



Planning Board

January 17th, 2023
7:30 PM
Virtual (Zoom)

Planning Board members present: Sam Bajwa, Nathan Cookson, and Michaela Moran, James Fuccione

Also present: Kaila Sauer, Assistant Planner & Alicia Burak, Administrative Assistant.

Michaela Moran read the guidelines for the virtual meeting.

Michaela Moran called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

Sam Bajwa called the roll: Sam Bajwa -Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson- Aye, James Fuccione- Aye

I. Regular Business

1. Resident Comments: None
2. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes: Sam Bajwa motioned at 7:36PM to approve the minutes from December 20th, 2022 and Nathan Cookson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Sam Bajwa- Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson- Aye, James Fuccione- Abstained

Nathan Cookson motioned at 7:38PM to approve minutes from Dec 22,2022. Sam Bajwa seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Sam Bajwa- Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson-Aye, James Fuccione-Abstained

3. Board Member Reports: None
4. Administrative Updates and Reports: None

II. New/Special Business

Vice Chair, Michaela Moran opened both hearings (PB22-7 and PB22-8) simultaneously at 7:40PM

1. PB22-8 Public Hearing – 247 Pope Road, Scenic Road

Paul Kirchner gave a brief overview of the application while referring to the documents presented. He noted the stone wall on either side of the driveway for the proposed subdivision is not currently sufficient enough to accommodate the Acton Fire Department's ladder truck and proposed the removal and relocation of two sections of the stone wall while intending to take the stones and reset them along the proposed driveway; additionally, to remove the twin 18-inch oak tree that is in the driveway footprint. He stated that he will be asking for a continuance after speaking with Tree Warden, Ryan Hunt about the information related to the tree policy.

Michaela Moran asked if the stones being removed from the stone wall will be relocated to make an entry way to the roadway. Paul stated that the stones will be moved about 10 feet and follow the driveway curve and appear as an entrance.

Sam Bajwa noted the Historical Commission's (HC) comments and that they did not like the curve in the wall. Kaila presented the comments and confirmed the HC doesn't support the relocation of the stones into a curved wall as drawn as it is inappropriate to the time of the placement. Paul stated that if the HC prefers not to have the stones curve along the wall than the alternative would be to incorporate the stones that need to be removed, into the existing wall to close any gaps and the plan can be revised to show that.

Ryan Hunt spoke about the tree and mentioned it is expensive to remove due to the replacement costs of the new town Bylaw. Paul Kirchner stated that is the reason why he wanted to continue the hearing so they can re-strategize the options of the tree.

Residents' Comments:

Terra Friedrichs, West Acton –Urged to not allow destruction of the wall or the tree. Stated that she objected the tree removal, qualifying it for a Select Board meeting and prefers the town not hear the subdivision hearing before the tree hearing.

Nathan Cookson stated that he thinks the Planning Board does a great job of deferring and continuing hearings until they have input from all the appropriate boards.

Joe Cooney, 2 Duston Lane- stated he was against the removal of the stonewall and shade tree and noted the importance of the tree bylaw.

Gabriel Scripps, 251 Pope Road, stated he was against the application and asked for clarification on the existing plans. Kaila Sauer noted there was only one set of plans.

Michaela Moran motioned at 8:06PM to continue the public hearing to 2/21/23 at 7:45PM. Nathan Cookson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Sam Bajwa- Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson-Aye, James Fuccione-Aye.

2. PB22-7 - Public Hearing – 247 & 249 Pope Road, Definitive Subdivision

The Board and Paul Kirchner agreed that the meeting will be continued, but he will present on the application to hear the public comments.

Paul gave a described the application while sharing the plans on docushare. The proposed project consists of the construction of a definitive subdivision adding two houses with a circular driveway that meets access requirements for the fire department. He noted the proof plan, stating that it meets all requirements for a subdivision, and stated a residential compound is benefit for the town because there is less infrastructure proposed, as they the residents will maintain it.

Board Comments: Michaela Moran stated that there were comments stated by GCG that the street was over 500 feet long which is not within subdivision rules. Paul noted that was an invalid statement from GCG and Assistant Planner Kaila Sauer confirmed, stating the street does not exceed the maximum length of 500 feet.

Sam Bajwa noted that the neighbors had a lot of issues and he hopes those issues are addressed. Paul stated that they will incorporate the comments into the revised plans.

Residents' Comments:

Gabriel Scripps, 251 Pope Road,- stated that the benefit of the developer is that he doesn't have to build the infrastructure for a compound. He noted that he doesn't think the land meet the requirements of a subdivision, stating the town would never have an expense. The least expensive benefit to the town would be to leave a nonconforming single family house for an R8 zoning area.

Terra Friedrichs, West Acton- thinks that when a developer makes a claim that one plan is better than another they should be required to show both plans.

Nathan Cookson motioned at 8:33PM to continue PB22- 7 to Feb 21, 2023 at 8:00PM. Sam Bajwa seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Sam Bajwa- Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson-Aye, James Fuccione-Aye

3. Review and Comment on Open Space and Recreation Goals

Assistant Planner Kaila Sauer gave a brief overview on the Open Space & Recreation Plan goals (OSRP) that were presented on the spreadsheet and asked for the Board's feedback.

James Fuccione noted that having accessible options for people of all ages might help with proposed goal number 2. Noted goal 3, to make sure it is across all cultures and histories.

Michaela Moran thinks the critical resources should be stated more clearly in the goals. Sam Bajwa Agreed.

Sam Bajwa stated the board should keep a very balanced viewpoint, but try to meet the objectives in a practical way.

Nathan Cookson mentioned the survey and stated it has a large response was from white residents and would be good to see what non-white residents prioritize. He stated that he was concerned about water supply in goal number 1. Michaela and Sam agreed that the critical resources need to be prioritized and water supply would be on top.

Michaela asked what kind of sustainability and asked what is the goal was. She stated that she will give the OSRP the Board's input at the next meeting.

Sam Bajwa motioned at 8:48PM to adjourn the meeting. Nathan Cookson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Sam Bajwa- Aye, Michaela Moran- Aye, Nathan Cookson-Aye, James Fuccione- Aye

Materials used at this meeting:

1.17 Planning Board Agenda

12-20-22 Planning Board Minutes

12-22-2022 Planning Board Minutes

How to participate remotely

247 & 249 Pope Road Scenic Road Application

247 & 249 Pope Road Definitive Subdivision Application

2312Adefsub Proof

2312Adefsub.a A_FF

2312A SW Report Reduced

Skripps Email

GCG Peer Review

Acton Water District Comments- Subdivision

Fire Comments- Subdivision

Health Comments- Subdivision

Planning Memo- Subdivision

Engineering Comments- Subdivision

Fire Comments- Scenic Road

Health Comments- Scenic Road

Historical Commission Comments- Scenic Road

Planning memo-Scenic Road

Engineering Comments-Scenic Road