



TOWN OF
STONEHAM
MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD
781-279-2695

STONEHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

(in accordance with provision of M.G.L. c.30A, §§ 18-25)

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

Town Hall Hearing Room

7:00 PM

Members Present: Chair Frank Vallarelli, Daniel Moynihan, Jr, Marcia Wengen and Terrence Dolan. Associate member William Perry was also present to sit on the Special Permits for 22 Valley Road and Rockville Park.

Also present at the meeting: Town Clerk Maria Sagarino acting as Planning Board Clerk, Attorney Charles Houghton, Mark Samson and Valerie Giglio-Samson, Mike Santullo of Sanco Builders, David & Judy Schurgin, Dan Votipka and Mason Gillespie, Frank Petrillo and Jim Castellano.

The Chair brought the meeting to order at 7:01PM and introduced the members of the Board that were present and explained the procedure for the public hearings this evening.

Mr. Vallarelli read the legal notice into the record for 22 Valley Road as follows:

“You are hereby notified that the Stoneham Planning Board acting as a Special Permit Granting Authority will hold a Public Hearing WEDNESDAY EVENING, April 10, 2024 at 7:00 pm in the Hearing Room, Town Hall, 35 Central Street, Stoneham, MA to hear all persons interested in the petition of Mark Samson, 22 Valley Road, Stoneham, Massachusetts for a Special Permit pursuant to Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15 Section 4.2.4.1 to add an Accessory Dwelling (Family Apartment) to the lower level of 22 Valley Road. A plot plan of 22 Valley Road by ABV Survey by Thomas M. Killion, Professional Land Surveyor and a plan by Sabbagh Associates, Inc, Professional Engineers were filed with the petition. The plans may be seen daily except Friday afternoon in the Office of the Town Clerk.”

Mr. Vallarelli invited Valerie Giglio-Samson to speak on the petition. Ms. Giglio-Samson explained that there was an existing apartment when they purchased the house on Valley Road. Their contractor had gone to get a building permit and it was brought to their attention that the apartment required a Special Permit. They are seeking a Special Permit to make a legal accessory dwelling for her mother to live in.

Mr. Vallarelli read the standard comments into the record by the Police, Fire and Building departments. There was some discussion with Ms. Giglio-Samson about addressing the comments provided by the departments particularly the window in the basement to assure that it is an extra point of egress as mentioned by the Building Commissioner.

Mr. Vallarelli opened the public hearing. Seeing no members of the public present for comment, Mr. Moynihan made a motion to close the public hearing which was seconded by Mr. T. Dolan. All members present voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Moynihan commented on the well drafted plan. It meets all of the requirements under section 4.2.4.1. Mr. Moynihan made a motion to approve, incorporating all department comments including the window in the basement. Mr. T. Dolan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted in favor 5-0.

Mr. Vallarelli read the next legal notice for Rockville Park Special Permit into the record as follows:

“You are hereby notified that the Stoneham Planning Board, acting as Special Permit Granting Authority, will hold a Public Hearing Wednesday evening, April 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hearing Room, Town Hall, 35 Central Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts to hear all persons interested in a petition for a special permit by SANCO BUILDERS LLC, of 82 Bedford Road, Woburn, MA for a Special Permit pursuant to Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15 Section 4.3.3.1 to construct a three story 46 unit Garden Style building on Rockville Park, Stoneham, MA and associated parking under and at grade. A plan dated March 25, 2024 by Dragani Engineering Group LLC entitled “Rockville Park Stoneham MA” shows the proposed building of 46 units and may be seen daily except Friday afternoon in the office of the Town Clerk.”

Mr. Moynihan recused himself from this matter and leaves the meeting at 7:19PM. Mr. Perry would sit in on the matter.

Mr. Houghton represents Sanco Builders. The property encompasses 143,000 square feet and is located in the Residence B District. Mr. Santullo purchased the Sinclair and Robinson houses at the top of the hill. Initially they were going to take the houses down and make open space adding 16 town houses which were approved. Townhouse style is no longer feasible. They are now seeking to build 46 units in a single building. There would be lower density and it meets the parking requirements. The grade of the building slab is changed so the building has been moved about fifteen feet. They have redesigned the subdivision road which is going to create a new road and cul de sac. This requires a Special Permit for the units, Site Plan approval and Conservation Commission. They would be required to have six affordable units under the bylaw. By doing apartments you can rent them for 80%. If you condo you can sell for a third of what it costs to build. They cannot afford to build condos now due to the affordable component. Mr. Houghton reiterates that there would be six affordable units which is calculated by 12% of the first thirty units and 15% of the units over thirty. For the parking there will be 31 spaces at grade and 48 underneath.

