

3 3 **Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes** 4 March 6, 2019 Municipal Center, Selectmen's Meeting Room 5 10 Bunker Hill Avenue 6 7 Time: 7:00 PM 8 9 Members Present: Bob Baskerville, Chairman David Canada, Member 10 Mike Houghton, Selectmen's Representative 11 Tom House, Secretary 12 13 Diedre Lawrence, Alternate 14 Members Absent: Jameson Paine, Vice Chairman 15 Robert Roseen, Alternate 16 17 **Staff Present:** Tavis Austin, Town Planner 18 19 20 1. Call to Order/Roll Call 21 22 The Chairman took roll. Mr. Baskerville asked Ms. Lawrence if she would be a voting member in place of Mr. Paine's absence. Ms. Lawrence agreed. 23 24 2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes 25 26 27 **a.** February 20, 2019 28 29 Mr. Canada made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of February 20, 2019 as presented. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. 30 31 32 3. Public Hearing: 33 a. Site Plan Review. To facilitate installation of an off-street parking area, widening of a 34 driveway, and associated infrastructure for the Robinwood Center, at 61 & 62 Stratham 35 Heights Road, Stratham, NH; Stratham Tax Map 2 & 5 Lots 81 &14; Exeter Tax Map 67 36 Lots 3 and 3-1; submitted by Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering, Inc. Continued 37 38 from 2/6/2019. 39 Mr. Austin stated staff opinion has not changed from the 2/6/2019 staff review. Mr. 40 Austin explained the only new information in the packet is additional information that 41 42 resulted from the applicant's communication with the abutters as was suggested by the

Planning Board. Mr. Austin stated Sheet C-2 indicates those changes, the note regarding solid waste and the dumpster location, and the plan has been modified to include a "Note 4" but no indication of a location for the crosswalk across Stratham Heights Road. Staff recommends approval of the project as submitted.

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Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering, representing Sophie Robinson and the Robinwood Center at 61 & 62 Stratham Height Road. Mr. Scamman stated the property has farmland on both sides of Stratham Heights; one side is the farmstead which includes the barn and house and the hayfields and woodland are across the road. The applicant is requesting the Robinwood Center be run out of the barn. The driveway requires widening and a parking lot installed for the facility. Overflow parking was added across the street for larger events. Mr. Scamman stated two meetings have taken place since the last planning board hearing; one with four of the abutters and another with two additional abutters to review the plans and their concerns. Mr. Scamman stated the biggest concern was the abutters did not want the parking lot or parking area across the street and asked for some buffering and hours of operation. Mr. Scamman explained a berm has been added which wraps around the parking lot with trees planted on top to help alleviate sound and car headlights. Mr. Scamman stated the parking lot lighting will be motion activated. Mr. Scamman read the notes on Sheet C-2 that is provided to help protect the neighbors and operations for this facility. Mr. Scamman stated the parking across the street will be a grass parking area. Mr. Scamman stated two of the abutters requests will not be able to be met. The request for all vehicles entering the site to back in the length of front property to reach the parking area is a safety concern, and water and soil testing for vehicles parking on the property in perpetuity, the applicant is not comfortable signing onto this request. The applicant has tried to balance some of the requests and is trying to work with the abutters to be a good neighbor regarding this project.

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Mr. House asked for clarification of the note regarding "snow storage". Mr. Scamman stated that was done in error and will be removed. Mr. House asked if the berm on northwest corner of the parking lot has been agreed to be all abutters. Mr. House stated it appears that several trees will need to be removed in order to put the berm in. Mr. Scamman stated it was discussed at the meeting with the abutters that trees would need to be removed in order to put the berm in. There are low level trees and on the stone wall there are some larger trees. Mr. Scamman stated during the site walk the applicant agreed to try and maintain all the larger trees but the 1-2 inch trees will be removed and the larger Evergreen trees would be put on top of the berm. The applicant is proposing the berm be made out of topsoil from the construction of the parking lot in order for there to be plenty organic matter to hold moisture for those trees. Mr. Austin stated "Operational Note #1" asked if the number was suggested by the applicant, the engineer, the abutters, or in consultation with the police department. Mr. Scamman stated it was not in consultation with the police department. Mr. Austin stated there is no correlation between a site plan and that type of condition and perhaps that may be an area for the zoning board. Mr. Austin stated concern with the site plan including Operation Note #2 regarding buses and shuttles and it suggests the site plan is not sufficient for what is being proposed and does not provide an alternative. The

