

HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD

Monday, January 24, 2005 7:30 P.M.
Hopkinton Town Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Coolidge, Chairman; Jaime Goncalves, Vice-Chairman; Sandra Altamura; Evan Ballantyne; Mark Abate; Brian Herr; Claire Wright, Pamela Duffy, Scott Aghababian (7:45 P.M.)

.....Cobi Wallace, Administrative Assistant

1. Annual Report

The Board voted unanimously to submit the 2004 Planning Board Annual Report as revised to the Selectmen’s Office to be included in the Town Report.

2. Design Review Board Appointment

Mr. Coolidge noted that Beth Kelly, member of the Historic District Commission, recently resigned from the Design Review Board. Ms. Wright noted that the Design Review Board is recommending that the Planning Board appoint a citizen-at-large instead of another HDC member to replace Ms. Kelly. She added that Gail Fallon, an alternate member till now, would be an excellent choice to fill the vacancy. Jeff Doherty, a member of the Design Review Board in attendance, stated that Ms. Fallon would fit the position very well. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Gail Fallon as a full member and start the advertising process for filling the vacant alternate position. The Board noted it will thank Ms. Kelly in writing for serving on the Design Review Board. Ms. Wright noted that Design Review meets more frequently now that they also review minor site plans.

3. Minutes – Planning Board Meeting, January 10, 2005

The Board voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of January 10, 2005 as amended with the names of Conservation Commission members in attendance for the Joint Meeting.

4. Continued Public Hearing - Colella's Supermarket - 61 Main Street - Site Plan Review

Dale Danahy, Colella's Supermarket, Inc., applicant; George O'Neill, Gorman Richardson Architects, architect; and Julius Diogenes, CDW Consultants, Inc., site design engineer, appeared before the Board.

Mr. Aghababian arrived at this time.

Mr. O'Neill stated they met with the Design Review Board last week where they discussed lighting, signage and pedestrian safety aspects of the proposal. He stated that with respect to signage, the idea is to maintain the primary Colella's Supermarket sign

and relocate the other sign to Grove Street at the new building entrance. He added the sign would not have the same shape but would be similar in terms of material used and type of gilded lettering. Mr. Coolidge stated that the signs need to comply with the Town bylaws and that there should be a policy to coordinate the Colella's Supermarket signs with those for the other businesses in the building.

Mr. O'Neill referred to comments made by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, LLC (FST), the Board's engineering consultant. Mr. Coolidge noted that just prior to the meeting an email was received from FST addressing some or most of the concerns.

Mr. O'Neill noted they have addressed the lighting issue. He stated some adjustments and slight revisions were made to the photometric plan including the installation of 3 single and 3 double 16 ft. light poles to maintain zero spillage while providing lighting for safety and convenience found to be adequate by the Design Review Board. In response to questions from Ms. Altamura, it was noted that the light source cannot be seen at all and that there will be no additional lighting at the front of the building.

Mr. Goncalves asked about security lighting, and Ms. Danahy noted that all lights go off around 9:45 P.M.

The Board discussed the potential vehicle/pedestrian conflict at the bank drive-up window. Ms. Danahy noted that any barrier there would need to be removable to accommodate snow plowing. Ms. Duffy stated that a gate would force people to stop. Ms. Altamura noted she has serious concerns about this design and thinks it is dangerous. Mr. Coolidge noted that this issue might have to be looked at again as the bank will be an integral part of the store layout. He noted some type of barrier is necessary to prevent people from going right through. Ms. Wright stated the area will need to be plowed and that a creative solution is being sought.

Mr. Coolidge noted that there will be a loading dock where the bank drive-through window is now. Mr. Herr asked about trucks being parked there. Ms. Danahy noted that the trucks will be in and out before the store opens. Ms. Danahy added that there is enough room for two vehicles to pass each other plus parked cars. Ms. Altamura noted it is asking too much of that side of the building and that this is a bad place for a new platform. Mr. Herr stated he understands why the loading dock is there as the business owner does not want this in front of the store. Ms. Altamura noted that the Board also needs to look at traffic flow within the site under site plan review. Mr. Diogenes stated that this is a change to an existing building and that theoretically they could put a wall there and still comply with the bylaw. Mr. Goncalves suggested putting some pavement striping at the end of the loading dock so that people will realize they should not be in that area.

