

# **TOWN OF ANDOVER**

## **Planning and Zoning Commission**

Monday, September 16, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

Town Hall Community Room at 17 School Road

### **Regular Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes**

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Bob Hamburger called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

#### **2. Roll Call / Seat Alternates**

Regular Members Present: Leigh Ann Hutchinson, Scott Person, Jed Larson, Anne Crème

Anne Crème was seated after elected as Regular Member.

Regular Members Absent: None.

Alternate Members Present: Gerald Hardisty, George Knox

Alternate Members Absent: None.

Town Administrator: Eric Anderson

Public Present: Dan Foran, Cathy Palazzi, Gerry Crème, Carol Barton, Wally Barton, Shannon Loudon, Louise Goodwin, Joe King, Catherine Magaldi-Lewis, David Kluczowski

Journal Inquirer Editor: Michelle France

Board Clerk Present: Amanda Gibson

Zoning Agent Absent: John Valente

#### **3. Additions / Changes to Agenda:**

Leigh Ann Hutchinson MOVED to add the following under Item 9. New Business:

9b. Application for Special Permit to install LED Security Light for Bus Depot at 12 Long Hill Road to provide lighting for the bus drivers.

9c. Gerry Hardisty: First Cut Land Divisions

Jed Larson SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:0

#### **4. Public Participation**

None.

#### **5. Old Business**

a. Discuss open member position on the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Anne Crème announced her aspiration to become a Regular Member.

Scott Person MOVED to accept Anne Crème as a Regular Member of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Jed Larson SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1

6. Suspend Regular Meeting

Chair Bob Hamburger suspended the Regular Meeting.

7. Open Public Hearing

- a. CGS 8-24 Referral / Public Hearing to determine if the Andover Elementary School 3-4 wing conversion is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Open Public Hearing

Town Administrator Eric Anderson: Presented a PowerPoint slideshow with details of how this project came to be and the big factors. The presentation will be uploaded to the town website. Here are the main points:

- Presentation Goals
- Steps in the process
- CGS 8-24 Referral
- Background on Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)
- Demographics
- Old Senior Center
- Current Conditions at AES
- POCD Compliance
- Recommendations from LTPC

Board of Education member, Dan Foran expressed the following concerns:

- Questions why the town would spend \$130k for the conversion when there is only \$450k in the fund for the stand alone building, with the new senior/community center being projected at \$2-4 million.
- Stated that the classrooms are full downstairs and Occupational Therapy and Special Education currently use the 3-4 wing.

P&ZC Chair, Bob Hamburger:

- Explained low enrollment rate and need for both the temporary and long term solutions suggested at hand.

Board of Education member, Shannon Loudon shared her insight:

- Use of the 3-4 wing allows rooms to be repurposed as the population declines.
- Shared the advantage of moving the Nurse's Office downstairs as it would move her closer to the students and provide faster response time.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- Future school compression could affect Andover's building sustainability and we have to protect the building.
- There are many interrelated factors to this project such as the state would potentially move grades 6,7 & 8 in the RHAM Middle School.

Board of Education member, Shannon Loudon:

- Referred to the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Town of Andover's Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education. Explaining that the primary use of the building is a school and will always remain so.
- While this is all being decided, there is still no senior/community center space for senior residents and town staff.
- This project will not increase the taxes. And the new stand alone center will take approximately up to 10 years for completion.

Parent, David Kluczowski:

- Knows that the architecture firm has helped 2 other schools in the State of CT. Suggested for them to share which schools and to correspond with them to share insight.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- The MOA does NOT allow other groups other than the seniors to utilize the space during school hours. It is referred to as a meeting space.

Parent, David Kluczowski:

- Addressed issue of school shootings scares and the importance of it.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- School safety is the top priority and safety precautions can always be increased.

Senior Services Coordinator, Cathy Palazzi:

- Worried that the seniors do not have a space to occupy as their own.

Republican Town Committee member, Wally Barton:

- Visitors are on the school property NOW utilizing the trails.
- Hopes that the Long Term Planning Committee & the Board of Selectmen agree that this is a short term solution and we don't forget the long term goal.

Young at Heart member, Judy Knox:

- Would appreciate a designated space for the seniors instead of setting up each week in the Town Hall Community Room.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- The seniors are the only group that would utilize the space during the day.
- They are in dire need of meeting space.