planning board, specifically, and the town, generally, does not have a way to verify whether Operational Note #3 is complied with or not the way it is worded. If the Planning Board would like that included the town will need to be looped in on that notification. Mr. Austin explained that a number of the "notes" listed may have more to do with the use than site plan approvals. Mr. Austin stated Note #4 is a suggestion from the Planning Board regarding the trash plan, and the opening phrase of Note #5 works with Stratham law goes without saying but the second part is more a ZBA element than planning board. Mr. Austin stated Note #6 is very similar to Note #2 and Note #3 and questioned who would be responsible for tracking this. Mr. Austin recommended "unless required otherwise by Building Codes" be added to Note #7 if the parking lot lights are deemed emergency or required egress lights during events. Mr. Austin stated Note #8 is a ZBA element. Ms. Lawrence questioned if this proposal has been brought before the ZBA. Mr. Austin stated no, this was supposed to go before the ZBA at their last hearing but was continued to March 12, 2019 and recently re-noticed for March 19, 2019. Mr. Austin questioned Note #9 and whether it is possible to accomplish back-in parking with front entry, is there enough room to drive forward to the east and then back in. Mr. Scamman stated yes, the drive aisle is 24 ft.

Barry Schiffman, 55 Stratham Heights Road, thanked the board for suggesting the applicant and abutters meet, and Ms. Robinson and Mr. Scamman for being accommodating to the situation. Mr. Schiffman asked what remedies there are if the engineered solutions don't work. Mr. Baskerville stated if the berm is not built tall enough anyone could go to the town and state it's not built per the plan. Mr. Baskerville explained there is a town ordinance that states, at the property line, how many lumens can exceed the property. Mr. Austin stated the enforcement mechanisms are all outlined in the zoning ordinance so if there is a perceived violation and a compliant is made to the Code Enforcement Officer, the CEO will investigate to determine if a breach of the law then the property owner is put on notice and has to correct the violation. Mr. Austin explained the lighting regulations for Mr. Schiffman.

Dave Tosatti, 72 Stratham Heights Road, questioned if the lighting regulations include rules of how much light can come off ones property from headlights. Mr. Austin stated in that particular instance no because it is not an element captured in this plan and functionally everyone that pulls into a driveway would be in violation of the ordinance. Mr. Tosatti voiced concern with enforcement if this plan does not work. Mr. Austin explained a scenario which could invalidate the site plan. For example: the applicant plans an event and does or does not duly pursue compliance with Operational Note #3; an abutter finds an issue with the applicant which does not have anything to do with Note #3 and submit a complaint that they never received notification of the event which is a failure of the site plan approval and unprovable to the CEO which leads to the site plan possibly being invalidated. Ms. Lawrence asked if the notes could be part of the zoning decision. Mr. Austin explained the Zoning Board and Planning board are two separate entities. Mr. Austin stated the Planning Board has every ability to send the Zoning Board an advisory opinion.