Ms. Duffy referred to correspondence expressing residents' concerns regarding the introduction of a Dunkin' Donuts coffee shop as part of the expanded Colella's Supermarket. Mr. Coolidge stated that it is an allowed use in the zoning district. Ms. Danahy noted that there are no agreements yet.

Mr. Diogenes referred to FST's review comments. He noted that he is comfortable with the total lot area produced by surveying. He stated that there will be no noticeable increase in traffic as the primary intent of the project is not to increase sales but to increase storage area for inventory purposes so that people do not have to make multiple trips. He noted that signage will be designed in accordance with the Town bylaws. The Board asked about the signs for parking compact cars, and it was determined that it would be best to install a single sign with arrows on the fence in order to avoid having a lot of different metal signs sticking out in a lot of places.

The Board discussed landscaping and screening. Mr. Diogenes referred to Design Review Board recommendations. Ms. Danahy agreed to dumpster screening with a fence along properties on Main Street. Mr. Herr expressed concern that the landscape plan would not be followed, and Mr. Coolidge noted that a bond guaranteeing completion will be in place. Ms. Danahy noted she spoke to Jeff Doherty and that the planting of spruce trees along 20 Grove Street will be perfect for that location. Ms. Wright noted that she was not convinced and that she wanted to make sure that there would be screening low to the ground, not only branches at the top.

Ms. Danahy noted that Austrian pines and a fence in the dumpster and loading area will be fine. He stated that the main entrance will accommodate the SU30 vehicles although it is a little tight, but they do not think it should be widened. Mr. Diogenes noted that they feel they have successfully separated vehicle and pedestrian traffic on the site. He referred to the FST comment regarding an additional stormwater treatment unit. Mr. Coolidge noted that FST is looking for more detail. Mr. Diogenes explained that the Conservation Commission already approved the design and that it is now on the plan. Mr. Herr asked about landscaping details for the front elevation and plantings in front of the coffee shop and the loading dock. Ms. Danahy noted that something will be added there. Ms. Wright asked about trash receptacles near the recycling machines, and Ms. Danahy stated that there will be two on each side. Ms. Wright asked for clarification regarding the proposed concrete planter detail and Mr. O'Neill stated he thought the separation would be achieved by some type of removable gate or fence. Mr. Coolidge stated some other style planter would be acceptable but definitely not a concrete planter.

David Adelman, 183 Pond St., questioned whether the expansion would generate more traffic, given the fact that there will be an additional commercial use in the form of a coffee shop, and asked whether the Planning Board would consider this a potential problem. Ms. Danahy noted it is not Colella's intent to bring in new business but that they want additional storage so that they can better serve their customers. Mr. Coolidge noted that the retail square footage of the supermarket is not increasing but is being re-arranged and that the parking area did not increase significantly. He added that there will be more truck traffic early in the morning.

The Board voted 7 in favor with 2 abstentions (Altamura and Ballantyne) to approve the Site Plan with the following conditions:

1. Prior to the commencement of demolition of 18 Grove St. and during construction, the property line with 20 Grove St. within the limits of construction shall be flagged.
2. During construction, the owner shall make every effort to ensure that soils are not tracked onto Grove St. by vehicles.
3. All entrance and exit turning lanes shall meet the minimum turning requirements of an SU-30 single unit turning radius.
4. All exterior lighting shall be directed downward, not upward or outward. Lights shall be off when the building is unoccupied, with the exception of lighting necessary for security purposes. A shoebox style light fixture with the flat lens on the bottom shall be used within the parking lot.
5. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from view from the ground.
6. The dumpster shall be screened with a wood stockade fence along the rear of the properties fronting on Main Street.
7. The drive-through/pedestrian conflict shall be resolved through the installation of a removable barrier in keeping with the exterior of the building.
8. The building owner is strongly encouraged to institute a signage program for the building with control over sign size, style, lighting and colors. The building signage should be coordinated with respect to each other and the style and architecture of the building.
9. A row of blue spruce shall be planted along the 20 Grove St. property line as shown on the site plan.
10. The plan shows spreading yew in the planter which defines the drive-through lane. The applicant should make sure that the type of spreading yew selected is suited for the location and does not spread too high or wide for the planter.
11. Plantings around the loading dock as shown on the building elevation drawings shall be added to the landscape plan.