Board of Education member, Dan Foran:

- Believes other issues at the AES have to be addressed first, such as; one of the adult bathrooms was converted and others can see into/from the urinal during use.
- Younger students have to leave the school at the same time as the older students via the stairs, and it is difficult for the younger students.

- Wondering if this conversion is just a intermediate project.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- This decision was made before they decided the senior space issue.
- Town became interested in the idea since there was unused space and the town is in desperate need of space.
- The superintendent has answered many of these questions with the old BOE.

Parent, David Kluczowski:

- Shared that he believes it may affect future parents moving into town due to the AES having a multi-use shared building. Parents move to town because they love the school system. Is this a deterrent?

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson explained more reasoning behind this project:

- Reminded that the town spends 84% of budget on education. Town has major infrastructure because they have invested in education instead of combining with other schools.
- The reality is, that at some point if the town has an under utilized building, there will be a strong consideration in regionalizing the elementary school with other towns.
- Other properties have been previously considered such as the church basement and the Fire Station building.
- As the Town Administrator, he will push extremely hard for a stand-alone building.

Parent, David Kluczowski reiterated his concerns:

- Residents would not approve of closing the school. The AES is what has brought many families into town.

Resident, Catherine Magaldi-Lewis offered up some creative ideas:

- Asked if the Planning and Zoning Commission can research what other towns have done with their multi-purpose school buildings.
- Asked if there can be an end date in the MOA?

P&ZC Chair, Bob Hamburger addressed the end date question:

- The town will need other sources of funding if enrollment continues to drop.

Resident, Catherine Magaldi-Lewis shared more creative ideas:

- She has written to people/companies to try and get funding for Andover. Who would want to invest in our town?

P&ZC Chair, Bob Hamburger addressed the declining enrollment issue:

- In conversation, someone mentioned 'to wait a few more years and you will have the whole building.' Reminded that the goal is NOT to decline enrollment, that is simply the prediction. And this would be a way to potentially save the building in the future.

Board of Education member, Dan Foran:

- Asked what the Long Term Planning Committee is doing to bring more people to town.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- As a whole, the Town of Andover has been very clear that the AES system is a huge part of town and are willing to spend tax dollars. Recently was denied adding 4 hours for a town employee. Staffing is low and the town is struggling.
- There has to be a balance. Can the town afford the bond for \$2-4 million for a stand alone community center? Probably. Would there be public support? Maybe.

Senior Services Coordinator, Cathy Palazzi:

- Distributed a survey to the seniors and received 256. 215 said yes, 34 said no with the reason being they wanted to ensure they wouldn't be forgotten to have a new stand-alone senior/community center.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- The plans for the new senior/community center will eventually come back to the town residents. If built, taxes would go up. He is personally happy to support both the school and the new center.

P&ZC Chair, Bob Hamburger:

- Questions the town's mil rate compared to surrounding towns.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- Andover has the lowest mil rate in the RHAM district with 3 surrounding towns. Approximately 6% lower than adjacent communities.

Young at Heart member, Judy Knox:

- The seniors want to be somewhere else other than the school, but that is their only option right now.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- If lucky, the town would occupy the new building in approximately 8 years.

Town Engineer and P&ZC member, Gerry Hardisty:

- Believes this is a good idea. Parking has to be discussed. If the seniors start to utilize it, is the lot large enough for personnel?

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- He has witnessed the parking lot during school hours. During the middle of the day, there is plenty of parking in both lots. Does not believe it will be an issue. It would become an issue if events were scheduled for the same time frame.

Senior Services Coordinator, Cathy Palazzi:

- Stated that most seniors come on the bus.

Board of Education member, Shannon Loudon:

- How many spaces would be set aside during the school day for the seniors?

Public discussion regarding this issue.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson: (former P&ZC Chair for 10 years)

- P&ZC would have to apply the current parking regulations to ensure it aligns.

P&ZC & Board of Selectmen member, Scott Person:

- Many seniors travel via the bus transportation service with 10 or less cars involved with the functions.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- He is a representative of the town for the 8-24 Referral. The next step is in the hands of the Board of Selectmen.

Scott Person MOVED to adjourn the Public Hearing and resume the Regular Meeting.

Leigh Ann Hutchinson SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0

Chair Bob Hamburger CLOSED the Public Hearing.

## 8. Resume Regular Meeting

Bob Hamburger reopened the Regular Meeting at 8:32 P.M.