Mr. Baskerville asked Mr. Austin for staff's recommendation of whether the notes should be on the plan or a condition of approval. Mr. Austin stated Operational Note #4 to be included in the upper right hand corner of notes which are the typical guiding structure of the planning board. Staff would remove the remaining operational notes from the site plan and draft an advisory opinion of the planning board for the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

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Joshua Cooper, 9 Orchard Hill Road, stated he was not prepared to address any of these concerns this evening since he understood these issues to be zoning related. Mr. Cooper stated discussions between Mr. Scamman and the applicant have been discussed potential compromises on the site plan, specifically the parking lot but there is still concern over the placement of the parking lot. Mr. Cooper stated he is against having a parking lot where it is proposed and noise from the events. Mr. Cooper questioned why the parking lot needs to be where it is being proposed. Mr. Cooper the new element on the plan which looks to be a fence. Mr. Scamman stated that is a silt fence for erosion control. Mr. Cooper stated the only parking lots that are this large in Stratham are associated with commercial buildings. Mr. Cooper read a quote from Kimberly Cooper who could not attend due to illness. "Had we seen a 40-car parking lot next to our house before we purchased it, we wouldn't have purchased it. Nobody wants to live next door to a parking lot because they are noisy and unattractive. Nobody selling a house points and says "it has a parking lot view". We are very concerned that it will affect the resale value of our home and make it harder to enjoy outdoor spaces while people slam their car doors and remote lock/unlock and remote start their cars, it is enough to allow abutters want to move. We understand from their point of view why they might need one, but we hope you understand from our point of view why we don't want one. We have lived here for seven years and the proposals are very upsetting to us." Mr. Baskerville explained that an applicant can propose a location and if it meets the regulations there is limited power that the Planning Board

Kyle Bloom, 61 Stratham Heights Road, explained he is studying Sustainable Agriculture at UNH and hoping to learn to be a good steward to this land. Most of the conversations with Ms. Robinson have been based on ways to be better members of the community and good stewards of the land. Ms. Robinson's parents are buried on that land and Mr. Bloom doesn't believe she'll ever sell the land and it can be transferred to their children down the road. Mr. Bloom explained the north berm, along the parking area, is intended to be planted with Canadian hemlock, blueberries, and drip irrigation to be a beautifully landscaped and adequate buffer. Mr. Bloom explained to Mr. Schiffman that just because a parking lot is being put in, they aren't suddenly going to be bad neighbors that don't listen to concerns. Mr. Bloom explained the headlights from their current parking area face the abutter's home and believes the berm will help with the headlights. Mr. Bloom explained to Mr. Cooper that the proposed parking lot location is due to the use of the barn and there is not another location, unless closer to his property that would allow people with disabilities or older people to access the barn. Mr. Bloom explained the parking area will not be black asphalt and the proposed site plan allows for use of materials, possibly plastic based, which would allow topsoil

can tell an applicant where something must be located.

and grass seed to be put into it to be a more reinforced lawn. Mr. Bloom stated the applicant is coming before the board to a request they be allowed to use this spectacular piece of land in ways that they have a right to. Mr. Baskerville reiterated for the public that most parking lots in town are normal asphalt and this parking area will be porous pavement, or equal, or better.

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Lester Cuff, 57 Stratham Heights Road, voiced concern at the last meeting regarding drainage. Mr. Cuff explained he has a long history of water drainage problems at his property since they built Elton Avenue and the town approved a makeshift catch basin. Mr. Cuff suppled Ms. Robinson with all the documentation, pictures, etc. and would like to confirm that there are no additional problems if there will be water drainage. Mr. Cuff asked for clarification that the parking lot runoff will go directly into the ground. Mr. Scamman stated yes, there is a cross section that will store water below the surface which will be filtered by sand and stone to return back to groundwater. Mr. Scamman explained in case of a 100 year storm or large event there is an overflow with a 6 inch diameter pipe. Mr. Austin asked if the rate or quantity of water leaving the property from the proposed design greater, less than, or equal to the current water leaving the property. Mr. Scamman stated more water will stay on site and be infiltrated into the groundwater. Mr. Scamman explained there are also bio-treatment swales that will take water from the existing driveway and infiltrate it back into the ground. Mr. Cuff asked if that pipe ties into the existing pipe that goes down Stratham Heights Road. Mr. Scamman stated no, it goes across Stratham Heights Road and ties into Ms. Robinson's additional property across the road. Mr. Cuff explained the pipe comes down on the northern side of Stratham Heights Road, and when Elton Avenue was developed and built, they made a makeshift catch basin that has the pipe going in lower than the pipe going out which has caused problems to Mr. Cuff's yard. Mr. Cuff has concerns of anything being hooked up to the northern pipe, additional water coming down Stratham Heights, will end up at a makeshift catch basin across the road which will need to be replaced. Mr. Baskerville stated that is a condition, existing on a town road that is causing problems. The applicant is before the board to develop their land and the regulations state the applicant can't make it worse. Mr. Baskerville explained what the applicant is proposing is way beyond the regulations and will decrease the water runoff, not increase it. Mr. Cuff left a copy of the history of the current situation. Mr. Cuff explained the situation to the board.