5. 81P Plan - Spring Street - Richard Braden

Mr. Coolidge explained that this plan was endorsed by the Planning Board in November of last year but that the applicant needs a duplicate original for submission to the Land Court. The Board voted unanimously to sign the duplicate original with the request that the applicant provide copies for Planning Board and Open Space Preservation Commission records.

The Board took a 5-minute break to move the meeting to a larger room in order to accommodate the number of interested parties for the Whitehall Estates public hearing.

6. Public Hearing – Whitehall Estates –279 Wood St. – Garden Apartment Concept Plan

Mr. Coolidge opened the public hearing for the “Whitehall Estates” Garden Apartment special permit application. He stated that review of this proposal would definitely need more than one meeting, and announced that, at the conclusion of this evening’s discussion, the hearing would be continued on February 28, 2005, at 8:15 P.M.

John Thomas and Dan Feeney, Beals and Thomas, Inc., engineers, appeared before the Board to represent Wood Street Realty Trust/Ron Nation, principal.

Mr. Thomas described the development site. He noted there are currently two dwellings, one a historic house on Wood St., the other home 2,000 ft. in on the property. He noted they met with the Planning Board informally a couple of months ago where they presented a 45-unit development that was deemed to be too dense. He added that at that time it was felt that a boulevard-style road might have merit. Mr. Thomas noted that under current zoning they could do 10 conventional lots, 10 open space lots or a Chapter 40B comprehensive permit. He added they have now filed a garden apartment application for 35 new units plus 2 units to be located within the brick home with a maximum of 2 bedrooms/unit resulting in 74 bedrooms total. He stated there would be approximately 9 acres of open space at the rear of the property providing access to Lake Whitehall.

Mr. Thomas noted that 0.5 acres near Reed Park would be deeded to the Town of Hopkinton to improve playing fields. He stated that the proposed boulevard-style roadway would make it possible to preserve a row of sugar maples. He noted that the road would provide access to Reed Park and that the existing access would only be for emergencies. He explained that the new buildings would be 360 feet away from Wood St., 4 of the units are proposed to be affordable and that it would be up to the Town to determine how to administer these. Mr. Thomas noted that the recreation area would consist of tennis courts. Mr. Coolidge asked whether the Town land is needed to fulfill the Garden Apartment recreation area requirement, and Mr. Thomas noted it can be done without but that it would be good to plan it this way.

Mr. Feeney discussed the hydrological aspects of the site and explained that it is draining in 3 different directions. He added that a subsurface drainage system is proposed for aesthetic reasons. Mr. Feeney stated there is Town water in Wood St. to serve the development for domestic use and fire protection. He added that the development will have an on-site septic system. Mr. Feeney noted that should things not work out with the Parks & Recreation Commission, there is an alternative access plan but the house would still be used as a 2-unit condominium.

Mr. Thomas stated that no work is planned within the wetlands and buffer zone and therefore no filing with the Conservation Commission will be necessary.

Ms. Duffy referred to the existing brick house and asked whether there would be a shared driveway or whether a second driveway would be provided. Mr. Thomas noted that the brick house would share the driveway with the whole project subject to the master deed. Ms. Duffy asked for details about the old house. Mr. Thomas noted that there is a garage out back but that there are no details about that yet at this stage. He added that the number of bedrooms would not change. Ms. Duffy asked about the impact of the development on the Reservoir viewshed. Mr. Thomas noted that the distance from the units to Whitehall Reservoir is 1,200 ft. on one side and 500 ft. on the other. He noted that nothing would be seen from the reservoir but that people will be able to see the project from the boat ramp parking lot. Mr. Nation stated that generally the roofs of the units will be visible from the boat ramp and that during the winter one would be able to

see the porches as well. Ms. Duffy asked about the size of the buildings compared to the existing houses and how the mass of the development could be broken up. Mr. Thomas noted that it is an architectural challenge. Mr. Thomas indicated that the project would be geared towards an older age group but that they are not officially calling it a senior development. Ms. Duffy commented on the number of garage doors and Mr. Thomas noted that we live in an automobile driven society. Ms. Wright referred to an informal meeting with the Design Review Board (DRB) and noted that she did not realize it would look like this. Mr. Thomas noted that they tried to minimize the amount of pavement.

