

Topsfield Planning Board

May 17, 2011

Clerk Janice Ablon called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Board members present were Martha Morrison, Janice Ablon, Gregor Smith, Ian DeBuy Wenniger and Steven Hall. Roberta Knight, Community Development Coordinator was also present.

Visitors: Selectman Dick Gandt;

Reorganization:

Member Gregor Smith made the motion to nominate Martha Morrison as Chairman; seconded by Clerk Janice Ablon; so voted 3-0-0.

Member Gregor Smith made the motion to nominate Janice Ablon as Clerk; seconded by Member Steven Hall; so voted 3-0-0.

Liaison / Designee Assignments: The Board approved as listed the new assignments for the May 2011 – May 2012 Term:

Steven Hall	Soil Removal Board
Janice Ablon	Main Street Foundation, Inc.

The Board will review the remaining assignments at the next meeting, and then it proceeded to discuss the need to find a new associate member.

Master Planning: Chairman Morrison noted that over the past several years the Town has fulfilled the strategy goals and initiatives relative to the EO 418 Plan Requirements. For future visioning, the Board will need to engage the community to gather citizen input concerning a vision for Topsfield development to meet the goals and needs of the community's future.

Minutes: Member Ian DeBuy Wenniger made the motion to accept the minutes of April 25, 2011 as amended; seconded by Member Gregor Smith; so voted 3-0-0.

English Commons Request for Modification of Master Deed: Chairman Morrison informed the Board that she had been contacted by developer Alan Berry concerning the restrictive language in the Master Deed concerning the 55 age of years and over residential requirement provision and specifically the provision concerning a surviving spouse when under 55 years of age. Mortgages are currently under strict bank scrutiny and the current language in the Master Deed giving a surviving spouse under the 55 years

of age two years to vacate premises does not meet the standards for approval by FannieMae. Attorney Bradford Latham has recommended that the language concerning the vacating by a surviving spouse under the age of 55 be deleted. The members then requested Ms. Knight to check on similar provisions dealing with age requirements for the respective developments in either the deeds or bylaws for Amberwood and Great Hill.

The members then discussed the previous modification requests by Mr. Berry and the status of the boardwalk and the clearing of the “nature paths”. The Board requested Ms. Knight to provide the Board with a copy of the list of voluntary improvements submitted by the developer associated with the gate entrance modification request.

2011 Summer Schedule: It was the consensus of the Board to meet on July 12th and August 16th based on the members summer vacation commitments.

Authorization of Signature: Clerk Janice Ablon read the statement for the record: “The Topsfield Planning Board voted pursuant to MGL Ch 41 § 41 to authorize any one of the below signatories to sign payrolls. It is understood that this provision does not eliminate the responsibility of the other members of the Board. A majority of the below signatories are required to sign bills.” Motion to approve by Member Steven Hall; seconded by Member Gregor Smith; so voted 5-0.

Old Business: The Board reviewed the outstanding list of items under old business as follows:

- CLURPA
- Community Development Strategy
- Review of Forms & Fee Schedule
- Revisions to Planning Board Subdivision Rules & Regulations
- Revisions to Scenic Road Rules & Regulations
- Revisions to Stormwater & Erosion Control Rules & Regulations

CLURPA: Chairman Morrison noted that the legislature is acting on CLURPA which as drafted is favored by the regional planning organizations. The MMA is not in support and noted that the Topsfield Board of Selectmen is forwarding a letter noting its objections. Ms. Morrison advised that the Planning Board also send a letter for the record.

Community Development Strategy: The stated goals and objectives have been met.

Forms & Fee Schedule: Clerk Janice Ablon noted that based on her research the fees were in-line with other communities. The forms needed some formatting and Ms. Morrison volunteered to assist in the update.

Revisions to Planning Board Subdivision Rules & Regulations: Ms. Knight noted that former Chairman had developed a list of clarifying changes, and that she recommended that the street acceptance process be reviewed by Town Counsel. The Board agreed.

Revisions to Scenic Road Rules & Regulations & Stormwater & Erosion Control Rules & Regulations: Clerk Janice Ablon noted that revisions for clarification of the public hearing and notification process were needed for both regulations.

Trees from National Grid for Scenic Roads: Chairman Morrison noted that National Grid was giving Topsfield 14 trees for scenic roads and that the Town had an opportunity to apply to the DCR for a \$5K grant and the question is what to apply for: forester, plantings?

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta M. Knight
Community Development Coordinator