

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD

May 11, 2021

ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Margaret Olson (Chair), Lynn DeLisi (Vice-Chair), Stephen Gladstone, Robert Domnitz, Gary Taylor

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie, Jennifer Curtin

7:00 PM Site Plan Review, Section 17: Monica Grewal and Jeffrey Ruberti, 3 Page Farm Road, Parcel 145-32-0. Site Plan Review for the construction of a fence in a cluster subdivision.

Ms. Curtin summarized the project submitted by the applicant.

The homeowners are requesting a fence permit to construct a partial perimeter fence to keep their dogs from running into the road. The proposed fence will run along the east and south ends of the property and along the driveway from the house to the east lot line. The east section runs along Page Farm Road.

This project falls under Site Plan Review because the lot is in a cluster subdivision.

The fence will be set back at least 10 feet from the roadside path on Page Farm Road. It will be a black aluminum vertical rail fence approximately 330 feet long and 3.5 feet tall.

The applicant submitted a plot plan, and site photos showing the location of the fence, and images of the fence designs.

The cluster documents do not specify any conditions that would apply to this project.

The fence meets the Criteria for Approval under Section 18.5.5 of the Zoning Bylaw for reasons stated below.

The proposed fence is an unobtrusive design that will blend into the surrounding landscape. The home is modern, and the homeowner chose this fence design to complement that aesthetic and to visually blend in with the vegetation along most of its length.

In addition, the applicant has changed the design of the section of fence that runs along the southeast property line to a wooden split rail design as seen elsewhere on Page Rd. This will be the fence that the neighbors at 9 Page Farm will see when they look from their house to the applicant's property. This was done at the abutters request.

The remainder of the fence along Page Farm Road will be the black aluminum rail fence that was proposed. The applicant originally also proposed granite posts that have been removed from the plans. The finished side will face Page Farm Road.

The fence is not located within the triangular area of the corner lot and will not affect any sight lines on the road or from the driveway. It will have no effect on snow clearing activities of the Town as it is set back at least 10 feet from the road. It also allows adequate space for emergency vehicles and will not impact pedestrians.

The fence will not be in any wetland resource areas.

Abutters:

The homeowner reported that two neighbors requested that the fence be changed to a split rail or horizontal design.

Peter Hussey, 6 Page Farm Road, sent an e-mail dated April 30, 2021 stating that he believes the design of the fence will complement the landscape. He requested that the fence be located behind the existing trees and shrubs.

Becky Spitz, 44 Page Road, requested the plans. Ms. Spitz did not submit any comment.

Ken Bassett, 37 Page Road, requested the plans. Mr. Bassett did not submit any comment.

MO said that Mr. Bassett is a landscape architect with strong opinions on roadsides. If there was a problem with the roadside and the fence, she would expect Mr. Bassett to comment on that.

Ms. Curtin showed photos showing the location of the fence line.

Mr. Ruberti said that the section that goes into the woods will be the split rail section. It is the same style that is on Page Farm Road on the property next to Mr. Bassett's house.

BD asked why a fence permit was needed.

Ms. Curtin said that because the fence was located on a property in a cluster subdivision, site plan review is required.

BD asked if the criteria for the fence section of the bylaw is being used for Site Plan Approval.

MO noted that using the fence criteria is reasonable even though the process is technically site plan approval.

Mary Helen Lorenz is Mr. Bassett's wife and said that the applicant invited them to their property to talk about the fence location and materials. She added that she appreciates that their proposal is responsive to what they discussed and supports the project.

Mr. Hussey said that he appreciated the applicant's responsiveness and supports the project.

LD moved to accept the plans as presented. MO seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, MO aye, SG aye, GT aye.

7:20 PM Public Hearing for a Ministerial Change to the General and Zoning Bylaws to change the name of the Board of Selectmen to the "Select Board."

MO opened the public hearing.

Ms. Curtin read the warrant language.