Mr. Ballantyne asked about the 100 ft. buffer requirement relative to adjacent properties. Mr. Thomas noted that in a couple of places buildings will not comply with this requirement, namely Reed Park and the existing house. Mr. Thomas stated the project was designed this way in order to maximize the amount of open space.

Ms. Altamura referred to the condominium floor plans and questioned whether one of the areas could potentially be changed to a 3rd bedroom. Mr. Coolidge asked whether this should be a question for the Building Inspector. Mr. Thomas stated that architectural changes can be made. Ms. Wright asked about the disposition of the old historic home. She stated that the proposal presented to the DRB on November 16, 2004, still showed 45 units and did not involve this old house. Mr. Thomas noted that the Planning Director had alerted them to a zoning issue and that the property with the existing home is needed to provide frontage for the development and that it has to be rolled into the project. He added that if a waiver was granted the developer might be able to sell the house off as a single family home. Ms. Wright noted that she does not feel a historic home should be used to enable a new development and that she has a problem with chopping it up into condominium units. Mr. Thomas indicated they would be very considerate and give it their full evaluation and possibly it could be separated out and be preserved as one unit.

Mr. Goncalves asked about environmental impacts. Mr. Thomas noted their application package includes a narrative that addresses environmental impacts in general terms. He indicated that fertilizers would only be used during the initial growing period. Mr. Thomas noted that the proposed stormwater infiltration system is superior to the use of detention basins and that the water will be pretreated before being discharged into the ground. Mr. Goncalves asked about the Town wells and Mr. Thomas responded the area is in the Water Resources Protection Overlay District but not within the Zone 2 of a municipal well. Mr. Coolidge noted it is possible that the Whitehall Reservoir Town wells might come back on line some time in the future.

Reference was made to the FST review comments, and Mr. Thomas noted that this is only a concept plan and that it seems that FST is asking for information which would not really be needed until the next stage. Mr. Coolidge noted that they would like to make sure that the project is viable before a concept plan is approved.

Mr. Ballantyne asked that a design be provided with and without the required 100 ft. buffer. Mr. Thomas indicated they could provide a layout plan.

Ms. Altamura asked about the walking distance to Wood St., and Mr. Thomas indicated it would be 1,500 ft. to the farthest point. Mr. Goncalves expressed concerns about parents driving the children to Wood St. and parking there while waiting for the school bus.

Ms. Duffy referred to FST's concerns about necessary cuts and fills. Mr. Thomas referred to the profile plan and noted they would have to ask for waivers from required road grades in order to avoid drastic cuts and fills.

Mr. Coolidge read an email dated January 24, 2005, from Mike Gildesgame, Mass. Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR), into the record (see copy attached). Mr. Coolidge noted that a lot of Mr. Gildesgame's comments involve issues to be addressed at a definitive stage.

Jim Weckback, 273 Wood St., addressed the Board, speaking also on behalf of his wife Nancy Weckback. He noted they live right next to the proposed development and are primarily concerned with the proposed type of roadway, infiltration area #2, and screening along their property. He referred to the Town's Design Review Board Guidelines and stated the proposed boulevard-style entrance would be out of character in Woodville with some homes dating back to the early 1900's built close to the street. Mr. Weckback requested that the Board deny the use of a boulevard-style road. Mr. Weckback also expressed concerns about the location of proposed infiltration area #2 with respect to his septic system, a row of maple trees, groundwater seepage through a fieldstone foundation into the cellar, and the viability of meaningful screening. Mr. Weckback submitted a letter summarizing his comments for the record.

Jonathan White, 54 Pinecrest Rd., Weston, addressed the Board. He noted he represents Brian Morrison and Susan Erdman, 22 Piazza Lane, owners of land adjacent to the site, and is also legally speaking as their attorney. Mr. White asked for clarification on the lower portion of the road area. Mr. Thomas noted that improvements to Reed Park, including a potential parking area and a multiple-use sports field have been shown for informational purposes only. Mr. Coolidge noted a land swap was mentioned. Mr. White noted that the style of the proposed buildings would be totally out of character for the area. He added that a Garden Apartment is not the right use for the land in an environmentally sensitive area. He added that they would like to see more than 15 ft. of screening taking existing elevations into consideration. He noted he is also concerned about the impact of the septic system and leaching field. Mr. White asked about the wetlands and Mr. Thomas noted that the Conservation Commission has issued an Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) for the property. In response to a question from Mr. White, Mr. Thomas noted that the southern path on the property is the only one to be maintained.