Dan Dragani the engineer on the project appeared to explain the plan to the Board. He talked about keeping some of the slope as a vegetative buffer, the plans for screening and explained the proposed replacement of the existing water and hook up to the sewer line. This project would allow neighbors up there to access sewer.

Mr. Vallarelli asked about the parking spaces under. Mr. Dragani stated there are 48 spaces underneath. Mr. Perry asked about an oil separator tank. Mr. Houghton stated there would be one. They will be going back to Conservation.

Mr. Vallarelli read the Fire and Police department comments into the record. Mr. Vallarelli assumed they expected a lot of blasting. Mr. Houghton stated they would offer the preconstruction inspections to abutters.

Mr. Perry asked if a traffic study had been done. Mr. Houghton indicated that they had done one in 2019. That is one of the reasons for the gate which was mentioned in Fire Dept comments. Mr. Vallarelli continued to read comments by the Director of Planning, the building Commissioner and the DPW comments. The DPW Director pointed out that the waivers being sought were not listed on the plan.

Mr. Vallarelli opened the hearing up to the public. One of the abutters James Albiani asked about the gate. Mr. Houghton stated that the gate is not shown on this plan but on the recently approved plan for the Glendale Road subdivision. Mr. Albiani also expressed a concern about traffic.

David Schurgin, 224 Park Street has a concern about blasting effecting Mosley Park. The preconstruction surveys were mentioned. Mr. Churgin expressed concerns about traffic stating that if you turn right from the project onto North Border Road many people drive into Mosley Park to turn around.

Dan Votipka at 10 Glendale Road also made comments about the terrible traffic and tons of cars. With 46 units plus the Glendale development it will be worse.

Mason Gillespie, 3 Mauriello Drive had been present at the previous hearings for the 16 units originally proposed. He loves what the developer has done. He has a concern about trash. He would like to see fencing or tall trees to prevent the wind from blowing this trash down into the gully. He spends a lot of time making sure that it is kept free of debris.

Mr. Houghton and Mr. Santullo mention that it is an order of conditions by the Conservation Commission to keep trash out of the area.

Judy Schurgin, 224 Park Street stated that the previous traffic study was just at the point that there was a light at the entrance to Mosley Park. They were assured there would be no impact. The traffic wouldn't back up from Rte. 93 but it does. In the morning it backs all the way up to the former Friendly's. She is concerned about the number of cars. Mr. Houghton stated that DCR and MassDOT have been working on a plan for the intersection at Main and North Border Road. They had proposed a roundabout that has yet to come to fruition. Mr. Houghton mentioned that the numbers on the 2019 study were minimal when there were a total of 30 units between this and the other site on Glendale. Glendale Road has now been reduced to seven additional units. They have a permit from DCR to make some improvements.

Ms. Wengen asked how the improvements at Friendly's might solve the Mosley Park problem. Mr. Houghton said it won't solve that problem but might improve the back up at that intersection. She also asked if there was something that could be done to help Mosley Park. Mr. Houghton suggested they put up no u turn signs to deter people turning around in their complex.

Mr. Perry believes the 2019 traffic study is antiquated. He's concerned about this. Mr. Houghton stated Fallon Road was already developed. Nothing else has changed in this end of town.

Mr. Houghton added that this development would add \$150,000 in tax dollars over what it is now.

Mason Gillespie asked who would be offered the blasting survey. Mr. Vallarelli responded that it would be offered by all residents up there. Mr. Santullo added that they send blasting information out certified mail.

Dan Votipka brought up more traffic concerns about only one way of getting in and out of the development. Mr. Houghton did explain that DCR is requiring them to T up the intersection into the development. The Board explains that traffic enforcement is part of the issue and must be enforced by the State in certain areas. Mr. Dragani added that a do not block the box could be painted on the roadway. Mason Gillespie asked about widening the two lane road and Mr. Houghton responded that they had asked DCR to remove a boulder to make that possible but they had said no because it was somehow considered historical.

Mr. T. Dolan was comfortable with the 16 units, he is concerned about traffic and believes 30 more units is overkill down there with the other development added too. It'll be a nightmare. Mr. Houghton responded that this was 16 but the other was more at 12. Mr. T. Dolan stated that his other issue is that this is now apartments not condos. Mr. Houghton responded that they cannot make it work as condos. These are now two bedroom apartments instead of the three bedrooms proposed in the 16 unit development. There is a ton of site work to do and the cost is too much to do townhomes.

Mr. Houghton added that they have added land and spent an additional million dollars to acquire the other houses. He said they can't spend millions and not build more units. They cannot make condos work with the inclusionary bylaw.

