

Present: Michael Fee (Chairman), Lisa Eggleston, Christopher Morely,
Michael Hunter, Joe Sziabowski (Associate), and
Jody Kablack (Director of Planning and Development)
Absent: Eric Poch

Construction of Proposed New Police Station

Present: Michael Melnick, Permanent Building Committee member, Peter Fagden,
Police Chief, Bill Murray, PLACES Site Consultants, Inc.

At 7:36 p.m., Chairman Fee called the meeting to order.

Ms. Kablack introduced the discussion, noting that the Town has completed a feasibility analysis of the site for the proposed new Police Station, but site plan review has not been done. She stated that this proposal will be a ballot question for the March 26, 2007 Town Election, and will also be an article to be voted upon at the Annual Town Meeting. Tonight's presentation will be a brief status report to elicit feedback and input from the Board, which can be considered and incorporated into the site plan review process.

Mr. Melnick reported that the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) fully researched the site possibilities for new construction in Town. Given the size, location, and financial criteria and constraints, the available options were few. Two locations on Route 20 were considered, but dismissed due to the cost of land upwards of \$2 million. The best site option available was determined to be the Hudson Road Fire Station. A benefit of this site is that response time to all locations in Sudbury will be distributed more equally than from the current station location on Route 20. The PBC met early in this process with the Historical Districts Commission, since the proposed site is within a Historic District. The Commission has offered no objections to the proposal at this time, and submitted a few site plan suggestions.

Mr. Melnick explained that the structure has been proposed with a brick exterior to reduce the long-term maintenance costs associated with the facility. He said the PBC also met last week with the Conservation Commission regarding septic system issues, and it appears that all of the Commission's recommendations can be accommodated.

Mr. Melnick noted that dissention regarding the proposed plans has been expressed by the Sudbury Housing Authority (SHA). Preliminary plans call for Musketahquid Village, owned by SHA, to share a driveway with the new Police Station. Concerns relate mostly to driver safety, privacy and security issues. Police Chief Fagden noted that the Police Station personnel do not generate a lot of incoming and outgoing traffic, since cruisers are deployed throughout shifts. Police vehicles are at the station, only at shift-change times (8 a.m., 4 p.m. and midnight).

Mr. Murray displayed plans for the site. The proposed plan has established public parking equally positioned between, and in front of, the new Police Station and the existing Fire Station. It was noted that zoning does not permit parking in front of buildings, however, consensus was that a public safety building should be an exception to this. Discussion ensued regarding of the amount of frontage parking as it affects neighborhood aesthetics.

In response to a question from Chairman Fee, Ms. Kablack noted that municipal-use sites would be exempt from zoning. Police Chief Fagden reinforced the need for additional public parking, noting that the facility will also be used as an emergency operations center and training facility. Mr. Sziabowski questioned whether the front, public parking area could be sited so as to fit in better with the buildings and have more of a relationship to them. Ms. Eggleston concurred with this suggestion.

Mr. Murray responded that it would be possible to slightly rotate the front parking, and that he anticipates revising the plans many times as the process proceeds.

Mr. Morely asked what the distance was from the street to the first proposed parking space and to the abutting property line. Mr. Murray responded approximately 25-30 feet to the front, and almost 70 feet to the Mack's property line. Mr. Morely suggested deepening/adding more green space on either side of the public-parking area. Ms. Eggleston agreed that maintaining the atmosphere of the historic Town Center is important. Mr. Murray stated that more grass, or low shrubs, can be considered. However, he emphasized that the primary design feature for a public, life-safety facility must always be to maintain a clear line of sight and recognition, so that in the case of an emergency, a citizen can quickly identify and access a safe haven.

Mr. Murray also noted that the site distances for the proposed new driveway should be greatly improved at the peak of the hill on Hudson Road. He also clarified that the proposed three driveways are separated by 100 feet.

In response to a question from Chairman Fee, Mr. Melnick stated he met with the Town Manager this morning, to discuss ways to work collaboratively with the Sudbury Housing Authority to resolve any and all concerns. The SHA maintains it wants its own separate road for residents, and it has requested a traffic count from the Police Department.

Mr. Murray announced that he developed, very quickly for this meeting, a second sketch to address some of the SHA's concerns. He cautioned that it was merely an attempt to see if other options would work on the site. He presented a second design sketch, which reduced the public-parking area in front of the building and created a through road between the 2 buildings (Police and Fire). This plan allowed for a separate driveway for the SHA, but would require a 10-foot retaining wall, along with a six-foot fence to separate the two users. This design is doable, but would have added costs to construct a larger retaining wall and additional paved surfaces.

