

The regular meeting of the Bridgewater Planning Board convened at 6:00 pm. Virtually via zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Driscoll, Chairman; Mr. Ajemian, Mr. Geller, Ms. Guarino

ALSO PRESENT: Associate member Julia Santarcangelo

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Jennifer Burke, Director CED; Jasmine Farinacci, Assistant Planner; Mrs. Leslie Dorr, Office Administrator; Mr. Azu Etoniru, DPW Director.

Mr. Driscoll read from prepared text on Governor Bakers order of 3/12/2020 and how the meeting will be conducted and how to be able to speak at the meeting. He advised the audience that this meeting is being recorded and will be posted within 48 hours on the Town of Bridgewater website or social web page.

#### **INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH THE OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

Eileen Hiney, Chairman of the Open Space Committee said they were here at the suggestion of Town Manager, Michael Dutton. This is a fairly new committee and have been active for about one year but haven't met much due to Covid. Members are Kevin Mandeville, Maureen Minassian, Lauren Webb, and Nicole Holmes. They are trying to reach out to other committees to define their agenda. They are working under the 2-17-2018 open space plan that was adopted by the Town, which gives them guidance. They are trying to figure out their priorities and where their efforts are best spent. They had a joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation and will be meeting with Conservation next week and then will meet with the Agricultural Committee. They are here this evening to get a sense from the Planning Board where their priority issues are and hopefully be able to work together so there is no overlap. She felt it was important to get clarification what open space values are; open space management and maintenance overtime... They are concerned with parklands, agricultural preservation, and water quality. She read their statement of purpose: preserving Bridgewater's character, protection of water resources and buffers; looking at conservation lands and seeing how they can be expanded or used with adjacent lands, providing public access for walking, biking, passive recreation, enhancing streetscape views or vistas, preserving wildlife and vegetation habitat, limiting the impact of climate change, and contributing into long term and environmental sustainability.

One of the issues they want to specifically raise, was the protection of trees. She understands that there is a new ad hoc committee and Nicole Holmes will represent the open space committee on that committee. She said she would like to know how the issue of trees comes up in the Board's proceedings. She gave a nod of appreciation to Kevin Mandeville who has served on this committee for awhile and has attended the Community Preservation Committee meetings on their behalf of the open space committee because money is available for open space projects.

Mr. Driscoll informed her that there is presently a recodification of the zoning coming up and one of the issues may be an ordinance to change our present open space zoning and when that comes up, it may be important for her and her committee to attend that public hearing. Ms. Burke said it has gone to the council for first reading and we are waiting for the new President of the council to appoint members to the sub- committees; we are waiting for that to happen, then a public hearing will be advertised. It has

to be scheduled before July 7<sup>th</sup>, so it will probably be by the end of June. Ms. Hiney said she would contact Jennifer to keep informed when this piece of it will be discussed.

Mr. Driscoll asked Ms. Hiney if her committee was proactively working on anything with CPC like conservation restrictions on agricultural lands or identifying ones? Ms. Hiney said that the Hanson Farm is interested in getting a Conservation restriction on their property and the open space committee will be heading up that project. Another project they started talking about is the Wildlands Trust who own property adjacent to the Wyman Meadows property and they are talking with them about possibly working together to provide town land for access to their property to make access to this underutilized property. Other things that have come up are uniform signage for the park land and the issue of not enough parking.

Mr. Ajemian questioned if their committee has identified areas in town that are open now and not really set aside? Ms. Hiney said no, but she believes there is a list in prior town master plans. They are looking into what is the status of those properties. In some cases, it might be possible to approach owners and ask what their intentions are for their property and to see if they would be willing to set aside for open space.

Nicole Holmes spoke briefly on the ad hoc committee on trees that was being formed. They are bringing up ideas on how they can work within our form of government as to how we can help protect more of the trees by some kind of tree ordinance. They have done research on how other towns of similar size have handled this. Kevin Mandeville said that another option that very common is that if it is a forest land or open space, we can work with the land trust who would hold the deed to ensure that it remains open space. Mr. Ajemian commented that with all the developments going on, it is important to pursue this sooner rather than later. Ms. Hiney agreed that there is a sense of urgency here and commented that you can look at the open space plan from 2017 and see how many parcels are no longer available for open space. She commented that some people complain that what we do have is underutilized and why don't they just concentrate on those properties? She suggested that if we do not act now on some of these properties, they won't be available 5 years from now. She asked if anyone saw any opportunities to please reach out to her and the committee.

