**PLANNING BOARD MEETING- APRIL 20, 2022**

The NB Planning Board held their monthly meeting at the Police Department Conference room April 20, 2022 at 7PM. Bill King called the meeting to order at 7pm. In attendance were planning board members Bill King, John Tripp, John Turner, James Grace, Clerk Kimberly Bent and absent member was Michelle Petraitis. Attending from the public: Jeff Howland, Mona Castonguay, Gloria Turner, Brandon Avery, Ellen Freyman, Dan Bonham, Giovanni Tracanelia and Fabrizio Garborini.

Chair King asked for a motion to approve the emailed minutes for March 16, 2022 as sent. John Turner made the motion to accept, and John Tripp seconded, and unanimously approved by all members.

A plot plan was presented by John Turner for 25 Ryan Road and Lot 1 known as 27 Ryan Road. Survey was done and presented to the board by HS&T Group, Inc. from Worcester, MA. John and Gloria Turner own both lots and would like to combine the two lots to be only 25 Ryan Road, where their house is located. Chair King made note on the Plot plan as follows “ Note: Plan combines two lots into one. “ John Tripp made the motion to approve plot plan combining two lots into one, seconded by James Grace and unanimously approved by all members.

**MAIL:**

Town of Spencer: Approved request to withdraw without prejudice 5 Donnelly Road multi-family development.

Town of Spencer: Notification to abutters Spencer ZBA regarding Denise Lacroix- 188 Charlton Road requesting relief from front setback to rebuild new home same location as previous structure.

Resident of North Brookfield: Mr. James Laney sent a letter regarding his property at 8 Ryan Road. The ZBA denied his request for relief from front and side setbacks. Mr. Laney has decided to move the structure to conform to the town bylaws instead of appealing the ZBA’s decision. Mr. Laney thanked all boards, committees and building inspectors for their time on this matter.

Chair King asked for motion to adjourn regular meeting and open public hearing. John Tripp made motion, seconded by John Turner, and unanimously approved by all members.

**Public Hearing 7:15pm**

Chair King called the public hearing to order regarding Vibram site plan review and special permit. Chair read the advertised notice of the public hearing which was in The Spencer New Leader, March25 & April 1. Chair wanted to make a note and inform Vibram that this advertised public hearing was only for site plan review, but Chair King’s interpretation of the zoning bylaws is that the Planning Board issues all special permits in the Downtown Development District. B. King has been in contact with Chair of ZBA and is waiting on more information. The Planning Board will be voting on the Special Permit for front setback after the site plan review presentation at this hearing. Ellen Freyman , the lawyer for Vibram, spoke and wanted it on record that her office interrupted bylaw as the ZBA needed to issue both Special Permits and that is why they went before the ZBA. Ms. Freyman thanked the Chair for hearing this issue tonight in order to cover all issues/requests given the bylaw ambiguity.

Ellen Freyman started the presentation off with a background on what the plans are for Vibram. Vibram came to town in February with preliminary plans to add new entry way with elevator to existing building. The new addition is 675 square feet. Vibram will be adding 900 square of factory space to the existing 400 square feet of office space making a total of 1300 square feet of office space in renovations. Vibram will be moving all their offices into the factory/office building and making the existing office building into private lodging for guests who are visiting the factory. Vibram other factories in Italy and China.

Dan Bonham presented site/building plans from McClure Engineering, Inc., Charlton MA and the Berkshire Design Group, Northampton, MA. He presented Board with drawings on the proposed entryway, sidewalks, crosswalk, parking, and green space being added. John Tripp asked if they had been in contact with Highway Dept. and they answered they had. They are changing the parking at the factory building. There will be three spaces at an angle instead of nose in, to make it safer for backing out into traffic and three parallel parking spots for the public. They are proposing replacing sidewalk and retaining wall, as they need to bring the grade down to make viable access. They will repair the sidewalk and wall up to the building corner, but will consider replacing all of the sidewalk and stone wall to the end of the street. John Tripp offered to get them some information from Techo-Bloc to replace the fieldstone wall.

The new entryway will be made of glass sitting on an 18” solid wall. Inside the entry way there will be access to an elevator which will go to two office floors and third floor conference room. The third floor conference room will be added. An analysis of the solar glare from the glass entrance way was provided and Dan explained that it will be museum glass. Museum glass has about 50% reduction in sun glare.

Vibram has declined offers to move, so they will make this investment to stay in North Brookfield. Ellen asked to have the peer review engineer option waived. One reason is they really are not having any engineering done and due to timing, they are ready to start right away. A peer review can take a couple months. Dan explained they do not have a civil engineer per say for this project but have engineers for structure , plumbing, electrical, mechanical, as well as an architect and landscape architect.