Chairman Fee stated his preference for the original plan, noting he is not that concerned about the addition of the front, public-parking area. He believes this will be a unique public facility and thereby, requires a unique design, even if it varies from Town precedent. However, Chairman Fee did declare keen interest for how opposition to this proposal from the community will be handled at the Annual Town Meeting. He said that although there is little Town-wide dispute regarding the inadequacy of the current facility, he anticipates residents will question why the new facility needs to be so expensive, and so large.

Mr. Melnick and Police Chief Fagden are confident that the present station built in 1959, and added to in 1981, is not large enough to accommodate the needs and requirements of a 21st Century Police Station. The Police Chief clarified that in essence, the new Police Station space will only double in area. He emphasized that the additional proposed square footage also accommodates a 2000-square foot Emergency Response Command Center, and another 2500 square feet will be available for future growth and expansion. In response to a question from Chairman Fee regarding the possibility of acquiring the lot next to the current Police Station by eminent domain, Police Chief Fagden strongly responded that the addition of that lot to the current location would still be inadequate, and would be a forced improvement, with another resulting limited lifespan.

Mr. Melnick further stated that the PBC studied similar facilities in surrounding cities and towns averaging about \$1.01 per square foot/per person population. He reported that the proposed spatial design and costs for Sudbury are comparable to structures for similar communities. Mr. Morely suggested documenting facilities built recently, in comparable towns, with photographs for presentation at Town Meeting.

Ms. Eggleston asked about the proposed septic system and drainage basin. Mr. Murray explained that the current systems servicing the Fire Station will be upgraded and expanded to comply with current code. He also has planned for an enhanced drainage basin, based upon discussions with the DPW Director/Town Engineer. Run-off from the new pavement will be treated before discharging into the existing basin. Mr. Murray anticipates that it is a detention basin, and not an infiltration basin.

Mr. Morely reiterated his preference for the original plan, expressing strong opposition to the retaining wall option. He too, has no problem with public parking in front of the building, but still would like to see more green space incorporated into the design. He commended Mr. Murray on the preliminary sketch work done to architecturally tie the new brick building to the existing Fire Station. Ms. Eggleston agreed, and hopes this will be a public-safety campus the Town can be proud of, while also enhancing the character of the Town Center. Mr. Hunter expressed his preference for the original plan as well, and suggested more parking could be added to the four existing spaces in front of the Fire Station as an alternative to constructing new parking in front of the Police Station.

In response to a question from Mr. Sziabowski regarding how much bearing the preliminary designs will have on the final designs, Mr. Melnick stated that the interior plans are fairly well defined at this point. However, he noted that work still needs to be done regarding the exterior orientation of the buildings to the site, and plans will probably change many times. Mr. Sziabowski complimented Mr. Murray on the relation between the elevations of the fronts of the Police and Fire Stations as exhibited in tonight's sketches.

Chairman Fee commended Mr. Murray on the high quality of substantive, conceptual material and design renderings provided to date. He found the presentation impressive, and believes Mr. Murray and his company possess the requisite knowledge, skills and understanding of the Town's needs to bring this concept to practical fruition. He summarized that the only impediment to the process thus far, appears to be the issues identified by the Sudbury Housing Authority. Chairman Fee noted that the SHA's concerns are legitimate and need to be addressed, but do not seem insurmountable.

Mr. Melnick asked that the Board consider lending its support to the article for construction of a new Police Station at Town Meeting. Chairman Fee assured him that the Board will enthusiastically support a new Police headquarters, and will express its satisfaction with the designated location site. Chairman Fee suggested that Police Chief Fagden continue to work with Ms. Kablack and the Town Manager to prepare for objections, which may be posed at the Town Meeting. Discussion was closed.

The Residences at Sudbury Commons

Present: Kevin Duffy, Steven Duffy, Paul Finger, Bob Engler, Jeff Engler, Jerry Scully, David Fisher, representatives of the Residences at Sudbury Commons Development and Design Team

Ms. Kablack introduced the project, which is a redevelopment of the Village Green commercial site on Hudson Road. The proposal is to renovate the existing buildings to create a 20 unit condominium project under Chapter 40B.

