Montague Planning Board

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February 23, 2021 6:30 PM

Meeting held remotely in accordance with the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G. L. c. 30A, § 20, relating to the 2020 novel Coronavirus outbreak emergency

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Ron Sicard (Chair), George Cooke, Elizabeth Irving, Fred Bowman
Absent: Bob Obear, Matt Lord
Town of Montague: Walter Ramsey (Planner)
Meeting was recorded.

6:30pm Meeting is opened by Ron Sicard, Chair.

6:30pm *MOTION by E. Irving to accept the meeting minutes of January 26, 2021. Seconded by G. Cooke. VOTE: FB (AYE) GC (AYE), EI (AYE), RS (AYE). MOTION PASSED.*

6:31pm: Approval Not Required (ANR) #2021-02, filed by Mark and Mary Bordeaux to subdivide a 533 square foot parcel at 31 Montague Avenue (Lake Pleasant) to be conveyed to an abutter. Property is identified as Assessor's Map 37 Lot 28.

The survey had two iterations. The Planner requested a revised plan from the surveyor to include a locus map, set backs and zoning references. He reminded the surveyor of Montague notation requirements.

Ron Sicard notices a discrepancy between the two plans, listing 588 and 533 square feet being transferred. George Cooke believes that in the revised plan the surveyor worked from an angle point off the pool deck to keep the 10' setback. The official square footage being transferred is 533.

Planner clarifies that after this transfer the Bordeaux parcel will remain conforming. The Drumgools' lot (abutter) will remain non-conforming in terms of lot size. The survey also suggests possible encroachments on Conservation Commission Conservation property. The Drumgools have reached out the Planner to contemplate a possible solution to the encroachment. It will take additional survey work.

MOTION by G. Cooke to Approve (ANR) #2021-02, filed by Mark and Mary Bordeaux and to authorize the chair to sign the plan. Property is identified as Assessor's Map 37 Lot 28. Seconded by F. Bowman. VOTE FB (AYE), GC (AYE), EI (AYE), RS (AYE). MOTION PASSED.

Planner Report

- The Montague Tree Committee has proposed a Tree Protection Bylaw. The Planner has proposed an alternative draft that modifies their proposed bylaw to fit a model tree protection bylaw issued by the state. The Planner is working with the tree committee on a compromise. The Planner is looking for policy input from the Board. Elizabeth Irving has some notes and will send them to the Planner. Topic is tabled for future discussion.

- The Governor has signed a Housing Choice Act that has narrow implications to zoning in Montague. Under certain circumstances it is easier for Town Meeting to pass bylaws as a simple majority (51%) rather than a vote with 2/3 approval. These circumstances include: multi-family, mixed use and open space developments, and accessory dwellings by right or special permit. Parking reductions through rezoning with special permit can also pass with a 51% majority. Some special permit categories have been changed, likely translating to mixed-used development downtown with 10% affordable housing, or parking reductions if it results in increased housing. For Montague that means 3 of 5 members rather than 4 of 5.

- The Planner reports that the Winter Parking Plan is going well with 15 participants. Although it is a clean-up challenge for the DPW, the program will likely become permanent.

- The Town received a downtown recovery award but hasn't heard back from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative. The project probably won't start until later in March.

- The Planning Department received a special permit from Hydro Flower, LLC. The Board will receive the application for the next meeting which will include a community outreach session.

MOTION by F. Bowman to ADJOURN. SECONDED by E. Irving by VOTE: FB (AYE), GC (AYE), EI (AYE), RS (AYE). Meeting is adjourned ***6:55pm***

Approved by: _____ Date: _____