Chair King expressed the Board’s gratitude to Vibram for working with them and investing in our town. He said he is not clear where the elevations are from the 3D drawings, so he suggested that a peer review engineer may be appropriate. The Board needs to make sure the town’s perspective is protected and that School St. drainage, parking and streetscape works best for all. He asked that all information presented tonight be put in narrative form, so Chair can use it to assist writing the certificate of decision. Chair asked about a shading device/awning that was in a previous design. Dan explained there will be a solid aluminum projection one foot wide and 9.5 feet high with a small pitch that goes around the glass entrance way. This will help with sun glare, snow and rain while walking outside. John Tripp requested they leave the 3D drawings, so he could show to Jason at the Highway Dept. There will be new landscaping around the entryway, as well as two EV charging stations.

John Tripp had some questions about bump outs and how they will work with snow plowing. Dan will submit more detail drawings clarifying elevations. Chair asked if they could extend the sidewalk work and railing all the way to Main Street. Dan said they are willing to have a discussion with the town on this matter. Vibram is trying to also help with using local companies as much as possible. Chair asked if Vibram could make the windows more traditional New England style. Dan presented drawings of 9 and 12 divided pane windows. Vibram prefers the 12 panes if the must change from their original design. All of Board agreed that they prefer the 12 pane windows. Vibram will consider this request.

The Chair introduced peer review engineer, Jeff Howland. He had a couple questions: 1) There is a monitoring well, what is its purpose and can it be removed? Dan had a conversation with Scott McGinley and his understanding is that it is to monitor soil and it can be moved. Jeff inquired if this was placed by DEP? 2) How do the bollards and bump outs affect plowing? He suggested that Vibram move their parking spaces out farther from the building, so it makes a straight line for plowing. 3) Would you have roof drains? Dan explained the roof drains are internal, new and existing. 4) What will happen to the storm drain at the corner of School and Grove Streets and the trench drain? Dan said they have to look into that further.

Jeff will get all questions, as soon as possible, to Vibram, so not to hold up any decisions or construction.

Chair then opened meeting to public comment. Brandon Avery said he liked all the improvements and appreciates the extra greenery but had one concern about the stone wall heading towards Main Street. He would like the field stone wall to remain. Dan explained that the proposed wall will have a texture to it and rebuilding the wall with stones is not feasible. Ellen explained they will give the Board a few options for the replacement material.

Moana Castonguay had a concern about snow falling off the awning and it was explained that it is only sticking out a foot and has a pitch, so no snow should accumulate. She also expressed how excited and pleased she was with Vibram’s proposal and its investment in our town.

John Tripp made motion to approve Vibram’s site plan review proposal contingent on Highway Superintendent approval of the bump outs and anything else pertaining to the Highway Dept., peer engineer review letter and any plan revisions being done, narrative of presentation, and building material for the replacement side walk wall along School St. to Main Street, seconded by James Grace and unanimously approved with contingencies by all members.

Chair then moved on to the Special Permit for front setback. They currently have a setback of 3.92 feet from the property line and need to move another 3.02 feet closer leaving only .6 of a foot from the property line. John Turner made motion to accept the proposed setback requiring a Special Permit, seconded by John Tripp and unanimously approved by all.

Public hearing closed at 8:15PM.

Chair asked for motion to return to regular Board meeting, John Tripp made motion, seconded by John Turner and unanimously approved by all members.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mona Castonguay had questions about her Chase Rd. decision from last July with the variance from the ZBA. Mona explained to the Board that she had not received the official notification from the Town Clerk. The Board stated that the Pl. Bd. Clerk will follow up and secure the decision document for her recording.

John Turner gave an update on Master Plan/Open Space Plan. The Open Space Plan is about 60 pages and after two months, the State has returned their review requests. There 13 items that need to be changed or added to the plan before final approval. The State gave preliminary approval, so the Conservation Commission and Town can apply for grants.

The Assessors requested donation of Board LPA hours for tax map updates. The Master Plan Committee has enough money left in their budget, so the Board discussed their donation. John Tripp made a motion to give the Assessors 10 LPA hours, seconded by John Turner and unanimously approved by all members.

All members of the Planning Board want to THANK James Grace for his service to the Board. We will miss his expertise. Thank you, James.

Next meeting will be May 18, 2022.

Motion to adjourn made by James Grace and seconded John Tripp, unanimously voted to approve by all members.

Minutes are four pages.

Completed by Clerk Kimberly Bent