

# Planning Board – Town of Spencer

## *Minutes*

Planning Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 18, 2012 at 7:00 PM

McCourt Social Hall

Memorial Town Hall



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The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

**Planning Board Members Present:** Chair Shirley Shiver, Mary Stolarczyk, Ralph DiChiara, James Whalen and Robert Ceppi (Note: Robert Ceppi was 5 minutes late)

**Planning Board Members Absent:** Associate Member Jonathan Viner

**Staff present:** Brynn Johnson, ODIS Clerk, Michelle Buck, Town Planner

Ms. Shiver opens the meeting

**1. Minor Site Plan Review and Public Hearing:** Parking Lot for Sibley Farm and Burncoat Pond Wildlife Sanctuary. Location: 131 Greenville Street. Jeffrey Collins Director of Ecological management from Mass Audubon is present to represent the project. Charlie Wyman was unable to attend.

Mr. Collins explains the plans for the parking lot proposed for 131 Greenville Street on the site of the former Seven Springs Horse Farm. This parking lot will serve visitors to Sibley Farm and Burncoat Wildlife Sanctuary. The lot will accommodate 11 cars as well as a bus turn-off. The bus drop-off area is not expected to be used very often. He only expects to have maybe one school bus a week during the fall and spring seasons. There will be trails from the bus drop off and parking lot that will lead to an orientation/information area. From this area a trail will lead north into the Sibley Farm area and another will lead east to Burncoat Pond Wildlife Sanctuary. A third will lead to the Mid-State Trail. These trails will have compacted gravel transitioning to natural soil as you go further from the orientation area. The house and barn on the site are in the process of being demolished now. They have already been issued the demolition permits by the Building Dept. They are also working with the Conservation Commission on stormwater controls and to restore an old riding ring back to a meadow. After the buildings are demolished the only impervious surface will be the paved driveway apron which is required by the town. The parking area will be enclosed by a low fence with a gate to allow maintenance vehicles such as a mowing tractor onto the property when needed. This gate would also allow an area for overflow parking on the grass if needed for an event. The parking area will not have any screening and will be visible from the road so it does not become a late night gathering spot for partying and drinking. In the Police Chief's comments to the Board he agreed that the lot should be visible from the road so they can better monitor it. The fencing will blend in with the surroundings; it will look much like it did when there was horse pasture there. Also the fence as well as some existing stone walls will keep cars from driving onto the trails.

Ms. Shiver asks what the signage for the orientation kiosk will look like. Mr. Collins says the signs will be limited to the 20 ft by 20 ft hard packed gravel orientation area. He thinks he will have to bring the proposed signage to the ZBA for approval. They do not have the plans for signs yet but at other sites they are on black metal posts and are about 3 to 4 feet wide with some wording and images of what is and isn't allowed on the trails. When the signs have been designed they can bring them to the ZBA for approval.

There is a discussion on whether or not they will have to bring the signs to the ZBA for approval. After reviewing the By-laws Ms. Buck and the Board determine that if the signs were ready for review they would have been reviewed as part of this site plan application. This how the Planning Board reviewed signs for other minor site plan reviews. Ms. Buck says because the By-law has a gray area that can be interpreted either way; Mass Audubon should come back to the Planning Board not the ZBA for approval when the signs are ready. If they come back to the Planning Board they will not have to pay a new application fee for the special permit. Mr. Collins is told he will need to call Ms. Buck when the sign plans are ready so it can be put on the agenda (the special permit will require abutter notification). Mr. Collins says that's fine with him. The signage will not hold up the project because they can be added at a later date.

Ms. Shiver asks if there are any questions from the Board. There are none.

Ms. Shiver opens and closes the public hearing. There is no one in attendance from the public.

**MOTION:** Mr. Ceppi makes a motion to approve this plan. Mr. Whalen seconds the motion.

**DISCUSSION:** Before they vote Ms. Buck asks that the Board and Mr. Collins to review the findings and conditions in the decision. Ms. Buck hands out a draft decision. After reading the draft Mr. DiChiara asks what will happen if a bus pulls up to the site and there are cars parked in the bus parking area. Mr. Collins says he does not expect this to be a problem because most of the time buses would only be there for planned field-trips during the school day. If parking in the bus turn-off becomes a problem, they may need to post a sign that says something along the lines of *Bus Parking Only Monday-Friday*.

**VOTE:** 5-0 in favor

## **2. Approval of Minutes:** July 17, 2012, July 25, 2012 and August 21, 2012

Motion: Mr. DiChiara makes a motion to approve the minutes for July 17, 2012. Mr. Ceppi seconds the motion. Vote: is 5-0 in favor.

Motion: Ms. Stolarczyk makes a motion to approve the minutes for July 25, 2012. Mr. Whalen seconds the motion. Vote: is 5-0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. DiChiara makes a motion to approve the minutes for August 21, 2012. Ms. Stolarczyk seconds the motion. Vote: is 5-0 in favor.

### 3. Town Planner Report:

**A. Deer Run Update:** After the July 2012 Planning Board meeting, at which the application to modify Deer Run, Phase 2 was denied. Work on Phase 1 had been delayed due to the modification application from Funari Development and other priorities of the Highway Dept. Ms. Buck met with Adam Gaudette Town Administrator and Steven Tyler U & F Superintendent to discuss the status of the road. Mr. Gaudette requested that work be started this fall. No further action has been taken by the Highway Dept. because they have numerous other superseding priorities. The road acceptance and layout process is planned to begin in late winter early spring 2013 in anticipation of the annual town meeting.

**B. Permit Extension Act:** An Amendment to the 2010 Permit extension Act was adopted in August 2012. The amendment extends permit deadlines. Any project in effect between 8/15/2008 and 8/15/2012 is granted a 4 year extension from original deadlines.

**4. Reorganization of the Board:** Ms. Shiver states she would like to stay on as a member of the Planning Board but wants to resign as chair. After some discussion Mr. Whalen volunteers to serve as Planning Board Chair. Mr. Ceppi volunteers to stay Vice Chair and CMRP Rep. Ms. Shiver volunteers to sever as the Capital Rep.

**MOTION:** Mr. DiChiara makes a motion to approve the reorganization of the Spencer Planning Board as follows:

**Chair-** James Whalen

**Vice Chair-** Robert Ceppi

**CMRP Rep-** Robert Ceppi

**Capital Rep.** Shirley Shiver

Ms. Stolarczyk seconds the motion.

**VOTE:** 5-0 in favor.

**Adjournment:** With no further discussion the meeting is adjourned at 7:50 pm.

**Submitted by:** Brynn Johnson, Jr. Clerk

**Approved by the Planning Board on:**     11/13/20    

### List of Documents used on September 18, 2012

#### Sent to Planning Board prior to Meeting:

- Agenda
- Memo to Planning Board from Michelle Buck, Town Planner dated 9/13/2012
- Minutes 7/17/2012, 7/25/2012 and 8/21/2012
- Revised Sibley Parking Lot plans and Locus map dated 9/13/2012
- Sibley Parking lot comments from Police & Fire dated 8/28/2012
- Memo from Adam Gaudette regarding Deer Run dated 8/01/2012

#### Submitted to Planning Board at Meeting:

- Letter from The Greater Worcester Land Trust dated 9/14/2012 supporting Mass Audubon's parking lot plans.