Landscape architect David Fisher presented exhibit renderings of the Village Green site at 29 Hudson Road. He described the site as 2.77 acres, which is presently only 10-15% occupied by commercial tenants. The site has never been commercially successful. The intent is to convert the location solely to a residential use site. The proposal is for 20 two-bedroom units in five buildings. Mr. Fisher explained that there will be four, small detached parking garages, with a total of 64 parking spaces designated. He highlighted that presently the site has 77,000 square feet of impervious surface, and that the new plan will markedly reduce the impervious area to approximately 58,000 square feet. Mr. Fisher noted that the applicant has met with the Conservation Commission, and is preparing a Notice of Intent for submission.

In response to a question from Chairman Fee, Mr. Fee stated that they have hired the Wellesley company, ESS, to work with the applicant regarding the storm-water design. Preliminary findings indicate a surface retention basin may not be needed.

Mr. Fisher acknowledged that traffic concerns are significant, and he has met with Ms. Kablack to discuss the scope of this issue. The applicant anticipates a marked decrease in traffic flow, based upon an estimated 22 trips will be generated at the peak hour for the proposed units. Chairman Fee emphasized that traffic, site distances and the one-way traffic circulation pattern have been identified as major issues. Chairman Fee noted that the Town will most likely require an independent traffic engineer to assess the proposal. He also recommended that the applicant prepare more quantifiable traffic data to present to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Kablack noted that the applicant's traffic consultant is Mark Howland, who conducted the traffic counts for the Town Center project with the Cecil Group.

Mr. Fisher addressed questions from Ms. Eggleston regarding the septic system, and noted that the Board of Health has requested that the entire system be rebuilt.

The current proposal designates either four or five units for affordable housing, at either 50% or 80% of the area median income. The applicant is flexible on this matter and will work with the Town to determine the proper number of units. Bob Engler stated that the location for the affordable units also has not been determined, and that the applicant will work with the Zoning Board of Appeals as to appropriate locations for them.

The Board expressed its preference that the new site plans maintain the historic character of the buildings and neighborhood, and that the visual accessibility to the site be improved. Mr. Fisher displayed two exhibits depicting options to provide greater flexibility for separation of public and private areas, and to enhance the greenery of the commons area. One plan removed the non-original stone wall along the entrance, and replaced it with granite posts and a split-rail fence. Mr. Morely thought this could be an attractive improvement, which also maintains the character of the surrounding Historic District.

Mr. Scully provided a very brief review of the architectural design concept, highlighting the focus of maintaining the village green atmosphere.

Mr. Sziabowski commented that much of the orientation of the complex seems geared to the interior, and he is concerned that not enough attention is being given to the front facade of the building. Mr. Morely concurred that from the public way, one will actually be viewing the back of the building. Mr. Sziabowski recommended designing the second floors and rooflines of the units with better articulation. The Board concurred that the new buildings in the rear need to be architecturally redesigned.

Limited discussion ensued regarding interior layouts and proposed specifications.

Mr. Kevin Duffy quoted anticipated prices ranging between \$600,000 to \$800,000, depending on the market.

The applicant mentioned it is open to pursuing discussion with the Town as to whether some of the larger, two-story units could be designed with handicap-accessibility features such as elevators, in order to accommodate these needs. Chairman Fee responded enthusiastically to this intriguing concept. He believes several Town committees and groups would support such a plan, which would enhance the diversification of housing types available in Sudbury.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To authorize Ms. Kablack to report to the Zoning Board of Appeals the Planning Board's support, concerns, and recommendations regarding The Residences at Sudbury Commons Comprehensive Permit Application, as discussed this evening.

40B Guidelines - Discussion of Final Draft

The Board was in receipt of the final "Guidelines for Comprehensive Permit (40B) Developments," dated February 26, 2007, approved by the Community Housing Committee. Ms. Kablack reported the Guidelines are comprehensive, and have been circulated to all relevant boards including the Conservation Commission. Chairman Fee praised the final document, noting it is well done compared to similar documents from other communities. He stated that these Guidelines were the result of a year-long process, which incorporated feedback from the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), the Design Review Board and the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Kablack reported that the ZBA is the enforcing entity operating under state statute, and thereby, does not want to formally adopt these guidelines. The ZBA prefers to not sanction any semblance of local requirements that could be used against the Town at the Housing Appeals level if a project were ever denied. Chairman Fee and Ms. Eggleston strongly disagreed with this position by the ZBA, stating that there are no negative consequences to adopting simple guidelines, which are not regulations. The Guidelines are merely intended to serve as a meaningful resource that the Town can distribute to developers to better clarify some of Sudbury's requirements.