#### **MEETING WITH THE BARRETT PLANNING GROUP**

Ms. Burke said that the recodification of the Zoning has been discussed and worked on close to two years with the Barrett Group. There was a committee made up of several citizens and Board members of different committees, who had public hearings, public outreach, surveys, social media also working on this. Judy Barrett is here this evening to kick off the review of the implementation phase, which is the staff phase of the project. The ultimate goal is to have the Planning board adopt this as the Town's official Master Plan.

Judy Barrett brought up on the screen a series of slides to layout the plan to the board. They are now trying to develop the Implementation phase of the Master Plan.

The plan framework is community vision statement, goals, policies, recommendations, and the implementation plan. They are hoping to finalize in August.

She spoke about the Vision Statement:

This Comprehensive Master Plan envisions a future in which Bridgewater continues to embrace its historic heritage and charm while welcoming opportunities for growth, change, diversity, and economic prosperity.

Professional Town staff, committed volunteers, elected officials, and citizens will realize this vision through hard work and respectful collaboration. The Town will cultivate strong partnerships with state institutions and leverage these relationships for the betterment of the community.

Sound fiscal management and careful consideration of local and regional needs will allow Bridgewater to offer excellent schools, reliable municipal services, sustainable infrastructure, and a breadth of housing options. The Town will plan for resilience to climate change and reduce its overall environmental impact through the use of renewable energy sources, sustainable development practices, and innovative transportation solutions.

Bridgewater's commitment to open space access and natural resources conservation will enable residents and visitors to treasure the Town's many scenic landscapes.

The Town will partner with Bridgewater State University to promote economic, intellectual, and recreational engagement within and outside of the community.

Bridgewater's convenient location, proximity to major highways, and commuter rail service will enable the Town to establish itself as an accessible hub of culture, commerce, education, and entertainment in the greater region. Successful traffic and parking improvements will enhance the downtown experience for residents, businesses, students, and visitors. The revitalized central business district will act as an economic, social, and cultural engine for the Town, and local employment opportunities will flourish.

Achieving this vision will define and enhance Bridgewater's sense of place, reflected in the Town's natural beauty, history, culture, accessibility, and community pride.

She spoke about the transportation goals developed in conjunction with McMahon Associates.

- Improve safety and accessibility for all transportation modes and users.
- Encourage multimodal transportation to minimize vehicular congestion, especially downtown.

#### TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

- Improve safety across modes by improving visibility and providing dedicated facilities for users of all ages and abilities to reduce conflict and confusion.
- Ensure equitable access to transportation facilities from all users, including those with disabilities, seniors, and families with young children.
- Create, maintain, and promote pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly infrastructure.
- Improve downtown access for all modes, including supporting the reconfiguration of Central Square and parking management.
- Improve circulation and reduce congestion town- wide.
- Improve public transit efficiency and connections between transit and other modes.
- Encourage the adoption of advanced transportation modes and other sustainable transportation solutions.

Land use goals had two parts:

- Provide clear, concise, and transparent zoning regulations to guide regulatory boards and landowners.
- Balance land use and development with environmental stewardship and social equity concerns.

## LAND USE POLICIES

- Employ smart growth development approaches to preserve open space and encourage sustainable development practices.
- Improve public access to zoning information and education.
- Ensure that regulatory boards are equipped with clear rules and regulations.
- Provide sufficient annual training to members of relevant boards, commissions, and committees.
- Review the boundaries of use districts.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Retain existing business while drawing a variety of new establishments to encourage residents to spend time and money in town and build Bridgewater's tax base.
- Co-locate housing, shopping, and jobs in select areas to reduce single-occupancy commutes and support healthy lifestyles.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- Form a downtown business group to foster collaboration between the Town, business and property owners, representatives of BSU, and other parties interested in revitalizing the downtown area.
- Actively foster collaboration with local or regional Chambers of Commerce.
- Develop and carry out strategies to activate storefronts.
- Improve town-wide roads, parking, and infrastructure to draw businesses.
- Encourage mixed-use development to attract family-oriented businesses and create additional housing.
- Develop a town brand to define Bridgewater.

