



PLANNING BOARD • Town of Acton

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ACTON PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of Meeting

December 11, 1989

RECEIVED & FILED

DATE *February 12, 1990*

Barbara Brown
TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Planning Board members in attendance: Chairman Quinton Brathwaite, Vice Chairman Rob Block, Clerk Mary Giorgio, David Hill, Greg Niemyski and Jim Lee.

Planning staff in attendance: Assistant Town Planner Timothy Smith, Planning Board Secretary Donna Jacobs.

Chairman Quinton Brathwaite called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

I. Durkee Lane Decision

Quint Brathwaite read excerpts from the Westford Planning Board letter dated 12/8/89 which identified their findings. He then went on to highlight Tim Smith's 12/8/89 letter which countered the findings contained in the Westford Planning Board's letter.

Jim Lee stated that he believes the problem should be resolved by the U.S. Post Office and suggested the residents and Board petition the Post Office to establish another method for dealing with the mail delivery such as development of a new zip code for the road.

Quint Brathwaite reported that he did a lot of research into the problem including conversation with the public safety people and the post office and has concluded that the name of one of the roads should be changed.

After additional discussion of the safety concerns caused by the existence of two roads with such similar names, and further discussion of the postal delivery problems, Mary Giorgio moved that the Board change the name of Durkee Lane in North Acton to Westford Lane as proposed by staff in the draft Order submitted this evening. Jim Lee seconded the motion.

Further discussion of the motion included Rob Block's suggestion that the house numbers of one street be changed to eliminate similarity of both numbers and names simply by adding 100 to the existing house

numbers. Greg Niemyski asked for points of clarification from staff: first, does the Board have the authority to change house numbers? and second, does the Board have the authority to change the name of Durkee Road in W. Acton? Assistant Town Planner Tim Smith responded that the Board does not have the authority to change either house numbers or the name of a public way (Durkee Road, Acton is a public Way). Mary Giorgio reminded the Board that no matter what there is still an outstanding safety issue the Board should address itself to and called for a vote on the motion.

The motion to change the name of Durkee Lane in North Acton from Durkee Lane to Westford Lane was amended so the order would not take effect until May 1, 1990 and passed with four in favor and two opposed. The order was signed by the Board for distribution to the proper town agencies and abutters.

II. Autumn Lane - Frank Manther

Tim Smith advised the Board that Mr. Manther does not believe the Autumn Lane development is being built in compliance with the Board's decision. Mr. Manther was specifically concerned that the berm was inadequately constructed, and therefore would not prevent flooding of adjacent lands.

David Hill reminded the Board that this was a very controversial issue at the time of the approval which is why the conditions contained in the approval are specific. David Hill stated his opinion that the development does not appear to be constructed in the manner required in the decision.

Jim Lee asked if David Abbt of the Engineering Dept. has done calculations of the runoff from the site. David Hill replied that these calculations have been performed and carefully reviewed during the approval process.

Greg Niemyski reported that the board has walked the site in the past. Greg suggested that 2 or 3 Board members meet at the site for a site walk on Saturday, December 16th at 8:00 PM. Greg and David will meet with Mr. Manther at 8:00 on Saturday morning to walk the site.

III. Quint's Resignation

Quint reported that he believes the Board needs to vote to accept his resignation as Chairman because it took a vote to elect him as chairman. Quint Brathwaite then moved that the Board accept his resignation effective January 1, 1990. Quint's motion was seconded by Rob Block and carried unanimously.

Jim Lee moved that the Board vote to officially thank Quint for his service to the town and the Board during his tenure as chairman. Greg Niemyski seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Rob Block reminded the Board of his pending resignation from the Board. Rob went on to advise the Board that he will be sending his letter of resignation to the Board of Selectmen to take effect January 1, 1990.

Greg Niemyski moved that the Board vote to elect Mary Giorgio as Chairman of the Board effective January 1, 1990. Quint Brathwaite seconded his motion. Mary Giorgio stated that she believes there are three people possessing the experience needed to chair the Board at this time; herself, Greg Niemyski and David Hill.

Greg stated that he doesn't want to become Planning Board chairman at this time because of his additional duties as a Planning Council member. David Hill stated that he felt he needed more time on the Board before accepting the role of Chairman as he has been a member of the Board for just over one year. Jim Lee also indicated that he needed another year of experience as a member before he would feel comfortable acting as Chairman.

Mary Giorgio reported that she may have difficulty as Chairman due to her need for baby-sitters and asked that she have a strong vice chairman to support her because of this problem.

Jim Lee moved that the Board vote to elect Mary Giorgio as Chairman, Greg Niemyski as Vice Chairman and David Hill as Clerk effective January 1, 1990. The motion was seconded by Quint and carried unanimously.

IV. Pro-Active Planning

Greg Niemyski updated the Board on the Planning Council's progress with the Master Plan. He reported that the build-out scenario performed by I.E.P. indicated a build-out of an additional 13.2 million square feet in nonresidential development and an additional 5200 residential lots which result in an estimated population of 32,000 at full build-out.

The Planning Council has concluded that the Town's main concern is with the commercial and industrial growth potential. The Council has looked at the zoning maps to identify which areas have the greatest potential for development. This has resulted in an investigation of down-zoning through reduction in FAR for land along Route 2A and for the W.R. Grace and Airco properties as well as the potential of a mixed use development zone for the present North Acton industrial zone.

Rob Block recommended that the Board take a pro-active stance by recognizing a couple of things:

- 1) no matter what you decide, you're going to get sued
- 2) go after changes in the Rules & Regs
- 3) include requirements for developer's contribution to infrastructure in both the regs & decisions.
- 4) incorporate the new Master Plan findings into the regs & Board decisions.
- 5) look beyond the specific decision by picking the battles and making decisions that establish precedents.

Greg Niemyski went on to report that the traffic analysis performed by VHB states that no matter what you do, Acton cannot manage the traffic problem in a way that Acton residents would like to see it managed because the problem is severe already. Greg went on to state that the Town needs to get the developers to bear the cost of mitigation measures.

Greg also reported that the Planning Council is interviewing all of the large land-owners in Acton to review the Master Plan progress with them and discuss their reactions and ideas in an effort to gain their support of the Master Plan during its presentation at Town Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Approved by the Acton Planning Board

David Hill 05 FEB 90
David Hill, Clerk Date