



TOWN OF EASTON
Planning & Zoning Board
136 Elm Street
North Easton, Massachusetts 02356
Tel: (508) 230-0630 Fax: (508) 230-0639

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Present: Christine Santoro, Colin Gillis, Walter Johnson, Gregory Strange, John Duggan, Alice Savage, Pamela Almeida

Christine Santoro called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

6:30 P.M. BOARD BUSINESS

- Chair Report: Christine Santoro showed the Board an article in January 23, 2008 edition of the Easton Journal entitled "Smart Growth Pays Off, Town gets payment of \$350,000." Please see article at end of minutes.
- Ms. Santoro read excerpts from a letter from the Old Colony Planning Council regarding the Rail Line.
- Ms. Santoro reports to the Board that next Tuesday a meeting will be held in the Selectmen's office of all Board / Commission Chair's.
- Alice Savage reported to the Board that the Monday night meeting schedule that was voted and approved at the last meeting will not go forward at this time due to lack of meeting space. Initially, it was thought that the Board of Health was moving their meeting night from Monday to Wednesday. That being the case, the Planning & Zoning Board was proposing to move into the Monday night slot. However, the Board of Health has not made the change of meeting night definite at this time.
- Ms. Savage reminds the Board of the training session next Wednesday (February 4th at 6:30 p.m.).
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2009**

Walter asked to correct a line on page three under Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 17, 2008.

Walter Johnson motions to approve the minutes with correction as noted and submitted, seconded by Gregory Strange. Motion passes (3-0-2) Christine Santoro and John Duggan abstained as they were not present.

FORM A (ANR) PURCHASE STREET – Michael Haikal

Ms. Savage explains that a variance regarding the frontage was granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals and which was filed with the Easton Town Clerk in June, 2008. This has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds in Book 17573, Page 175-182 (per note on plan). The purpose of this plan is to divide Map: 47U, Lot: 16 into two lots. One is to be conveyed to the Conservation Commission and the other for construction of a single family residence.

Walter Johnson motions to approve plan as submitted, seconded by Colin Gillis, motion passes (5-0)

The Board signs the mylar. A copy of the mylar was made and the mylar was taken by Mr. Haikal for recording.

DISCUSSION OF DEVELOPMENT/CONSERVATION PRIORITY PARCELS

Ms. Savage refers to a map posted on the board developed for the South Coast Rail project entitled “Economic Development and Land Use Corridor Plan.”

According to the Legend on the map, areas shown on the map include: Easton Priority Protection Areas; Easton Priority Development Areas; Permanent Open Space; Chapter 61 Protected Land; Developed Land; Water; Wetlands and the Proposed Rail Route.

DISCUSSION OF ZONING AMENDMENTS

Dynamic/scaled zoning: Mr. Strange thoughts of changing the residential zoning as it currently is. More and more with older lots, we are seeing people putting up larger homes on grandfathered, smaller lots. These homes appear out of scale with the lot size and/or character of other homes in the area. The house is large in size and height, close to the road, with a raised septic system (due to high water table).

1) The state building code has a maximum height of 35 feet. Mr. Strange explains that the building height shall be measured by the mean grade of the natural alterations of the site. (take into consider having to raise the grade due to the water table along with the height of the home. Instead of the home totaling 35 feet in height, if the grade of the site has to be raised 7 feet, then the height of the home would be 28 feet.)

2) or to have the building height based on the setback lines.

Definition of Building Height: Christine Santoro asked Gregory Strange to clarify the definition of building height. He explains that the maximum 35 feet height of the house based on the existing grade, not the altered grade due to water table and the need to raise the grade.

Planning & Zoning Board
Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2009

Additional discussion included what would the Board need to do if would like to propose this change in the zoning. Ms. Savage explains the route of submitting proposal to Town Counsel for review. The Board would have to hold a public hearing, then would have to submit to the Board of Selectmen for approval and then to Town Meeting for vote.

ADJOURN

Walter Johnson motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Gregory Strange.

Respectfully submitted by Pamela Almeida, Recording Secretary.

Signed by,



Colin Gillis, Clerk



Date

RNAL

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Smart Growth pays off

Town gets payment of \$350,000

By Katherine McInemey
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As towns across the Commonwealth brace for cuts in local aid expected to be as high as 10 percent for fiscal year 2010, Easton has received a \$350,000 payout from the state.

The check is a one-time incentive payment for towns to create Smart Growth zoning districts. Easton gets the funds for adopting a Chapter 40R Smart Growth zoning bylaw at the May 2008 Town Meeting, which paves the way for Douglas King's Queset Commons project.

"It just adds to the cushion that we have in place," said selectmen Chairman Colleen Corona.

She said the \$350,000 will be put into the town's stabilization fund, which currently has a balance of more than \$2 million.

"Considering the current fiscal

crisis there's going to be a lot of need," Corona said.

Town Administrator David A. Colton has cautioned that the money is a "one-time payment" and should not be used to meet expenses in the operating budget.

"My philosophy, and I think (that of) most people involved in municipal finance, is that a one-time payment shouldn't be spent on the operating budget, but set aside for capital expenses," said Colton.

"I'd still like to do that," Colton said. "If we could spend it on something that improves our community, such as capital equipment, or something that gets us a more energy efficient building, that would be my first choice."

According to state guidelines, Smart Growth districts combine

GROWTH, page 5

Smart Growth pays off for Easton

SMART, from page 1

affordable housing with public transportation and commercial space for offices and retail stores.

The proposed Queset Commons development includes condominiums, office space, a food market, mixed use buildings with office space on the ground level and apartments and affordable housing above, as well as a conference center and wastewater

treatment plan.

The development would be located behind King's Queset on the Pond apartments on Rte. 138.

When the May vote was taken, there was some speculation that the state would not come through with the incentive payment in Easton, as other communities with similar Smart Growth projects were still waiting on their funds.

The proposed Queset Commons is still in the initial phase of presenting plans to town boards, Corona said. The town could get additional money from the state as the project progresses and the building permits are granted.

Information from the GateHouse news service was used in this report.

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