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Mr. Austin stated staff recommended the Planning Board motion to approve, as received on March 6, 2019, with the understanding that the operational notes as presented on Sheet C-2, specifically #1, #2, #3, #5, #6, and #8 be included in an advisory opinion memorandum to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, reviewed and approved by the planning board at the March 20, 2019 hearing, and operational notes #4 and #7 be relocated to the general operating notes in the upper right hand corner, and the February 6, 2019 staff review conditions of approval as the following:

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#### **Conditions Precedent**

1) Remove the cross walk and coordinate with DPW at a later date.

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- 2) Applicant to coordinate with Town Assessing Department relating to current use stipulations and modifications on the property prior to recordation of the site plan.
- 3) Applicant to obtain NH DES septic approval prior to issuance of building permits.
- 4) Clerical changes of removing the snow storage from south side of Stratham Heights Road.

Mr. Austin asked the board if they will require a performance and surety bond for the installation of the landscaping and/or berm which was not shown in the previous proposal. Mr. Baskerville explained the performance and surety bond to Ms. Robinson. Mr. Canada stated he does not see a need for a bond if a CO to operate is required. If the berm and plantings are not installed them a CO won't be issued.

Mr. Canada made a motion that any performance and surety bond be waived prior to issuance of building permits provided that the site plan is built to completion prior to Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. House seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. House asked for clarification of the land on the south side of Stratham Heights Road and if that is in conservation. Mr. Scamman stated that land is an agricultural conservation easement but agricultural structures could be built on that land. Mr. Scamman stated Southeast Land Trust holds the easement and they approved the grass parking and they've been notified as abutters.

Mr. House made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Canada suggested the board approve this proposal based on staff's recommendation and conditions of approval. Mr. Houghton requested the operational notes be moved to Sheet D-4 and list them as the Planning Board's recommendations to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Canada made a motion to approve this application, as received on March 6, 2019, with the understanding that the operational notes as presented on Sheet C-2, specifically #1, #2, #3, #5, #6, and #8 be included in an advisory opinion memorandum to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, reviewed and approved by the planning board at the March 20, 2019 hearing, and operational notes #4 and #7 be relocated to the general operating notes in the upper right hand corner, and the February 6, 2019 staff review conditions of approval as the following:

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Mr. Canada amended the motion to include the Planning Board Chair is authorized to sign the advisory opinion memorandum instead it coming back to the board. Mr. House seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

 Mr. Austin stated the board may want to consider for zoning amendments is the consideration regarding duplicity of approvals. Staff has had conversations with the Code Enforcement Officer and there are no variances or special exceptions in the Gateway District and the Planning Board controls this through the site plan process and variances and special exceptions are granted via waiver process in the Conditional Use Permit. Staff recommended where the ordinance calls for review of two boards that this be relegated to one or the other.

**b.** Subdivision Permit. 71-73 High Street Retroactive Condominium Subdivision, represented by Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering, Inc., requests a Subdivision Permit to convert a duplex into condominium ownership as completed without Town approval in 1998 at 71-73 High Street, Stratham, NH 03885, Tax Map 18 Lots 80-1 and 80-2.