Mr. Houghton stated they can analyze the traffic again if that's an issue, but condos cannot work. Mr. Houghton added that they have added land and spent an addition million dollars to acquire the other houses. He said they can't spend millions and not build more units. They cannot make condos work.

Mr. Santullo reminds the Board that he came before them with the last round of rezoning in 2023 and told them that he was considering one building with this many units. Nothing like this was said then. He wanted to know what the change of heart was. Mr. T. Dolan mentioned that the Board didn't have input from all of these people like they do today. He added that he agrees with Mr. Perry that a traffic study should be done. There's more going on now and the traffic is awful. Mr. Houghton stated that we need to grow. We can't just shut the doors because of traffic. We need the tax dollars. Mr. T. Dolan agrees we need the tax dollars, but he doesn't want renters. He wants people with some skin in the game. Mr. Houghton said that if it's an owner or a renter, paying three thousand dollars a month, those people will care about where they are living. Mr. T. Dolan asked Mr. Houghton if he has seen the police log in the paper for the amount of calls to Fallon Rd.

Mr. Perry believes the biggest thing is the traffic impact study. It needs to be reconsidered. Mr. Santullo stated that they have redesigned the entrance and have the permit from DCR. Mr. Houghton asked if the Town wants Stantec to look at the study again. Mr. Houghton added that DCR looked at traffic too for 18 months before issuing their permit.

Dan Ghergis 224 Park Street has concerns about people turning around in Mosley Park. He asked about stop lights. Mr. Houghton indicated that the State regulates where you are allowed to put stop lights. Ms. Wengen asked if Stantec could look at the turn around in Mosley Park? Mr. Schurgin mentioned that a lot of people go in and exit out the back of Mosley Park and the trustees got it removed on Waze direction app which was showing Mosley Park as a cut through street.

Hearing no further comment, Mr. T. Dolan made a motion to continue the public hearing until May 8, 2024 at 7PM. Mr. Perry seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor (4-0).

Mr. Moynihan re-entered the meeting at 8:26PM to continue with the agenda. Mr. Perry exited the meeting at 8:37PM as there were no other Special Permits being heard.

Mr. Vallarelli read the legal notice for the rezone at 147 Franklin Street into the record as follows:

“You are hereby notified that the Stoneham Planning Board will hold a public hearing at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, April 10, 2024 in the Town Hall Hearing Room, 35 Central Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts to hear all persons interested in an article to amend the Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15, Zoning Bylaw as contained in the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 6, 2024 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15, Zoning Bylaw by amending the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Stoneham to add to the Residence B District the following described property at 147 Franklin Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts from its current split zone of Residence B District on Franklin Street and Residence A District in the rear to all Residence B District.

The land in said Stoneham, situated on the Southerly side of Franklin Street, bounded and described as follows:

Being a portion of land as described in a Deed at Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds in Book 82173, Page 76, beginning One Hundred Three and Forty-Nine Hundredths (103.49) feet from the Northeasterly corner of said lot thence:

SOUTHEASTERLY: by land of the Town of Stoneham Seventy-One and Ninety-Five Hundredths (71.95) feet, thence

WESTERLY: by land now or formerly of Rao One Hundred (100.00) feet, thence

NORTHERLY: by land now or formerly of Joyce One Hundred Two and Eleven Hundredths (102.11) feet, thence

EASTERLY: on a curve with a radius of Five Hundred and Eighty-Two Hundredths (500.82) feet, a length of One Hundred One and Fifty-Two Hundredths (101.52) feet, to the point of beginning.

Containing 8,377 square feet, more or less.

The complete text and maps relative to the proposed amendment are available for inspection during regular business hours in the Office of the Town Clerk.”

Mr. Houghton appeared to explain that he had filed this citizen’s petition to rezone a portion of 147 Franklin Street from Residence A to Residence B. The parcel is currently split zoned as Residence A and Residence B and this zoning article is seeking to rezone the entire parcel to Residence B. Mr. Houghton also explained why they were seeking the change. Mr. Petrillo is proposing to build six units. They’d build them smaller and market for about \$700-800,000. They would be three bedroom townhouses.

Mr. Moynihan asked if there would be variances required. Mr. Houghton responded that after a successful zoning change at Town Meeting, there will be some variances, Special Permit and Site Plan required. There would be no need for Conservation or the Stormwater Board.

Ms. Wengen asked if there would be an HOA. Mr. Houghton responded that there would be a homeowner’s association.

Hearing no members of the public present for comment, Mr. Moynihan made a motion to recommend favorable action at Town Meeting. Mr. T. Dolan seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor 4-0.

