

March 10, 2020
Planning Board
One Lafayette Street
Wakefield, MA 01880

Upon notice duly given the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Board of the town of Wakefield was called to order by Chairman William Spaulding at 7:04 p.m.

Members present: William Spaulding, Matthew Lowry and William D'Amore

Also present: Paul Reavis / town planner and Linda Donaldson / clerk

1. Minutes of the previous meeting / February 11, 2020

A motion was made by Mr. Lowry, seconded by Mr. D'Amore, to approve the minutes of February 11, 2020 as presented.

VOTED: Unanimously in favor

At this time the agenda was taken out of order.

4. 7:00 p.m. Public hearing – definitive plan / 10 Mansion Road

Atty McGrail was present along with James Gattuso of JCG Investments, LLC who is the owner and principle of the property. He said that the board is aware of what has transpired at this location in the last few years. The property was subdivided in the 1970's and twenty-three lots were created on Winship Drive and Mansion Road. The lot that the mansion is situated on is 50,000 square feet. One person owned it and after some domestic issues in 1998 the property was vacated and it all went downhill from there. There was a fire at the property in the past and after sitting for so long the property fell apart after a number of years and vandalism played a big part. It went through the financial crisis and the foreclosure commenced. The final owner of the property was Wells Fargo which is stated on Mr. Gattuso's paperwork.

Atty McGrail said that the town wasn't neglectful and tried to reach out to the people who owned the property but it went ignored and was open to vandalism. There was a website online where kids would meet up and go there. The property was for sale and people were bidding on it for different venues; and at a certain point some of the banks would walk when it wasn't beneficial for them to take it.

Mr. Gattuso made a bid on the property and it was awarded to him and at that point Atty McGrail approached the abutters asking what they would like to see go in there. The neighbors would like to see two single family homes.

At this time Atty McGrail submitted photos to the board of the deplorable state of the property and said that Mr. Gattuso had three different people come in to assess if anything historical

could be salvaged and there was nothing. There were 250 calls to the property since 2015 according to the police department logs.

Mr. Gattuso said that there's a huge in-ground pool with disgusting water in it that's going to have to be pumped out and they'll remove the concrete and close the whole thing up. The building will be razed and he's gone through the channels that he needed to with the historical commission. There was a six month delay with the process which has now ended.

Atty McGrail said that one of the lots has only 83' of frontage so they requested a variance from the z.b.a. which was granted and the appeal period has passed; and a waiver of the frontage from the planning board as part of the definitive plan is being requested. Fire Chief Sullivan has no problem with the razing of the current dwelling nor the construction of two, single family dwellings.

Mr. Gattuso plans on hiring a landscape architect to make sure everything fits in and he said that beautiful architectural constructed homes will be built, similar to those in Wellesley. Also, there are no plans for these houses to be flipped and he already has the lawns in place, etc.

In answer to Mr. Lowry it was noted that all back taxes have been paid. Mr. Lowry said that he would be a little more comfortable with knowledge of what's going to happen up there. He's concerned with what type of houses will be built.

Mr. Gattuso replied that the colonial style houses will be between 3,100 and 3,500 square feet with two car garages and two stories each. He owns a demolition company and said that the cost to raze the building is approximately \$190,000. The property is assessed at \$1.85 million and costs about \$9,000 every month for taxes.

At this time the hearing was opened up to audience members.

Peter Melanson of 62 Winship Road asked if there's anyone present speaking in favor of what's there now and there were no hands raised.

An abutter on Winship Drive said that people flood through her property going into the building and telling the owner (her) where to go.

Mr. Gattuso said that he would be living in one of the houses.

Mr. Melanson wants to make it clear that the developer wants to do the right thing and he thinks it's the right thing to do right now.

Debra Napoleone who has lived at 5 Winship Drive for four years said that her backyard abuts the mansion and her pool is right there and they can't believe how the mansion property began deteriorating beginning a year after they moved in. She said that there were more mosquitoes last summer and they're dealing with rats too. Four years ago she was told that the property

was for sale and said that the neighborhood would look so much better with what Mr. Gattuso wants to do. She said if a tree were to fall from that property it would go into her pool and would ruin the landscaping. They don't see anything negative about this whole aspect and would like the plan to move forward.

Atty McGrail will vouch for Mr. Gattuso who has spoken to all of the abutters as something needs to be done to address these problems.

John Shevlin of Winship Drive has lived here for forty years and the last two decades it's gotten worse and worse he said. The owner, Mrs. Whitaker, would file for bankruptcy every time.

Bronwyn DellaVolpe of Cyrus Street has no problem with the demolition or the two single family homes proposed for the lots.

Jake Connolly of 2 Fielding Street said that the worst case scenario would be if they flipped the property there still would be two nice houses built there.

Mr. Lowry asked if this is approved tonight when would the demolition occur.

Atty McGrail said forty to forty-five days and asbestos removal and other things have already been done by Mr. Gattuso whom he vouches for and he also knows most all of the abutters.

A motion was made by Mr. Lowry, seconded by Mr. D'Amore, to close the public hearing.
VOTED: Unanimously in favor

A motion was made by Mr. Lowry, seconded by Mr. D'Amore, to approve the definitive subdivision plan on 10 Mansion Road dated January 7, 2020 by PJF Associates and to grant the waiver pursuant to frontage and waivers of other requirements.
VOTED: Unanimously in favor

Mr. Lowry advised the abutters that it's up to them that what gets built up there adheres to their wishes and is suitable, etc.

6. Public hearing: zoning map change, 3 Chestnut Street, 5-5A Chestnut Street, 345 Main Street, 4 Avon Street from general residence to business district
AND #7. Zoning text change, §190-31, add new paragraphs L & M

Atty McGrail said that this pertains to the Savings Bank where Robert DiBella is the president and chief executive officer and sponsor of these two items along with twenty residents for a recommendation to town meeting. The bank wants to put an addition onto their building and connect it all. The purpose of the bylaw amendments will allow them to do what has been proposed to the board.

Atty McGrail said it's critical to our town to be able to work with the banks and for them to stay in the downtown area. He went over and explained the rezoning on the plan that he presented and they propose to clean everything up. For town meeting all of these lots are being requested to be rezoned all business. The library is being included in this zoning change and if they don't want to be included this could be amended at town meeting and they would just be taken off and remain as currently zoned. The lot line move will make it accommodate to "the business" or to "Main Street".

Bronwyn DellaVolpe of Cyrus Street said that this shouldn't be muddied because everyone knows how it is to try and make amendments on town meeting floor.

Atty McGrail said that he would meet with the library trustees and that the planning board is only making a recommendation to town meeting.

Mark Simeola whose business is at 4 Avon Street is very happy to go along with this and he is here to support the Savings Bank; and they've done a fabulous job with the Odd Fellow's Building. Whatever they do with this property he feels will be very tasteful and he supports it wholeheartedly.

At this point in the meeting the clerk was excused at 8:50 p.m. for personal reasons and Mr. Reavis took over the notetaking at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Donaldson, Clerk