## HOUSING GOALS

- Provide necessary infrastructure to meet the Town's housing needs.
- Accommodate the housing needs of seniors, people with disabilities, students, families, and other types of households at all income levels to encourage population diversity and equitable access to housing.

## HOUSING POLICIES

- Implement the Town's Housing Production Plan and update at regular intervals.
- Partner with developers to ensure that new housing development provides infrastructure and amenities that benefit the community.
- Explore opportunities for creative retrofit of existing structures and neighborhoods to fulfill a variety of housing needs.
- Encourage a mix of housing types with convenient walking and biking access for residents. Town offers in these areas.
  - Adopt zoning that enables the creation of senior housing, affordable housing, and housing for people with disabilities.
- Establish Bridgewater as a cultural, intellectual, and recreational hub in the region.
- Protect natural resources while providing and promoting open space access.

#### NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCE GOALS

- Establish Bridgewater as a cultural, intellectual, and recreational hub in the region.
- Protect natural resources while providing and promoting open space access.

#### NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCE POLICIES

- Provide for adequate planning, monitoring, and management of the town's open space.
- Improve access to parks and open space and enhance wayfinding to connect open space resources.
- Encourage stewardship and volunteer support to maintain open spaces and parklands.
- Preserve and promote awareness of cultural and historic resources to give residents a sense of place and of what is available to them and their families.
- Encourage resident interaction with the cultural, intellectual, and recreational resources Bridgewater State University offers; likewise, encourage BSU student interaction with the resources the Town offers in these areas.
- Plan for resilience to climate change to protect Bridgewater's natural resources.

#### PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOALS

- Provide efficient, reliable, high-quality services and well-maintained facilities that residents consider town assets rather than unnecessary tax burdens.
- Prioritize reducing energy use and water consumption as a community.

#### PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES POLICIES

- Maintain Green Community Designation through the state.
- Solicit resident input about satisfaction with municipal facilities and services at regular intervals.
- Work in collaboration with the Bridgewater- Raynham School District to meet the diverse needs of all students and foster an inclusive environment that enables all students to succeed.
- Employ green infrastructure design in town- owned properties to reduce flow to surface waters and infiltration.
- Investigate and promote alternative energy production and storage on Town-owned parcels.
- Balance services with careful short- and long-term budget considerations.
- Prioritize transparency and communication with the public.
- Facilitate communication between Town staff, boards, committees, and commissions.

Ms. Barrett explained how they use the comments matrix.

A Town survey will be sent to town staff, boards, and Commissions. She is looking forward to getting the Planning Board members feedback by June 30<sup>th</sup>. She would like a response as a board, not by individuals.

## MEDEIROS ESTATES PUBLIC HEARING-Soriedem Way

Mr. Driscoll explained the procedures for a public hearing and how to chat.

The public hearing convened at 7:00 pm.

The public hearing ad was read into the record and the green cards were received.

Mr. Larry Silva presented the plans. He said it is a 10-lot subdivision with 9 new lots and one existing with a house; It is located off High Street, east of Hayward St. The land extends into East Bridgewater. It is in a zone II associated with East Bridgewater drinking wells. They make an acknowledgement on the cover page that they realize it is in the zone II. He spoke about the grades of the existing land. Test pits have been done and is sand and gravel throughout....25 feet plus. It is a cul-de-sac that bananas to the right. He pointed out that the subdivision is known as Medeiros Way, however, due to the fact that no proper names are allowed in the Town of Bridgewater, the street name is Soriedem Way. (Medeiros spelled backwards) It is in a Residential C district, which has a minimum of 18,000 sq. ft. He explained that in order to sustain a three-bedroom house you have to meet the nitrogen loading requirements. In this case here, there is some set aside land with the understanding that some of it be done with denitrification septic systems. He spoke about the drainage that was going towards High Street and the fact that there is no outlet for it. (in the area of lot 9) They found that the better way to deal with it, was to bring the drainage to the rear of the property; they would have to cut the grades somewhat to do that; there are a couple of places where they need a retaining wall or get an easement from the abutter to accommodate the grade change. In between lots 2 and 3 is where they have a drainage lot; it is heading north towards East Bridgewater; this is the area where we may have to have two structural engineered walls should there not be another way of doing it. The drainage has been designed to zone II standards and has been submitted to the Town of East Bridgewater for review.

