



Town of Georgetown

MINUTES

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Committee: Planning Board
Date: March 8, 2023
Time: 7:00 pm.
Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members present: Harry LaCortiglia, Bruce Fried, Bob Watts, Joanne Laut, George Comiskey.
Staff present: Town Planner, John Cashell.
Staff absent: Administrative Assistant, Andrea Thibault.

Minutes transcribed by A. Thibault. Note: Video recordings of all Georgetown Planning Board meetings may be found at www.georgetownma.gov and by choosing the Community TV option.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Harry LaCortiglia.

Minutes:

J. Laut: I move to accept the meeting minutes from February 8, 2023 meeting as stated in our packets and on this meeting's agenda.
B. Fried: Second.

Motion carries 5-0; via roll call vote.

Vouchers:

J. Laut: I make a motion to approve the vouchers for BMO/Zoom February 2023 for \$14.99; H.L. Graham and Associates: G. Mello Disposal technical review \$260.00; and reimbursement Town Planner for legislative event: \$25.00 as cited in our packets and on this meeting's agenda.
B. Fried: Second.

Motion carries 5-0; via roll call vote.

Public Hearing: 430 Andover Street, Special Permit for shared Common Driveway.

J. Cashell: Reads public hearing notice into the record.

Ron Morrison, applicant: We would like to put a shared driveway in.

47 J. Cashell: Last August, Mr. Morrison came before this Planning Board with a different proposal that
48 was recommended to him.

49
50 During that public hearing process last August, the Planning Board suggested that a better approach
51 would be to submit a Special Permit application for a common driveway, in accordance with Chapter
52 165-73E.

53
54 The project engineer is Thad Berry. The submitted plans to do not show the actual construction of
55 the driveway all the way out to Andover Street.

56
57 Thad Berry's computer system went down and then he went on vacation. I was in communication
58 with him on Monday and Tuesday but he wasn't able to finish the revised plans in time for this
59 meeting.

60
61 H. LaCortiglia: So, we will be getting actual plans for the roadway?

62
63 J. Cashell: Yes.

64
65 G. Comiskey: What are the specifications for a common driveway width?

66
67 H. LaCortiglia: There are no per se specifications. They are what are acceptable to this Board. We
68 would need to approve the width, the grade, the drainage and things to that effect.

69
70 J. Cashell: This mainly is at the discretion of the Planning Board as far as the construction standards
71 are concerned. And, it really rests on the Fire Department.

72
73 If they are satisfied, and they produce a report to us in writing, then we can go by that. I know that
74 the applicant has been working from the Fire Department.

75
76 H. LaCortiglia: It has been my experience that the Fire Department requires a 20-foot roadway.

77
78 G. Comiskey: So, we don't have anything to send to our technical review engineer.

79
80 J. Cashell: Does the Board want to have Larry Graham to review the pending plans before they come
81 back before the Board?

82
83 H. LaCortiglia: Possibly after this Board reviews the plans first.

84
85 *{Planning Board agrees to receive revised plans, have Fire Department review prior to the next hearing on this project.}*

86
87 H. LaCortiglia: Mr. Morrison, do you have any questions? Does anyone from the public have any
88 questions?

89
90 R. Morrison: No.

91
92 *{No comments from the public}.*

93
94 G. Comiskey: I move to continue the hearing for 430 Andover Street to April 26, 2023.

95 J. Laut: Second.
96 Motion carries 5-0; via roll call vote.

97
98

99 **Planning Office:**

100

101 **1. Citizen's Petition for Town Warrant.**

102

103 J. Cashell: We will not be seeing any citizen's petitions on this spring warrant. Our three warrant
104 articles are ready to go in front of town meeting in the form of warrant articles.

105

106 I got notice today through Town Counsel, that Chapter 57 amendments only call for a majority vote at
107 Town Meeting, not 2/3 because it is not a zoning ordinance.

108

109

110 **2. Update on MBTA Housing.**

111

112 J. Cashell: Yesterday I had a great meeting with several MVPC members, and we went over the
113 schedule of what needs to be accomplished.

114

115 What it boils down to is the MVPC is going to spearhead the efforts working with town officials and
116 other designated parties of the town as a core team to develop a perspective overlay district that would
117 ultimately be developed over the next couple of months, keeping in mind the timeframe scheduling
118 for this MBTA statue and the guidelines.

119

120 MVPC will have a training session in the next month on their GIS program for member communities
121 to go over the scenarios relative to creating overlay zoning districts that would provide for the multi-
122 family housing. They will assist the town in creating the overlay district.

123

124 There will be two different funding sources. MVPC has secured grant funding to help member
125 communities, and then DCHD will be providing additional funding. We will have technical experts
126 helping us throughout the process.

127

128 When the time comes, and they are ready, they will come to a Planning Board meeting, or a
129 subcommittee meeting. As we go along, we will keep everyone up to speed.

130

131 We would like the first public hearing in January 2024 for the start of the process to present to town
132 meeting in Spring 2024.

133

134 Then, the town would be on schedule to have this fully adopted by December 2024 deadline.

135

136 The interim action plan was formally approved by DCHD.

137

138 Any property owner within this potential overlay district could apply for multifamily housing.

139

140 H. LaCortiglia: Which essentially means that we have access to the three grant funds that we have
141 never accessed before and are not accessing now and have no plans for using in the future.

142

143 J. Cashell: As everyone will recall from a few years ago, the town did receive a \$50,000 grant for a
144 downtown septic evaluation.

145
146 That money was used to develop plans for a waste water treatment plan for downtown. It comprised
147 of 84 existing properties.