Mr. Hunter reported that the Guidelines received a very positive response when they were distributed at the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) sub-region meeting hosted by Sudbury, on March 1, 2007.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To adopt the "Guidelines for Comprehensive Permit (40B) Developments," dated February 26, 2007, and to authorize Ms. Kablack to send a letter, to the Zoning Board of Appeals, advising that they should also adopt the "Guidelines for Comprehensive Permit (40B) Developments."

Grouse Hill - Endorse Plan

Ms. Kablack reported that this agenda item has been rescheduled to March 28, 2007. She distributed to the Board, for informational purposes, a Grouse Hill Conditions of Approval progress report, dated March 13, 2007. She highlighted that the site plan is progressing well, architectural plans have been submitted, and the landscape plan has been modified to comply with requirements. Ms. Kablack reported that the applicant has requested one foundation permit, which she recommends be granted, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Building Inspector. Based upon the application progress achieved to date, Ms. Kablack anticipates the plans will be ready for endorsement at the Board's next meeting.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To grant one foundation permit to the Grouse Hill Incentive Senior Development, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Building Inspector, as recommended by Ms. Kablack.

2007 Annual Town Meeting Articles

Amendment to Sign Bylaw - Temporary Signs

Ms. Kablack distributed to the Board, for informational purposes, a memorandum dated March 14, 2007, summarizing the requested opinion from Town Counsel regarding the proposed amendment to the Sign Bylaw for temporary signs. Mr. Kenney proposed rewording the last provision, and stated that the permit and its use would only be valid for one year. The Board supported this opinion. In addition, Ms. Kablack also reported that Building Inspector Kelly has estimated that 30 permits as year could be requested, with a total annual budget of \$7,500. Mr. Kelly also estimated the cost for sign enforcement at \$7,000.

Construction of a New Police Station

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To authorize Ms. Kablack to send a letter of support to the Permanent Building Committee for the project, noting in particular, the Planning Board 's enthusiasm for the determination of a suitable site, and that the site plan approval process will be pursued.

Outside Wood-fired Boilers

Chairman Fee asked for reactions to the revised article, so that he can respond to the petitioners. Everyone agreed that the edits have not improved the language of the article, and Chairman Fee objected to the definition, as written. Mr. Morley recommended advising the petitioners to withdraw the article this year, and resubmit it next year.

Ms. Kablack reported that the Board of Health (BOH) did not vote to enact a moratorium on new wood fired boilers. Instead, the BOH chose a neutral position prior to the Town Meeting, so as not to be perceived as endorsing the bylaw. Ms. Kablack suggested to the petitioners that they continue to pursue action from the BOH immediately following the Town meeting.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To authorize Chairman Fee, on behalf of the Planning Board, to notify the petitioners that the Board maintains its previously stated position to not support Article #31 as amended, and to advise them to continue to work with the Board of Health to enact a moratorium or ban for use of the devices.

Faucher Woods - Endorse Site Plan

Ms. Kablack reported that all conditions previously required have been met.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To endorse the final Faucher Woods Definitive Subdivision Plans, as presented, in accordance with the approval.

Miscellaneous

Housing Round Table

Ms. Kablack reminded the Board that the Housing Round Table will be Thursday, March 22, 2007. She alerted Board members to look for email communications from Housing Specialist Beth Rust regarding the event, and to respond accordingly. Chairman Fee and Mr. Morely stated their intentions to attend.

Minutes

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of February 28, 2007.

Mahoney and Melone Properties Staff Group

Ms. Kablack announced that a staff group will be established to review the Mahoney and Melone properties regarding engineering feasibility. The Community Preservation Committee has allocated \$25,000 for each property towards the completion of these studies. An engineering firm will most likely be hired to complete surveys, topographical maps and some basic designs. Ms. Kablack recommended that the Planning Board be represented in the group to review the RFP and review responses. Chairman Fee nominated Ms. Eggleston, and she accepted.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To appoint Ms. Lisa Eggleston as the Planning Board representative to the Mahoney and Melone Properties Ad-Hoc Committee.

Upcoming Planning Board 2007 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Kablack announced the March 28, 2007 Planning Board meeting will include the Walkway Forum for Raymond and Peakham Roads.

Chairman Fee adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.