MOTION under ARTICLE 24 Board of Selectmen / Citizens' Petition

Town Counsel requested that the Planning Board conduct a public hearing on the ministerial changes to the Town's General and Zoning Bylaws to change the name of the Board of Selectmen to the Select Board. Because this is a ministerial revisions, the usual legal notice requirements are not required. The Select Board seeks the Planning Board's endorsement of the following:

Moved: That the Town vote to amend the Town's General and Zoning Bylaws to change the name of the Board of Selectmen to the "Select Board," by striking out, in every instance in which they appear in reference to that body, the words "Board of Selectmen" or "Selectmen" and inserting in place thereof the words "Select Board"; and by striking out, in every instance in which they appear in reference to Board members, the word "Selectman" and "Selectmen" and inserting in place thereof the words "Select Board Member" or "Select Board Members"; and further to authorize the Town Clerk to make non-substantive, ministerial revisions to ensure that gender and numerical issues in related text is revised to properly reflect such change in title; provided, however, that regardless of such nomenclature, said board shall constitute a board of selectmen for purposes of the General Laws and of any special law applicable to the Town; and further that the authorization provided to the Town Clerk herein be extended to ensure gender neutrality more generally throughout the Town's General and Zoning Bylaws.

PVM said that the Board of Selectmen is seeking the Planning Board's endorsement of the warrant article.

LD moved to endorse the warrant article. GT seconded.

Peter von Mertens said that there have been 10 women on the Board of Selectmen and that they have served the Town well. It is time to make the language neutral regardless of gender. He added that he is part of a citizens group that feels strongly that this change is due.

Kim Bodnar said that it is a logical change since over 90 towns in the Commonwealth have changed to a gender-neutral language.

BD asked if Madam Moderator should still be used in Town Meeting.

Ellen Meyer Shorb said that the move is towards gender neutrality so just saying "Moderator" would suffice since gender is not relevant to the job.

Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, MO aye, SG aye, GT aye.

MO said she would be happy to state the endorsement by the Planning Board at Town Meeting.

BD asked if the language will be able to be changed in other regulations under the same vote.

Jennifer Glass said that there is language in the warrant article allowing that kind of clerical change to ensure that language is gender neutral throughout.

7:30 PM Business

- Approval of April 27, 2021 minutes.

LD moved to approve the minutes as amended. SG seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, SG aye, MO aye. GT abstained as he was not present for the April 27th meeting.

- Vote to endorse Village Center Survey and Postcard and send out.

PVM said that there has been some concern expressed that people may take the survey more than once. She asked Ms. Glass if she experienced that with the School Building Survey.

Ms. Glass said that the surveys were mostly collected by hand and some were done electronically. They were not concerned about people completing more than one survey and relied on people being truthful.

PVM shared the postcard. It has the link, QR code, and instructions on how to request a paper copy.

LD said that there should be something on the survey to say to only fill out once and to say people need to be over 18 to fill it out since people under 18 cannot vote.

MO said that people know not to fill out more than once and that it is not necessary to specify that.

GT said that it may be interesting to see what people under 18 have to say.

MO said that getting suggestions from kids can be helpful.

Mr. Nicholson said that there are a lot of kids who go down to the center every day and he encourages opening the survey up to anyone who would like to take it.

BD said that there is question in the survey about town finance and does not believe that children under 18 would be able to answer those sorts of questions.

PVM noted that the survey is not a vote. Any changes to zoning or a project proposed under the South Lincoln Overlay District would have to go to Town Meeting vote anyway.

MO moved to endorse the survey and postcard for their distribution. GT seconded.

BD asked when the postcard will be sent out.

PVM said that it will be distributed to Lincolntalk and a variety of different listservs. It will not be posted online until the mailing goes out which is expected to happen by next week.

Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, SG aye, MO aye.

PVM said that there was a typo in the warrant for the Accessory Apartment Bylaw revision that will be changed when the text is officially written into the bylaw. James Craig will introduce the Stormwater Bylaw on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and then turn it over to MO who will explain what it is about and give the Planning Board's endorsement. Questions will be answered by Nick Cristofori, the Town's consultant from CEI. MO will then give a report on the Accessory Apartment Bylaw revision with questions from residents to be answered by the Planning Board.

GT asked if the Request for Proposals went out for the Septic Evaluation.

PVM said that it has, and responses are due by May 14th. She also has been in contact with MAPC and the EEE to revise the timeline for their joint grant. The timeline has been extended because of COVID and the creation of the new SLPAC committee. She also reported that the screening trees at Minuteman School have been reviewed by the Lincoln Conservation Land Manager, Emma Coates, who will write a report on which trees are healthy and which may need more care or be replaced. This report will be sent to Minuteman.

BD asked how we can ensure that Minuteman maintain these trees as they have been neglected thus far.

PVM said that the requirement for screening is part of the Site Plan Approval so the requirement does not go away, and we have leverage to hold them to that.

GT moved to adjourn. SG seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, SG aye, MO aye.

Approved on May 25, 2021.