

**TOWN OF GRANBY  
GRANBY CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 26, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Mark Fiorentino via Zoom, Meg Jabaily, Abby Kenyon, Eric Myers, John Oates, Martin Schwager, Jonathan Martin and Suzanne Goldberg, BFJ

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

M. Jabaily called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She noted the meeting will run until 8:45 to allow time for public comment.

**2. ACTION ON THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2025**

On a Motion by M. Schwager, seconded by J. Oates, the minutes of February 26, 2025 were approved unanimously.

**3. BFJ UPDATE:**

**a. Status of Work/Timeline**

- J. Martin reviewed the timeline and noted they are currently in Phase IV (developing preliminary concepts). The public workshop is scheduled May 15<sup>th</sup> with the expectation of the plan being complete in early June.
- M. Jabaily noted the committee asked for deliverables and priorities of what they wanted to be incorporated into the plan, as well as where the information came from.
- S. Golberg provided a summary of the process and noted they took some concepts and goals from the 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development, the Affordable Housing Plan and information obtained through public outreach, i.e. walkability, environmental sustainability, business connectivity, etc., which help the plan and design concepts.
- J. Martin reviewed the proposed circulation network for pedestrians and vehicles, which included expanding the parking lot behind The Bears Den; a proposed sidewalk/pathway behind Frontier coming out behind Citgo; options for parking at the Bank Street/Hartford Avenue parcel, a greenspace and mixed-use development.
- J. Oates asked why a parking lot would be enlarged but not connect to Merchants Way. Additional parking is needed at the post office and CVS and connecting sidewalks from a parking area would be beneficial.
- M. Schwager felt walkways behind buildings will create a challenge as that is where business tend to keep their dumpsters, storage, etc.
- J. Martin pointed out the ideas are conceptual and up for discussion. He noted there is a lot of interest in the property along Bank Street, which could be a parking lot with a buffer between the homes to the east; a linear park or small mixed-use development.
- M. Fiorentino noted the plan needs to work for those who need zoning approvals. In addition, he believes the plot on Bank Street is too small for development. He feels areas along the edges, especially those that abut residential areas, should have some stronger zoning restraints.

- M. Jabaily added there should be some information regarding car circulation and parking, i.e. what times are the busiest, how much traffic, etc. J. Martin stated that would fall under an engineering report if needed.

#### **b. Discussion of Zoning Ideas**

- The existing zoning consists of three areas. J. Martin noted one zone had been discussed: The Granby Center Zone with some expanded uses. He discussed permitted uses; special permit uses and reviewed some recommended zoning changes in the Center Area Zone.
- Option I: Granby Center and slightly different regulations for bulk center. This would provide three separate zones and provides the option for smaller lots and the ability to control the area with a slight adjustment in bulk regulations.
- Option II: Slight adjustment in some of the front yards and side yards would remain the same.
- M. Schwager inquired if the town hall complex could be included in the center zone, which may allow for the creation of only two zones.
- E. Myers had hoped for a plan with one zone that would include the edge, the commons, and the center.
- M. Fiorentino noted single family uses under permitted uses should be eliminated so as not to create conflict; gas stations should not be allowed as they do not fit with walking and dining areas and suggested 'bulk standards' where one district can have special use permits in different areas.
- A. Kenyon noted Option II is preferred. It is easier and simpler to administer.
- M. Jabaily stated she is in favor of it being easier to access and buffering existing neighborhoods.
- M. Schwager believes if the center area is broadened outward, it will compromise the core and there will be a cost to the original goal.
- J. Martin discussed proposed parking requirements. M. Fiorentino is supportive of being creative with parking but leery of relaxing parking standards within multifamily uses. E. Myers pointed out landowners will need to be on board regarding parking.

#### **c. Updated Design Concepts**

- Discussed in BFJ Update (#3)

### **4. Discuss May 15<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting**

At the committee's next meeting, BFJ will review the presentation and process for the public workshop. The workshop will include a brief presentation followed by roundtable discussions. M. Fiorentino agreed with the format and noted the circulation plan and public space should be included in the presentation.

### **5. Response to Previous Discussion and Comments:**

A. Kenyon replied to some comments she has heard from members of the public and some committee members.

- b. Frontier Building Access** – This was formerly State property that was turned over to the Town when Park Place was terminated and the dead end was created.

- c. Utilities - There were questions regarding utilities which was included in BJB's memo. There is mapping of the sewer which is owned by the Town. The town also has maps of Salmon Brook Water. Mapping is available on the town website under the Affordable Housing Plan. A study of the sewer system (i.e. gallons per day, anticipated flow moving forward) was done by Tighe and Bond which is posted on-line as part of the Board of Selectmen Meeting packet. In regard to build out based on square footage, she stated it is standard to look at bedroom count as opposed to square footage regarding sewer usage. Once completed, this information will be submitted to WPCA.
- d. 26 Hartford Avenue – There was a question inquiring if this piece was acquired at the time of the Geissler's site development. There is nothing on the land records to indicate the property was encumbered and there are no storm water features tying Geissler's to 26 Hartford Avenue.

## 6. Action Items for Next Meeting

- Expansion of Center Zone to include Town Hall Complex
- Demolition Delay Ordinances

## 7. Public Session

- **Bob Flannigan of Woodcliff Drive** - The town does not own the center properties, and he questioned why a multifamily building would be constructed next to a historical building. He also expressed some environmental concerns, i.e. sewer usage and runoff, dumpsite behind Station 280. He would like to know why the sewer usage number increased so much and expressed concern about sewage runoff into the Farmington River from the Simsbury sewer plant.
- **John Morgan of Salmon Brook Street** stated he was in attendance on behalf of the Historical Society and noted broadening the center area would disperse the economic activity. He believes parking regulations are tough and the developer/owner should provide parking. The historic zone needs protection and it cannot be protected by allowing more uses into it.
- **Terry Hahn of 6 Allen Place** would like to see sidewalks through parking lots and not behind buildings. She suggested more labels on the drawings in public presentations and questioned who would own a parking lot at 26 Hartford Avenue and who would monitor it. She felt the statistics regarding the number of children in rental units should not come from New Jersey numbers and Goman & York supplies better statistics. Viable open space should be added, not just green space and there is no reason for units with three and four bedrooms in the core. The height of 45' buildings next to single residential homes is overwhelming. No change in charts should be clarified. There should be a reduction in parking for second floors. Market studies mixed use is based on neighborhood and survey comments. She feels it should be an unbiased look on current economics. Would like to add viable open space and impervious surface instead of 'building coverage'.
- **Michael Fusick of Northwoods Road** inquired where the design stems from and what is driving mixed use housing? The workshops revealed the public is interested in walkability, inclusive design, environmental sustainability and beautification. With Station 280 and The Grand, he doesn't understand the idea of more mixed-use housing. He is concerned the sewer capacity will be consumed and the subsequent cost of replacing the pump station. Zoning changes will make the town vulnerable to more developers who will utilize these changes and create dense development. The area will be further congested and less attractive. He feels this process should be taken slowly.

The Public Session was closed. M. Jabaily will email the questions to the commission.

A. Kenyon reported Planning and Zoning is meeting in April. They are not considering any zoning changes and there is not an application before them regarding this study. The commission will be provided a brief update of B&J's work.

## **8. ADJOURN**

**ON A MOTION** By E. Myers, seconded by J. Oates, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kane  
Recording Secretary