Mr. Etoniru was present: his comments were received this afternoon-" I have performed a cursory review of the definitive subdivision plan for the above subject matter. The plan(s) and the drainage report dated March 30, 2021 and March 31, 2021 respectively were prepared by Silva Engineering Associates (SEA). My initial review comments at this time include the following: **1**, the intersection of the subdivision roadway and High Street lacks the requisite property line radius; **2**, the subdivision is located in a Zone II aquifer protection district. A minimum of 10,000 S.F. of land space per bedroom is required. As currently designed, the lots do not contain the requisite square footage for three-bedroom dwellings and several lots do not contain adequate area to support two-bedroom dwellings. The applicant's plan includes a "nitrogen loading easement" and it does not appear that the "nitrogen loading easement" would satisfy the criteria for any land space reduction. The lots will not be held in a common ownership and the use of the easement does not appear to be exclusive; **3**, the stormwater management and attenuation basin is located in East Bridgewater. The treatment volume and the recharge volume need to conform to the DEP stormwater regulations for work in a Zone II area. The Town of East Bridgewater's review and approval of the stormwater basin is required. The logistics for the maintenance of the basin need to be worked out as the basin is located in a community different from the community where the stormwater runoff is generated. There is no documentation of any insitu soils analysis and groundwater level determination."

Mr. Etoniru noted that the radius at the intersection onto High Street doesn't meet requirements. He said he doesn't see a request for a waiver and he noted that this board, for the record, has never granted a waiver for this, so they would have to figure out how they want to handle that, he said. He also stated that if the Town accepts the roadway, then they would need an agreement for maintenance and should be discussed with the Town of East Bridgewater because of the stormwater basin that is entirely in East Bridgewater. The logistics for that need to be ironed out. He said that based upon the soil maps for the area, the expectation is that it will be primarily sandy material with some gravel; that needs to be evaluated. He stated that some of the topographic that is there is not natural as it has a lot of fill material that has been deposited, so they have to identify where the virgin, natural ground is in terms of determining the depth of impervious materials. He will need to coordinate with Larry for the test pits.

Mr. Silva commented that the width of the roadway at High Street is 145' wide, so they have incorporated radiuses into the length of the width of the right of way. He felt they far exceeded the requirements. As it relates to the lots in zone II, he does not feel that is the purview of the Planning Board, but the Board of Health. He said they will satisfy the Board of health on all of those. He will schedule test pits with Azu; he has done himself and it is all sand and gravel. Mr. Etoniru said his was a cursory review and if in fact, they have 104' at the intersection it is true that they will meet that requirement; he will have to do a template to make sure they can make a proper radius on the left side. He said that the issue of the compliance with zone II is within the purview of this board; Primarily it is under the Board of health thru the DEP, and right now they have not demonstrated compliance with that. They have to find that the lots that are being developed are in compliance; the board must make sure that there is compliance with the nitrogen loading to make sure the lots are viable lots. Chapter 41 L states the Board can't act until the Board of Health has determined that public health, safety and welfare are being promoted. So it is 100% relevant to the deliberation of this Board.

The location of the street trees was discussed. Location had been changed to the street layout in the revised rules and regs, so they can be maintained by the Town.

Mr. Silva said it would be their intention to have driveway lights on the lots, rather than streetlights.

Mr. Silva stated that an item he would like to bring out is that the roadway cross section detail for a 5-10 lot subdivision doesn't work. It shows that it is an off-set layout showing the centerline 15' from one side and 25 feet from the other; but then it shows that the drainage needs to be 7' from that centerline, which is right where the catch basins are located. He said that is something you might want to look at it to see if it needs tweaking. They are asking for a waiver of strict compliance because of that. Mr. Etoniru stated that in 2007 that was created when Mr. Dyer was chairman of the board, and he thinks that detail has been changed since then. He will look at it as it must be resolved. Larry said it was dated 2018 and it is labeled detail 1E. Mr. Etoniru said he would take a look at it.

Mr. Driscoll noted that there is no landscape plan from a landscape architect or lighting details on the plan. Mr. Silva stated that he will show the light poles on each lot.

