**ACTON PLANNING BOARD**

**Minutes of Meeting**
**February 8, 2005**
**Acton Memorial Library**

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Planning Board members Mr. Greg Niemyski, Mr. Christopher Schaffner, Ms. Stacy Rogers, Mr. William King, and associates Mr. Edmund Starzec and Ms. Ruth Martin were in attendance. Also present were Town Planner, Mr. Roland Bartl and Assistant Planner, Kristin Alexander. Absent was Mr. Gary Sullivan. Ms. Lauren Rosenzweig (Chairman) arrived after 8:15 PM.

Mr. Niemyski called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

## I. Citizens Concerns

None.

## II. Consent Agenda

Item A, Minutes of 1/25/05, and Item C, Recommendation of Street Acceptances, passed by unanimous vote.

Item B, QRCC Amendment – maintenance building and related car parking, was pulled for discussion. Mr. Bartl explained the proposed change from a 2-story to a 1-story maintenance building and to relocate parking spaces. It would reduce floor area but increase building foot print and impervious cover. He confirmed that the Planning and Engineering Departments reviewed the proposal and recommend approval with conditions as stated in the Planning Department 02/04/05 memo. Mr. Schaffner moved to approve the amendment with the recommended conditions. Mr. King 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

## III. Reports

**CPC:** Ms. Rogers reported that, on 2/3/05, the CPC reached preliminary consensus on the 2005 CPA funding recommendations except for the Habitat for Humanity proposal. The CPC will finalize its decisions at its next meeting. The preliminary consensus is on the CPC webpage. No other reports were given.

## IV. Appointment – Quail Ridge Country Club (QRCC) Environmental Monitoring

Attending were Mr. Steve Graham and Mr. Jay Peabody of Graham & Harsip, P.C. representing QRCC.

Mr. Graham referred to Mr. Bartl's 11/16/04 e-mail to Ron Peabody regarding the QRCC Special Permit Decision 02-06 (Decision) requirement for annual environmental audits beginning this year. Mr. Graham stated that the objective of the appointment is to reach an agreement with the Planning Board on how to comply with the Decision other than through the Audubon International Bronze Signature Program.

After some discussion, the Planning Board reached consensus. Mr. Bartl will ask Mr. Toohill of ENSR (the Planning Board's present review consultant on the project) for a price of, and his availability for, drafting a scope for the annual environmental audit. Mr. Bartl will report back at the 3/8/05 Planning Board meeting. A draft of the audit scope is to be circulated to Conservation, Health, and QRCC for comments. When finalized, the scope will come to the Planning Board for approval. Once approved, the Town would issue a request for proposals for the environmental auditing service. Mr. Graham and the Planning Board agreed that QRCC would pay for the drafting of the scope and for the annual environmental monitoring.

## V. Appointment – Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Update

Tom Michelman, Friends of the BFRT, presented the following information to the Planning Board:

- The BFRT will be a multi-use trail extending from Lowell to Framingham. It is planned in 3 phases:
  - Phase 1 – owned by the State Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) - 7.5 miles from Lowell to the Rt. 225/27 intersection. The design is done. Construction might start this year.
  - Phase 2 – EOT-owned – goes from the Rt. 225/27 intersection through Sudbury.
  - Phase 3 – CSX-owned – stretches from Sudbury through Framingham.

- In Acton (part of phase 2), the BFRT parallels Rt. 27 from Carlisle south toward Great Road, which it crosses just east of Rt. 27; then runs alongside Great Road to Concord Road, and on toward the Concord Rotary. The Town funded a $25,000 feasibility study for the Acton trail portion. It found bridge abutments in relatively good shape and noted the extra wide r.o.w. making equestrian use an option.
- Mr. Michelman reported that the Friends of the BFRT are now incorporated as a "non-profit," so they can fundraise. The Friends have already been attending town events, working with Town staff, trying to run education programs/events, and working with members in other BFRT towns.
- When asked how trail users will cross Great Road, Mr. Michelman replied that the feasibility study proposed an at-grade crossing with a pedestrian-activated signal. The Town is now requesting $75,000 in CPA monies for BFRT start-up funding which will include a feasibility study to ascertain with MassHighway a safe method to cross Great Road.
- The Friends are hoping for 80% federal funds, 0-10% state funds, and the rest from the Town. Under the Federal Transportation Enhancement Program, the Town is responsible for preparing the "25% Design" stage for about 50% of design cost. It appears that ultimately the Acton portion will cost the Town between $500,000 and $1.5 million.
- Mr. Michelman said that the Friends of the BFRT will meet with the State to discuss Concord Rotary redesigns to ensure a crossing for the trail to West Concord. The key to federal transportation money is connecting to the West Concord train station. The State has picked an engineer and design for the rotary, so things are moving along now. The Friends plan to stay involved with the State to keep the rotary project moving and to ensure a safe trail crossing over Route 2.
- Mr. Michelman stated that trail parking lot locations in Acton have yet to be determined. When asked about road cyclists, Mr. Michelman stated that road cyclists probably wouldn't use the trail.
- According to Mr. Michelman, the trail does not connect to the Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT) but there may be ways to build other trails to connect the BFRT and ARRT in the future.
- When asked how abutting land owners felt about the BFRT, Mr. Michelman reported of no direct contacts to date, but that there has been enough publicity for people to have become used to the idea.

## V. Amateur Radio Towers – Draft Zoning Article Discussion

The Planning Board reviewed and discussed a staff draft article. The consensus was to amend it as follows for purposes of the public hearing discussion on 2/22/05:

- Allow amateur radio towers by-right - no special permit;
- Restrict the number of towers to one per lot;
- Require that the tower be dismantled and removed within 60 days after the operator's ownership or tenancy, or the expiration, cessation, or rescission of the operator's FCC license;
- Prohibit lighting on a tower;
- Make an exception to the setback requirement for a tower if it is attached to the principal structure;
- Eliminate optional Sections 3.8.3.6.d) – raising/lowering device; and 3.8.3.6.f) – setback equal to height and dish antennas.

Mr. Niemyski moved that the Planning Board vote to change the maximum allowable height of a tower including its antennas to 80 feet. Mr. Schaffner 2nd. The motion passed 3-1-1.

## Other Business

Mr. King moved that the Planning Board appoint Mr. Niemyski as Vice Chairman and Mr. Schaffner as Clerk of the Planning Board. Ms. Rogers 2nd. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.