## 9. New Business

- a. 8-24 Referral / Public Hearing to determine if the Andover Elementary School 3-4 wing conversion is consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

Scott Person MOVED to accept the CGS 8-24 Referral for the Andover Elementary School 3-4 wing conversion as consistent with the POCD.

Jed Larson SECONDED

Discussion: Bob Hamburger called on the commission members to make comments.

Leigh Ann Hutchinson: The community center space is needed in town and would like a stand-alone community center in the future.

Ann Crème: The town needs a stand alone senior/community center building. The goal is to spend the least possible amount on the temporary space to save as much as we can for the future new building. Town immediately needs a space for a senior center.

Scott Person is supportive of the conversion.

MOTION CARRIED: 5:0:0

- b. Application for Special Permit to install LED Security Light for Bus Depot at 12 Long Hill Road to provide lighting for the bus drivers.

Town Administrator, Eric Anderson:

- Explained need to provide lighting for the bus drivers during the night time hours. Town was approached by DATCO to replace the security poles last year. DATCO would like to have the security lighting installed. CL&P will install the lighting with a monthly fee that is paid by DATCO with no cost to the town.
- The Special Permit is necessary since the Planning and Zoning Regulations only allows for lighting fixtures up to 12' high and the need is for 35' high. The buses would block the lighting at 12' high. The abutters will be notified. Even so, it is hundreds of feet from the nearest house and no glare or illumination will occur.
- He will provide more documentation to the P&ZC and will resubmit the application at next month's meeting.

Anne Crème MOVED to tentatively schedule a Public Hearing on Monday, October 21, 2019 for the Special Permit Application pending the complete application from the Town of Andover as described below.

Scott Person SECONDED

Discussion: Bob Hamburger suggested to tentatively plan for a Public Hearing at the next Regular Meeting on Monday, October 21, 2019. Eric Anderson stated he would submit the completed application by Monday, October 7, 2019 to meet the deadline for a Public Hearing. The Public Hearing will not occur if they do not submit the complete application.

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0

c. First Cut Land Divisions:

Gerry Hardisty presented a map of 'First Cut' Land Division for Vincent Grimaldi at 353 Lake Road as it includes a controversial question that needs an answer.

Jed Larson: Suggested to request the town's Land Use Attorney, Mark Branse to review.

Gerry Hardisty: Confirmed that you can divide the land into two properties as long as both parts conform. If it becomes a subdivision, it has to go through the regulatory process.

Jed Larson: Stated that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) already approved the 353 Lake Road driveway application at the Regular Meeting on Monday, July 8, 2019 but believes they should not have based on the subsequent findings. The original application was for the driveway installation and not the house.

Board Clerk Amanda Gibson: Shared reasoning behind the recent IWWC application process improvement due to unclear items such as, that the applicants were not required to submit letters to abutting properties in surrounding town.

Jed Larson: Believes that if you purchase a piece of property within wetlands, you are not able to build on the lot.

Gerry Hardisty: Confirmed that the map is being presented to the IWWC members as a courtesy. This land deed will be filed as a 'Free Cut' as the piece will be divided in the Town of Andover.

Gerry Hardisty: If this were a re-subdivision, the applicant would have to come before the P&ZC. Confirmed a subdivision occurred on the property after 1950. The issue is the town line. The land in Andover has never been subdivided. The farm straddled Columbia and Andover so it does not count as a subdivision. The large farm had sold off pieces throughout the years. The contiguous piece in Andover was never split. Because the application is in Andover, it is treated as a single parcel and does not constitute as a subdivision.

Bob Hamburger: Suggested referring to the knowledge of the (recently resigned) Zoning/Wetlands Agent John Valente.

10. Public Participation

None.

11. Commission Open Discussion

a. Discuss dates for 2020 P&ZC Regular Meetings.

Bob Hamburger had the commission members approve the Regular Meetings for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 P.M.

12. Administrative Report from Zoning Agent

None.

13. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Approval of Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes

Leigh Ann Hutchinson MOVED to approve the Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes with one edit of changing to the Town Land Use Attorney instead of the Town Attorney.

Scott Person SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0

b. Approval of Monday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes

Jed Larson MOVED to approve the Monday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes.

Anne Crème SECONDED

Discussion:

MOTION CARRIED 4:0:1 (Leigh Ann Hutchinson abstained)

14. Adjournment

Bob Hamburger MOVED to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Leigh Ann Hutchinson SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0

Bob Hamburger adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:23 P.M.

Meeting Minutes helpfully submitted by Land Use Board Clerk, Amanda Gibson.

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.