal. Article authorizes Board and Town Manager to enter into a lease, with monies in short term to come from 125K and 75K in gift funds toward lease/other costs. Marge Kennedy, Church Street, wrote to Board about revisiting community center idea; Board will take up community-center idea at a later date. Board voted to recommend.

- Articles 21-22, Kelley's Corner zoning amendments and infrastructure articles: Planning Director Roland Bartl provided an overview. Town Meeting should address Article 21 first because zoning amendments are necessary in order to pursue the Article 22 infrastructure proposal. Article 22 is for 756K (of a total estimated cost of 9-12M), with 80-20 federal-state funding ratio; estimated cost to Town for right-of-way acquisitions about 1.6-2M. Aim of amendments is to create overlay district in Kelley's Corner for more, denser development with greater height and mixed use. Underlying district zoning still would be available if a developer preferred that. Planning Board had concerns about height, inclusion of residences, but inclusion of residences is key, will create unique Acton town center that doesn't simply replicate another location. Such town centers popping up all over U.S. Influx of new residents not projected to have much impact on school enrollment. Board voted to recommend both articles.

- Articles 10-11, Collective Bargaining Agreements: Police Chief Frank Widmayer presented. Board voted to recommend both articles.

- Articles 28-30, Zoning Bylaw Amendments: Mr. Bartl provided an overview. Board voted to recommend all articles.

- Article 23, Community Preservation Act projects: Mr. Berry provided an overview. Board voted to recommend.

- Articles 25-26, Land Acquisitions, Central Street and Conant Street: Board voted to recommend.

- Municipal Budget articles (4, 6, etc.): Mr. Ledoux provided summary of updated budget: Total budget is 32,656,604 with operating comprising 32,247,604, subsidies comprising 247K and capital comprising 162K. In accordance with recent Acton Leadership Group consensus, budget cuts 200K from proposed budget that Selectmen recommended to Finance Committee in 2/2016. Board voted to recommend all.

Board also voted to recommend articles proposed for Consent Calendar or otherwise not requiring discussion.

Board of Selectmen

March 7, 2016

Page 5 of 6

House Bill H3884, Increase of Liquor Licenses Discussion: Mr. Ledoux explained that as part of the pending MA legislation to increase the Town's allocation of liquor licenses, the Town needed not only to agree to the phased release of the licenses, but would have to specify districts in Town for many of the licenses. Motion to recommend the Great Road District be assigned 4 all alcohol and 1 wine and malt licenses, and Massachusetts Avenue district have 8 all alcohol and 3 wine and malt licenses, and 4 all alcohol and 2 wine and malt licenses be left unassigned. Board voted to approve.

Town Manager Review: Board received and reviewed for first time Town Counsel's compilation of Board-members' ratings and comments with respect to Town Manager's performance for past review year. Ms. Green noted that Open Meeting Law precluded Selectmen from seeing each other's ratings and comments outside of posted public meeting; take time to review compilation and bring up any questions or concerns later.

Selectmen's Reports:

Selectmen Reports are included in the agenda packet on DocuShare. There were no questions.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Green held Item 11, pertaining to proposed Historical Commission appointment, to clarify that is for Associate position. Motion to approve Consent Agenda, seconded, All Ayes.

Adjournment at 12:15 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lisa Tomyl, Recording Secretary



Janet K. Adachi, Clerk