Mr. Austin stated the board's packet include the information brought before the planning board in July 2016. Prior to that meeting the applicant came to the Planning Department regarding a septic system which was denied by DES due to no local approval for the subdivision. Staff found a condominium plat, condominium by-laws, etc. but no town approval. In July 2016 the applicant came before the board and the planning board described the application process to legalize the condominium. The applicant has complied with recommendations from the 2016 meeting so staff recommends the board approve as submitted.

Mr. House made a motion to accept the application as complete. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering, representing Ruth S Manos Family Trust and Nora Ellison. Mr. Scamman explained this property was subdivided in 1997-98 to create one lot. In 1998 a duplex was built and shortly thereafter a condominium site plan, floor plan, and condominium documents were prepared and put on record with the NH State Registry of Deeds and the town has recognized this as a condominium ownership since 1998. Since the state has not received town approval of the condominium the applicants are coming forward to legalize the condominium approvals. Mr. Scamman brought the NH State Subdivision Approval which was received 3/6/2019.

Mr. Baskerville opened the hearing up for public comment. No public came forward.

Mr. Houghton made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. House seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Canada made a motion to accept the condominium plans as presented. Mr. House seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

# 4. Public Meeting:

**a.** Skate Park. Preliminary Consultation for proposed Town Skate Park at 68 Bunker Hill Ave.

Mr. Austin explained the Skate Park has had preliminary consultation with the board and it was requested the applicant complete the application requirements for a public hearing and receive feedback prior to Town Meeting that has a Warrant Article to fund the skate park. Mr. Austin stated the statute does not obligate site plan review for projects such as this on town property but the select board requested a version of site plan review so they could be assured that the project was going to adhere to the spirit and intent of the regulations. Mr. Austin stated it is staff's opinion that the application before the board is not a complete application to go for public hearing and staff wanted the board to have the additional information presented since the last preliminary consultation. Mr. Baskerville asked for clarification that since this project is a town project it does not need planning board approval. Mr. Austin stated yes.

Mr. Austin stated staff's question is whether the Skate Park has adequate parking. Mr. Austin stated the town has been put on notice about potential run-off infractions between Stevens Park and an abutter. Staff's opinion, as well as Director of Recreation and the town engaged engineer working on the project, is that the park will not increase the run-off. The park design has been reviewed by the Code Enforcement Officer.

Michael Tallone, 5 Rollins Farm Road, explained the information before the board is a construction design of the Skate Park which would be built out of concrete and shockcrete. The skateable surface is around 7,100 SF. The overall footprint which includes the nine (9) additional parking spaces proposed on the access road will be on compacted dirt. Mr. Tallone spoke with the CEO regarding code compliance and making the facility wheelchair accessible. Currently the one design shows two (2) paths coming from the proposed nine (9) parking spaces and Mr. Tallone asked the board if both paths where needed or could one be a viewing area. Mr. Austin and Mr. Baskerville stated that would be a code question for the CEO. Mr. Tallone stated there was an asphalt path put from the back corner of the tennis courts running east/west on the south edge of the Skate Park which will also be accessed into the ninety (90) car existing parking lot. Mr. Tallone would like to change the parking lot to crushed stone. Mr. Austin stated that would be a code question for the CEO regarding ADA compliance. Mr. Tallone asked if the area between the tennis courts and the Skate Park requires ADA accessibility. Mr. Tallone explained the design of the park and its features are not very large. The two features on the west side of the park are 30 inches high and according to the CEO anything 30 inches or below does not require a handrail. The feature that is the bowl/mini ramp