148
149 As part of the process when the study was done, the school board voted to allow for the possibility of
150 putting a small treatment plant at the west end of the parking lot area of the Middle High School. The
151 upper field would be the 5-acre leach field.

152
153 During that use process there was a multi-use recreation project that would be planned on top of the
154 leaching field and that would all be have to planned for in this process. The Board of Selectmen are
155 still exploring this.

156
157 **3. Border to Boston Rail Trail update.**

158
159
160 J. Cashell: Right now, the focus and deadlines are on preparing for town meeting. Town Counsel is
161 working on creating the right of way from the Boxford town line to West Main Street, referred to as
162 the southern half of the Border to Boston shared use trail. The northern half consists of West Main
163 Street to Newbury town line.

164
165 The south portion is scheduled for a year before the north.

166
167 The warrant article for the spring town meeting, for the town to vote on for the meeting in May, has
168 been prepared by Kopelman and Paige and summarizes what the town needs to vote on.

169
170 There are two tiny town owned lots that are within the right of way. These were orphaned by the
171 process of the railroad right of way. This is the warrant article for May and needs a 2/3 vote. This
172 right of way has to be delivered with clear title to all 84 easements.

173
174 These easements need to be acquired in order for the south section to move forward. The motion
175 above this article was drafted by Kopelman and Paige for the Conservation Commission to approve at
176 their next meeting. It consists of the Border to Boston Trail runs dead center within the power line
177 easement.

178
179 There is professional appraisal firm working on this.

180
181 G. Comiskey: Could you explain to the Board about the emails going back and forth between me,
182 Harry, Attorney Klein, John and a couple of Rail Trail members to help explain the process.

183
184 I asked if the Rail Trail could be granted the use by the Conservation Commission rather than filing
185 Article 97 legislation which would take the use from the Conservation Commission.

186
187 It was never really explained. The parcels in questions are also held by the Essex County Greenbelt
188 and they haven't been notified of this warrant article and neither has the Conservation Commission.

189

190 There is a law that for this type of taking that the public needs to know and there is a certain process
191 that must be followed in order for the secretary of the EPA to recommend the taking.

192

193 So, if it goes to town meeting, then the legislature and the Governor signs it, he asks the EPA
194 secretary if this has been followed and if all alternatives have been investigated. They don't take the
195 use taking lightly.

196

197 Why didn't the Rail Trail go to the Conservation Commission directly rather than going this route.

198

199 J. Cashell: The Conservation Commission Chairman sent an email today and I need to have a
200 discussion with him. This is just now emerging. It is only freshly in writing; we are working with the
201 Conservation Commission. If they affirmatively act it, this does not have to go before town meeting.
202 That motion is not under the time frame for town meeting.

203

204 G. Comiskey: Right now, what is required is a unanimous vote of the Conservation Commission. If a
205 town turns over Article 97, they may not be eligible for grants that they have received in the past. And,
206 we have received over a million dollars of these grants in the past. I think the Conservation
207 Commission deserves the courtesy of discussion.

208

209 H. LaCortiglia: John, will you update us at our next meeting?

210

211 J. Cashell: None of this is meant in any hostile manner or keeping people in the dark. This has just
212 emerged.

213

214 I need to be sure that we can deliver the clear title right of way. The whole project hinges on delivery
215 clear title to right of way.

216

217 I want for Chris Roop and Bill Hastings and everyone else who has worked so hard on this project are
218 going to see this through to fruition and that it will happen.

219

220 It is such an important amenity. Salisbury has their leg done; Newburyport is almost complete. Ours
221 is the only leg of the process that has had to go through all these easements.

222

223 G. Comiskey: Have you reached out to Greenbelt?

224

225 J. Cashell: Katie Klein our town counsel, is aware of what needs to be done, and so do the appraisers
226 as well as Mass Highway and Stantec. This is the time and place for the acquisition of the right of
227 way.

228

229

230 **4. Little's Hill project**

231

232 J. Cashell: The survey team has been out in the field. They have identified the boundaries that exist
233 and the ones that are missing. There is some discrepancy between the plans and the survey team.
234 Larry directed the team to place more boundaries to err on the side of caution.

235

236 We would like to complete the monumentation by June of this year.

237

238 **5. FEMA letter.**
239

240 J. Cashell: Bottom line is that they are going to notify us regarding the flood insurance survey and
241 flood insurance rate maps about having a community coordination meeting. At this meeting, the
242 FEMA official will go over the revised flood hazard information, the ordinance adoption that
243 Georgetown will need, and will answer questions.
244

245 This project is very technical with environment scientists and engineers. Georgetown has a 30-day
246 window from the date of receipt of this letter to comment on any road or stream names.
247

248 There is an appeal process for homeowners.
249

250 **6. Other Business.**
251

252
253 For future projects, there will be a submission from G. Mello for a major development review for the
254 transfer station. That would be a special permit. As determine in litigation, our major development
255 review bylaw is in effect.
256

257 Tin Lizzie formally submitted their application to amend their previous special permit to the ZBA for
258 their April meeting. The revisions pull things out of the wetlands and provide for garages for the
259 proposed units.
260

261 And, the executed tripartite agreements for Parish Commons and 51 West Main Street are done and
262 with the Town Treasurer for review.
263

264 Mission Dispensary (previously Healthy Pharms) needs to renew their 5-year special permit
265 application. They must apply between now and late October. We are within the time frame to go
266 through that public hearing process.
267

268 B. Fried: Motion to adjourn.

270 J. Laut: Second.

271 Motion carries 5-0; via roll call vote.
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275 Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.