Brian Morrison, 22 Piazza Ln., presented an aerial map to illustrate the effect of the development on the viewshed. He noted that the homes will be highly visible from the boat ramp and the lake.

Carol DeVeuve, 282 Wood St., asked whether there would be any buffer between the loop road and Reed Park. Mr. Coolidge stated the plan shows there will be no buffer there and that the pine trees would come down.

Stephen Warren, 23 Parker Point Rd., asked about the marketing aspects of Reed Park being in such close vicinity to the new development.

Ken Lysik, 42 Parker Point Rd., asked about the maintenance of the tennis court and parking lot and expressed concerns about lighting. Mr. Lysik noted that they have lived there for 27 years and wants to know if the park will be closed at night. Mr. Coolidge noted that he does not have an answer and that Parks & Recreation will have to respond to that issue. Mr. Thomas noted they are not planning any improvements to the Town park. Mr. Lysik stated that the back end of the park has a problem every time it rains.

Ken Johnson, 31 Parker Point Road, addressed the Board on behalf of “Friends of Whitehall”. He noted he is here to present a petition and would like to read a statement into the record. Mr. Johnson read the statement into the record (see attached copy).

Ms. Duffy asked about the land takings done to create Whitehall Reservoir. Mr. Johnson responded that 7 properties were taken by eminent domain for that purpose.

Jacqueline Duffy, 276 Wood St., submitted three letters for the Board’s consideration.

Mr. Adelman referred to the initial land takings for the creation of the reservoir. He asked what would happen to the leach field and the so-called “saddle” in the land in case of flooding. He also expressed concerns about children having to potentially walk up to 1500 ft. to get to the bus stop, the viewshed from the cove, and the disposition of the old home. He asked about visibility of the project during spring and winter months and asked why it had to be a boulevard-style instead of a simple double road. Ms. Duffy responded that they would be able to preserve a row of sugar maples that way.

Andre Griben, 6 Winter St., expressed concerns about the proposal.

Sara Stedt, 184 Pond St. asked about the need to file with the Conservation Commission for this proposal, and Mr. Thomas noted that the Commission has issued an ORAD for the site and that it was determined that there was no need for additional filings. Ms. Stedt noted she had spoken to the developer and was under the impression that there would be no development within 1600 ft. of the reservoir and that the buildings would be Cape Cod style. She stated that it looks like Reed Park and the proposed development are together even though there is no relationship.

Steve Kelley, 14 Winter St., stated that he feels it would be more appropriate for the Town to pursue acquisition of the land. Mr. Coolidge noted he has talked to the developer and that the Open Space Preservation Commission is still interested although there are no active negotiations at this time.

Carol Mecagni, 226 Wood St., asked if it would be possible to provide a drawing that does not include Reed Park.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the public hearing to February 28, 2005, at 8:15 P.M. The Board noted it would check on reserving a bigger meeting room to accommodate a large number of people.

7. Articles for 2005 Annual Town Meeting

The Board briefly discussed the articles forwarded to it from the Zoning Advisory Committee proposed to be placed on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to place the following articles on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting:

- a. Open Space and Landscape Preservation Development in RLF Districts
- b. Water Resources Protection Overlay District – underground storage of propane
- c. Signs and Identification Devices
- d. Drive-Through Windows
- e. Driveways
- f. Dumpster Screening
- g. Residence A District – setback for animal enclosures
- h. Street Acceptances
- i. Accept Gift of Land – Springwood West subdivision

8. Multi-Family Housing Development

Mr. Coolidge referred to informal discussions held at the previous meeting with applicants proposing multi-family/senior housing developments. He noted that the Board can expect a lot of these applications in the future and needs to be prepared to follow the process. Due to time constraints, it was decided to place this item on the February 14, 2005 agenda.

Meeting adjourned – 10:45 P.M.

Cobi Wallace
Administrative Assistant

Approved: February 14, 2005