section is about 48 inches but the slope off the backside of that feature would not be more than a foot high every foot across. Mr. Austin stated staff does not see that the parking lot or parking lot access proposes an impediment to the existing site features. Mr. Baskerville does not see issues with the proposed access road or nine (9) parking spots. Mr. Baskerville questioned if there is ADA access from the main lot to the Skate Park. Mr. Tallone stated there are no current ADA facilities or accessibility at Stevens Park. Ms. Lawrence asked how the nine (9) spaces was arrived at. Mr. Tallone stated the nine (9) parking spaces was based on general flow within existing park spaces. Mr. House asked if there is proposed lighting. Mr. Tallone stated no, the hours will be dawn to dusk. Mr. House asked Mr. Tallone to correct the ADA slope from 12:1 to 1:12. Mr. Austin recommended the planning board "coordinate with other town officials to determine ADA compliance with regard to ramps, access ways, and parking stalls". Mr. Houghton stated there are historical concerns with parking at this property and drainage. Mr. Houghton questioned if the 7,100 SF of concrete and intensification of use for these facilities are accommodated in this plan to ensure that the drainage conditions are no worse and the parking can accommodate this use. Mr. Houghton explained the Highway Department has raised concerns with security of the DPW property. Mr. Houghton stated a 2018 warrant article to provide \$30,000+ for the site plan selection process to enable the committee to evaluate town properties to find the most suitable site for this type of recreational facility which resulted in the Skate Park Committee picking Stevens Park as the most suitable site for this facility. Mr. Houghton questioned what the board would need to see in terms of the site plan approval to ensure that drainage is no worse, because of the long-standing, historical abutter complaints with drainage, and there is a residence level of complaints regarding parking. Mr. Baskerville stated the board would need details a regarding the storm water management. Mr. Austin stated staff sees a proposed drainage system can be designed to take a 50 year storm or concentrates the flow equivalent to a 50 year storm, there's no detail of what the average rate and quantity of flow off site is and how this does nor does not add or reduce that number. Mr. Baskerville explained there should be a storm water management area which includes what it is made of, how deep it is, what the gravel is, how is it used, what are the state specs, and include an engineered drainage calculations to include information regarding those calculations. Mr. Baskerville stated concern with the access way and the compacted dirt parking area and would prefer to see a paved parking area. Mr. Austin questioned if the \$265,000 cost is for the concrete envelope and drainage under the Skate Park. Mr. Tallone stated yes, the cost estimates for the design are \$278,000; \$265,000 plus the \$23,000 left over from the first warrant article. Mr. House questioned what the slope is of the of the asphalt access path from the main parking lot is and stated it does not appear to be ADA compliant. Mr. Baskerville questioned if there is an existing fence between the Skate Park and the DPW facility. Mr. Austin stated no. Staff stated storm water and engineering design of the skate park feature and storm water analysis on the parking area are needed to go forward. Mr. Canada questioned if the storm water management can be contained within the site or if it can go into the town's existing storm water management. Mr. Austin stated it cannot leave the property at any greater rate or quantity than exists

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prior to instructions of the element. Mr. Houghton explained the funds provided last year were to be used for design and engineering.

# **b.** Third-Party Engineer Update

Mr. Austin stated MS4 permit is active and involved and staff will be proposing some site plan regulation changes with regard to storm water in response to MS4 and this will require more third party engineering. The third party engineer will review planning board approved plans and be a construction site manager in evaluating compliance with the planning board's storm water conditions, and will be on an extended retainer to perform post construction, annual maintenance of various facilities and improvements. Mr. Austin explained he spoke with Paul Connolly regarding upcoming projects and Mr. Connolly stated he retired in January. Mr. Austin worked with the Town Administrator to draft and send an "RFP" requesting letters of interest to a number of local firms to be returned March 20, 2019. Mr. Houghton requested staff circulate the letter which was sent and name the six (6) firms who received the letter.

## **c.** Storm Water Regulations (time permitting)

Mr. Baskerville explained that he and Mr. Roseen met to go over the storm water regulations. Mr. Roseen made the corrections and Mr. Baskerville made corrections. Mr. Baskerville stated he has more concerns and will send one to Mr. Roseen and one to staff so when it comes before the board most of the concerns will be dealt with.

### 5. Adjournment

Mr. Houghton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 pm. Mr. House seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.