

PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
14 Court Square, Greenfield, MA 01301

413-772-1548
413-772-1309 (fax)



GREENFIELD PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of January 5, 2012

Police Station – 321 High Street

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson at 7:05 p.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Roxann Wedegartner, Chair; Linda Smith, Vice-chair; Mary Newton, Clerk; Clayton Sibley; and James Allen

Also present were Mayor William Martin; Robert Pyers, Director of Economic Development & Marketing; Eric Twarog, Director of Planning and Development; and members of the public

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Newton, and voted 5:0 to approve the meeting minutes from December 15, 2011.

CHAIRS STATEMENT: This meeting is being recorded. If any other persons present are doing the same you must notify the chairperson at this time. No one responded.

Public Hearings

7:00 p.m.: Proposed Zoning Amendments - The two proposed Zoning Map amendments are to re-zone the Lunt property (298 Federal Street) from General Industry to Limited Commercial/Urban Residential and to re-zone the portion of the Bendix property (180 Laurel Street Ext.) that is Urban Residential to General Industry. The two proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments are to allow "Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations" by special permit in the Rural Residential, Suburban Residential, General Commercial, and Office Districts and to add a new section to the Ordinance on "Non-Commercial Scale Solar Energy Installations".

Wedegartner read public hearing notice into the record and explained the public hearing process to the audience. The public hearing was opened at 7:10 p.m. for public comment.

Bob Campbell, President of the Greenfield Little League

Mr. Campbell expressed concern for himself and on behalf of the other members of the League about the future of the baseball fields on the Lunt property. Expressed gratitude to the Lunt's for the use of the ball fields over the past 50 years and his hopes that the ball fields could continue to be used for the foreseeable future.

Charlie Ocharleski, 20 Smith Street, Greenfield

Stated that the ball fields on the Lunt property have been in his family's life since he was a young child. Expressed concern about the continued use of the ball fields in the future. Stated that he has not seen any action by the Town to preserve the ball fields such as looking for grants or other funding to preserve them. Stated that other communities have used public funds to purchase such facilities such as Northampton. Expressed his desire for the Town to move forward with grant opportunities to preserve the ball fields.

Ed Sabella, Attorney for Lunt Silversmiths, Springfield

Asked for an explanation above and beyond the public hearing notice on why the Town is re-zoning the property. Wedegartner responded that the Town regularly proposes amendments to the Zoning Map and Ordinance. Wedegartner reviewed potential uses that could occur on the property under existing zoning and stated that the purpose of the proposed re-zoning is to make the zoning on this property consistent with the existing zoning of the area which is Limited Commercial (LC) along Federal Street and Urban Residential (RA) along the side streets.

L. Alexandra Hogan, Attorney for Lunt Silversmiths, Springfield

Asked why the re-zoning is occurring at this time. Wedegartner responded that there is no particular reason why it is occurring at this time.

Susan Worgaftik, 45 Forest Avenue, Greenfield

Stated that she lives in the neighborhood of the Lunt property and that she supports the proposed re-zoning of the property. She also stated that industrial zoning is not compatible with this mostly residential area and commercial area along Federal Street.

Joe Kopera, 14 Green Street, Greenfield

Stated that he agrees with preserving the existing ball fields and asked who would be responsible for the cleanup of any environmental contamination on the property if the Town purchased the property. He also asked who would be responsible for the cleanup of any environmental contamination on the Bendix property. Wedegartner asked the Mayor if he or Mr. Pyers could answer this question. Mayor Martin asked if he could respond to all questions at the end. Wedegartner responded yes.

Kyle Bostrom, 95 Green River Road, Greenfield

Stated that he wrote an article for the Greenfield Recorder on the potential of a food hub at the Lunt property. The food hub could have a farmer's market, storage for food products, and an educational component linking with Greenfield Community College. A food hub would also allow for some limited manufacturing jobs.

Katie Campbell-Nelson, 84 Cleveland Street, Greenfield

Asked what the difference is between Limited Commercial and General Industry. Wedegartner explained the difference between the two districts in terms of uses. Ms. Campbell-Nelson echoed the comments on the potential for a food hub at this location and cited examples of several communities that have done this. She handed documentation on this to the Board.

Wedegartner read a memo dated January 5, 2012 from Robert Pyers, Director of Economic Development and Marketing, into the record and asked if anyone else in the audience would like to speak on the proposed zoning amendments.

Keith Zaltzberg, 36 Lovers Lane, Greenfield

Stated that the Town needs to be cognizant about not zoning out areas for future industrial development within town. Such areas should be provided in town.

Mayor William Martin

Mayor Martin addressed all questions and comments put forth through this public hearing.

Existing Ball Fields – Mayor Martin stated that it is the intent of the Town to the ball fields as a greenspace in the center of town. Stated that the Town has not pursued grant opportunities at this time because it does not own the property and that many grant programs require ownership in order to apply.

Timing and Reason for Re-zoning Lunt Property – Mayor Martin stated that the Town has a two-year option on the property with about one year remaining so the Town has limited time to prepare a re-use plan for the property. Stated that in 1989 a wholesale change to the Zoning Ordinance and Map was done during which this property was left as industrial to accommodate the 100-year old business operating at the time.

