



TOWN OF HOPKINTON

OFFICE OF THE PLANNING BOARD

TOWN HALL
18 MAIN STREET
HOPKINTON, MASS. 01748
(508) 497-9755

January 28, 2004

Wayne Davies, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
18 Main St.
Hopkinton, MA 01748

Re: **Stagecoach Heights Comprehensive Permit Application**

Dear Mr. Davies:

The Planning Board has reviewed revised plans dated through Sept. 5, 2003 and the letter dated Jan. 19, 2004 from Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, LLC (FST) to the Board of Appeals, relative to the comprehensive permit application submitted by Stagecoach Heights LLC for 44 multi-family units on Wood St. The Board has the following comments and recommendations:

1. The road system has been modified so that there is one double-barreled entrance into the development from Wood St. There are three other such roads in Town, and they do seem to work adequately from a traffic flow perspective, but the Board has aesthetic and safety concerns.

The road would create a long straight section, which will most likely encourage excessive vehicle speeds. Since there will be pedestrians in and around the development and children waiting for the school bus at Wood St., there should be some attempt to either introduce curves into the road or shorten the straight section. The Board suggests consideration of the following alternatives:

- A. Delete the portion of Road B between building #1 and building #3. This section of road serves no units. All traffic would use the road which passes between the detention basin A and the sewage disposal system. This road is designed to be 20 ft. wide. If its width is increased to 22 ft. (traveled way/pavement width), then it would meet the Minor Street provisions of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, which are designed to serve 10 to 50 units. It would also eliminate a major portion of the straightaway.

OR

- B. There does not seem to be a reason for Road B to be a double barreled road from the intersection at building #1 to the intersection at building #3. Therefore, this could be narrowed to be a conventional roadway, and curves could be introduced in this section. The Board recommends that the road in this section be designed to meet the design standards for Minor Streets, consisting of a 22 ft. wide traveled way.

The Board recommends that the roadways in the development meet the design standards for Minor Streets in the Subdivision Rules and Regulations, with the exception of the double-barreled portion. Minor Streets are designed to serve 10 to 50 units, and have a traveled way (pavement width) of 22 ft. A portion of Road B is shown at 28 ft. wide, and the remainder of the roadways are designed to be 20 ft. wide. The Board does not recommend roadways that are excessively wide, which encourages increased vehicle speeds, increases the amount of stormwater runoff, and detracts from the overall appearance of an area.

2. The plan does not show any proposed light poles in the development. If there is to be pole-mounted lighting, the applicant should submit a photometric plan for review by the Board of Appeals. The Planning Board recommends minimal lighting on the site, shielded fixtures, and no spill of light off-site.
3. The plan shows a single row of Jack Pines along Road B near Rt. 495. The Board believes that the screening would be more effective if the number of trees was increased, and the trees are planted in staggered rows. The purpose of the screening is to mitigate both visual and noise impacts. The noise from the highway will increase in the surrounding area when the trees are cut in the development, so as much mitigation in this area should be provided as possible. In addition, a plan should be prepared to address future screening if a portion of the trees should die as well as address unforeseen screening needs after the development is constructed.
4. The Board understands that the affordable units will be scattered throughout the development, but recommends that their placement within buildings be scattered as well, so that not all of the affordable units will face east toward the highway and the most noise.
5. The Board has reviewed FST's letter dated Jan. 19, 2004, and recommends that the plans be modified or additional information provided to accommodate FST's recommendations.
6. The Intensity Schedule table on the plan has not been changed to reflect the change of two units from 2-bedroom to 3-bedroom. The number of bedrooms in the table should be "90" instead of "88".
7. The Board continues to be concerned about the density of the project and the environmental impact of changing a rocky, hilly, wooded site into a flat, open area, which will require significant blasting and earth moving. These concerns were outlined in previous letters to the Board.
8. In its capacity as Earth Removal permitting authority, the Planning Board frequently addresses the earth moving activities that occur on a site during construction. The Board of Appeals may want to include the following condition of approval to address this issue. Similar language is standard in subdivision, Garden Apartment, and Senior Housing Development approvals:

A plan shall be submitted to the Board of Appeals prior to construction showing the location of where earth will be stockpiled on site. No earth products shall be delivered to the site which are not for use on the property. No earth shall be stripped or excavated

and removed from areas of the site unless for road, infrastructure, home or lawful accessory use construction. No earth processing operations shall occur on the site, unless earth products are to be combined and/or mixed for use on the property. All piles of stockpiled earth shall be stabilized with adequate dust and erosion controls. All piles of earth shall be removed from the site upon completion of construction of the road and infrastructure. Any piles remaining after that time shall be solely in conjunction with an active permit for construction of sewage disposal system, building or lawful accessory use. Any violation of this provision may result in enforcement action.

9. The applicant is requesting a connection to the municipal water supply for domestic service. The Board understands that the municipal water system is at capacity and that the Town is very close, if not at, its DEP established water withdrawal limit. The Board also understands that water main extensions for domestic purposes have not been permitted for new development in several years, due to the limited supply. The applicant should address the impact to the Town's water supply if it were permitted to connect to the system, and propose mitigation to alleviate these impacts.

The applicant should also provide information to justify extension of the water main to this particular property in light of the limited supply and the need for others to be served by municipal water in areas with existing failing private wells or possible contamination. In addition, other comprehensive permit applications acted upon within the last few years were not granted municipal water by the Board of Appeals. If water is to be granted, the Board should indicate why this particular project has priority over other established Town needs and other projects already in the pipeline.

In the Board's experience, it appears as though there is more than enough land on this parcel on which to site a private water supply well to serve the development. The applicant has not provided information which indicates that sufficient water to serve the development cannot be found on-site.

10. The Applicant has not addressed compliance with the 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan, as outlined in previous correspondence to the Board (enclosed).

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the revised plans. Please contact the Board or Elaine Lazarus, Planning Director, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

John H. Coolidge
Chairman

Cc: Stagecoach Heights, LLC