Mr. Vallarelli read the final legal notice for the 32 Summer Street rezone into the record as follows:

“You are hereby notified that the Stoneham Planning Board will hold a public hearing at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, April 10, 2024 in the Town Hall Hearing Room, 35 Central Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts to hear all persons interested in an article to amend the Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15, Zoning Bylaw as contained in the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 6, 2024 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Stoneham Town Code, Chapter 15, Zoning By-law by amending the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Stoneham to add to the Residence B District the following described property at 32 Summer Street, Stoneham, Massachusetts.

32 Summer Street

The land in Stoneham, being shown as Lot B on a plan entitled “Subdivision of Land in Stoneham, Mass., dated March 26, 1962, which plan is recorded at the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds as Plan No. 1416 of 1962, at Book 10137, Page 430, and further bounded and described as follows:

SOUTHWESTERLY: by Summer Street, as shown on said plan Ninety-Five and Sixty-Eight Hundredths (95.68) feet, more or less;

NORTHWESTERLY: by land of Vayo, as shown on said plan, Ninety-Five and Fifty-Eight Hundredths (95.58) feet, more or less;

NORTHEASTERLY: by Lot A, as shown on said plan, One Hundred Forty-Three and Twenty-Six Hundredths (143.26) feet, more or less;

SOUTHEASTERLY: by Pond Street, as shown on said plan, Sixty-Five (65.00) feet, more or less; and

SOUTHERLY: by a curved line forming the junction of Pond and Summer Streets, Fifty-Five and Ninety Hundredths (55.90) feet, more or less.

Containing, according to said plan, 13,180 square feet, more or less.

The complete text and maps relative to the proposed amendment are available for inspection during regular business hours in the Office of the Town Clerk.”

Mr. Houghton appeared to explain to the Board what his intent is with this citizen’s petition to rezone 32 Summer Street. In the 1930s this parcel was rezoned to retail. It was a gas station at one time. Most recently it has housed Armstrong Ambulance storage. They could not have employees stay overnight. The ambulance company is an existing nonconforming use in the Residence A District. The parcel had changed from retail to the Residence A District in the 1980s. Mr. Houghton is now seeking to rezone the parcel from Residence A to Residence B District. He explained that there are already many two family homes on the street. Mr. Houghton said that his client is looking to build something like what sits on the former Dairy Dome property. Mr. Vallarelli mentioned that it would be four units.

Thomas O’Connor, 9 Walnut Street is a direct abutter in favor of the zoning change. He is currently looking at the back of the Armstrong Ambulance building which is not attractive.

Scott Lebeau of 35 Summer Street states that what they are proposing is nicer. He does have a concern about cars going out onto Summer Street. He also is concerned with spot zoning. This would be one lot in the middle of Residence A. He would prefer that someone bought it to build a small single family home.

Mr. Houghton thought someone might suggest this is spot zoning. He has some case law that shows it would not be. Mr. Houghton said that the current building doesn’t fit in the neighborhood. They want to build something that does.

Mr. Lebeau would want this before he’d want an apartment building, but this hearing is just for the zoning. If it is rezoned at Town Meeting, he wouldn’t necessarily have to go forward with the plan he has now. Mr. Vallarelli asked if this would require variances. Mr. Houghton stated that this would require variances, Special Permit and Site Plan. Mr. Lebeau would be notified of those hearings as an abutter.

Mr. Houghton’s client, Mr. Castellano, also pointed out that he could turn it into a preschool or a church.

Mr. Lebeau is just concerned as he used to live on Pleasant Street and Gould Street has Residence A & B and Mr. Maisano was able to put his building up right in the middle.

Mr. Moynihan reminded everyone that they are just here for zoning. It will be up to Town Meeting to decide whether or not it is rezoned. He said Mr. Lebeau should go to Town Meeting.

Hearing no other comments from the public, Mr. Moynihan recommended favorable action on the article at Town Meeting. Mr. T. Dolan seconded the motion. All four members present voted in favor 4-0.

Mr. Moynihan made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. T. Dolan. All members voted in favor 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Maria Sagarino
Town Clerk

Documents and other exhibits used by the Planning Board during this meeting to be made part of the official record but not attached to these minutes:

A plot plan of 22 Valley Road by ABV Survey by Thomas M. Killion, Professional Land Surveyor and a plan by Sabbagh Associates, Inc, Professional Engineers

A plan dated March 25, 2024 by Dragani Engineering Group LLC entitled “Rockville Park Stoneham MA” shows the proposed building of 46 units

Full text of the Town Meeting articles presented for the rezoning of 147 Franklin Street and 32 Summer Street.

Portions of the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Stoneham dated May 1, 2023