Environmental Contamination – Mayor Martin asked Mr. Pyers to address the question of environmental contamination on the Lunt property and the Bendix property. Mr. Pyers explained that Honeywell Corporation has been conducting soil and groundwater remediation at the Bendix property over the last 10 years and that this process should be complete by the second quarter of 2013. He also stated that the US EPA has recently cleaned up the surface of the property and the interior of the building from hazardous materials which cost the US EPA about \$800,000. Mr. Pyers then reviewed the recent Phase I Environmental Site Assessment at the Lunt property paid through the FRCOG’s Franklin Regional Brownfields Program and prepared by Weston & Sampson. He stated that at the current time, Phase II/Phase III Environmental Site Assessments are being conducted by O’Reilly, Talbot & Okun Associates, Inc. to determine remediation costs. This is being paid by a grant to the Town from MassDevelopment. He stated that this work should be completed in about six weeks.

Solar Array on Capped Landfill – Mayor Martin stated that Greenfield was the first community in Massachusetts to complete a power purchase agreement (PPA) for a large solar array system on a capped landfill. He stated that this PPA will save the Town thousands of dollars over the 30-year period of the agreement. Mayor Martin stated that the Town desires to create an eco-industrial park at the Bendix property with a solar array system installed on-site near I-91 that could provide power to businesses there. This would provide an incentive for companies to come to Greenfield instead of other regions of the United States where power is cheaper.

Industrial Zoning – Mayor Martin asked Mr. Pyers to address the question on available land for future industrial development. Mr. Pyers explained what modern industrial users are looking for in terms of location.

Mayor Martin stated that he supports the proposed re-zonings. Wedegartner inquired on whether the Town intends to purchase the Lunt property for town uses or whether it intends to find a preferred developer for the property. Mayor Martin stated that there are several on-going studies that need to be completed before the Town can make a final decision. Bob Campbell stated that the Town’s Recreation Department currently uses the ball fields as well on the Lunt property and wanted the Board to be aware of this. Mr Pyers addressed the question on property values by stating that there are many steps that need to be taken before the Town could actually purchase the Lunt property. A Mr. Steven Notes was acknowledged by the Chair to speak. Mr. Notes asked if the proposed re-zoning of the Lunt property is the Town choosing the lesser of two evils, residential and limited commercial as opposed to heavy industrial uses. Mayor Martin stated that the purpose of the proposed re-zoning of the Lunt property is to make this property consistent with the existing zoning of the area.

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Smith, and voted 5-0 to close the public hearing at 8:11 p.m. on the proposed zoning amendments.

Allen inquired whether municipal uses would be allowed under existing zoning or under the proposed re-zoning of the Lunt property. Director Twarog stated that municipal uses would be allowed in either case.

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Newton, and voted 5-0 to table discussion on the proposed zoning amendments until the January 19, 2012 meeting of the Planning Board.

Town Council President David Singer stated that the EDC will be holding a public hearing on the proposed zoning amendments on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in this same location and that the full Council will not be take this up until their February meeting in order to give time to consider the comments made and questions posed.

ZBA Recommendations

- a. Application of Susan Peck for property located at 741 Bernardston Road, which is located within the Suburban Residential (RB) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.3 (C16) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow an animal hospital at this location.

The Board had no issues with this request.

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Newton, and voted 5-0 to forward a positive recommendation to the ZBA on the application of Susan Peck for property located at 741 Bernardston Road, which is located within the Suburban Residential (RB) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.3 (C16) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow an animal hospital at this location.

- b. Application of A.R. Sandri, Inc. for property located at 48 Montague City Road, which is located within the General Industry (GI) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.11 (C14) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow bulk storage of fuel at this location.

Wedegartner recused herself because a family member works at A.R. Sandri. The primary concern of the Board was safety. Some members of the Board felt that additional above ground storage tanks of the size proposed at this location would exacerbate an already potentially hazardous situation. Safety for the Greenfield Center School and neighboring residences was of primary concern.

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Smith, and voted 1-2-1 (Newton voted yes, Smith and Allen abstained, and Sibley voted no) to forward a negative recommendation to the ZBA on the application of A.R. Sandri, Inc. for property located at 48 Montague City Road, which is located within the General Industry (GI) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-4.11 (C14) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow bulk storage of fuel at this location.

The motion failed with no additional motions made.

- c. Application of Dalton Athey for property located at 119-121 High Street, which is located within the Urban Residential (RA) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.1(C) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the expansion of a pre-existing nonconforming two-family home.

The Board had no issues with this request. The Board recommended that the ZBA find out the height of the proposed addition to the back of the house to ensure that it does not exceed zoning standards.

MOTION: Moved by Smith, seconded by Newton, and voted 5-0 to forward a positive recommendation to the ZBA on the application of Dalton Athey for property located at 119-121 High Street, which is located within the Urban Residential (RA) Zoning District, for a special permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.1(C) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the expansion of a pre-existing nonconforming two-family home.

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Newton, and voted 5:0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Twarog, AICP
Director of Planning and Development