Mrs. McCloud-989 High Street-her driveway is across from Lot 9 and expressed concern about water coming over to her lot. She said there are no storm water drains in High Street and asked how many lots will actually drain towards High Street and not towards the drainage basin? Mr. Silva said there is currently drainage that goes in that direction now that goes towards her property. When they develop the individual lots, the grading for lot 9, a portion of it will go towards High St but will be far less than what is currently going towards High Street; there are two catch basins at High St. which will take the

water back and none of the street drainage will be going in her direction. He commented that there will be a dramatic reduction from the lot grading to the roadway improvements. Ms. McCloud expressed concern about getting out of her driveway with the intersection of Hayward Street being so close: she has difficulty backing out now as High Street is very busy and the curve also contributes to that. Mr. Driscoll questioned if this meets the line-of-sight requirements? Mr. Etoniru said we will have to take a look at that. We do have a requirement of a setback from an intersection of a roadway and an adjoining driveway. He said the requirement here is 250' for line-of-sight. He said you can accomplish some of the issues with signage.

Mr. Silva said that one thing he needs to point out is that the roadway is actually outside of the layout of High Street. The travelled way in High Street, shown with the double line on the plan, you can see how it come up towards their road but getting further away from the actual layout of High Street. It is skewed to the north. So, the curve in that area, he said, is actually more dramatic than it was supposed to be. They never moved the road to be within the layout, he said. Mr. Etoniru stated that being on that curve actually makes the argument for the concern that the abutter has. So, he thinks they need to take a look at that intersection, which also can be addressed with signage.

Mrs. Mamaty-60 Copperfield Drive-abuts the proposed 231' retaining wall and questioned if the wall would pose any danger to a child and would there be anything done to ensure their safety? Mr. Silva stated that if there was a safety issue, they would have to put a fence on top of the wall. She asked if the easement at the rear would be utilized? Mr. Silva said yes; the water dept. requires that the water line be looped; it will allow the installation of the water main. She commented that the previous owners left a lot of tires and debris on the property line and asked Mr. Silva if there were any plans to clean that up? He suggested that the Planning Board could make a condition of approval that any tires or debris on the property be cleaned up.

Stephanie Roberts- 979 High Street-stated that her driveway is directly across from the proposed road and expressed the same issues as Mrs. McCloud. She asked if there is any talks or requirement for sidewalks in the area?

Gerald Sousa- 27 Rainbow Circle- asked who will be responsible for maintaining the retaining wall and the entire drainage easement? Mr. Etoniru stated that we do not allow retaining walls within the right-of-way and do not accept responsibility for them in a subdivision. They will have to do their design work and control the grading outside of that right-of-way. Mr. Silva stated that they are not in the right-of-way but in the drainage easement. Mr. Etoniru stated if the town accepts the roadway, that includes the basin and then the town would be responsible. We need to look at it more critically to make sure it is the responsibility of the developer, not the town of Bridgewater.

Ms. McCloud asked how would the dust control be managed? She has a child with asthma and doesn't want to go thru enforcement if there is a problem. There was no response.

Mr. Ajemian expressed concern about the retaining wall and the responsibility to the town. Mr. Etoniru stated that we have to make sure that it is not in an area of town responsibility. If it means that they have to redesign their project by eliminating a house lot to make it work, then that is what they will have to do. He said they may have a grading issue where there is too steep of an embankment on the back of three lots near the bend of the road in the subdivision necessitating a possible modification to a problem caused by the grading. The street poles should be put into the road layout; not left up to the



homeowner. He cited the problems on Colonial Drive where the post lights were put up close to the houses and not by the end of the driveway. We have specific rules for the location of the lights., he said.

Ms. Guarino requested that Mr. Silva explain the septic systems that are required in this zoning district.

**On a motion by Mr. Ajemian, seconded by Ms. Guarino, it was unanimously voted by roll call vote to continue the hearing to June 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.**

#### **BOARD BUSINESS**

Ms. Guarino said she had read the minutes and had sent some Scribner's errors to Mrs. Dorr this afternoon. Mrs. Dorr said she would make the corrections on Monday.

**On a motion by Ms. Guarino, seconded by Mr. Geller, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to approve the 4/7/21 and 4/14/21 minutes with corrections.**

**On a motion by Ms. Guarino, seconded by Mr. Ajemian, it was unanimously voted, by roll call vote, to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 pm.**

**MINUTES APPROVED:**

