

Westwood Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2014
50 Carby Street
7:30 PM

Attendance & Call to Order:

Ch. Rafsky called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. WestCat TV was present and was granted permission to videotape the meeting.

Present: Planning Board members: Steve Rafsky, Steve Olanoff, Jack Wiggin, Bruce Montgomery and Chris Pfaff. Also present, Town Planner Nora Loughnane and Planning & Land Use Specialist Janice Barba, who recorded the minutes.

Consideration of Request for Reduction of Tri-partite Agreement Amount for Morgan Farm Estates

Summary:

- Ms. Loughnane informed the board that Lou Petrozzi submitted a letter noting progress on the required public improvements at Morgan Farm Estates and formally requested a reduction of the amount of funds secured by the tri-partite agreement. *(A copy of the "Request for Reduction of the Amount of Security" is available with these minutes.)*
- Ms. Loughnane informed the board that she requested confirmation of the work detailed by Mr. Petrozzi and whether it has been completed to the required standards by both Conservation Agent Karon Catrone and Town Engineer Jeff Bina. She said that Ms. Catrone confirmed that the required replication plantings are in place but stated that some of the erosion control measures require maintenance and/or replacement. Ms. Loughnane said that Mr. Bina was not able to inspect the underground utilities prior to the Planning Board meeting.

Board & Town Planner Discussion:

Board members briefly discussed the matter and agreed to approve this request pending satisfactory resolution of the outstanding issue with the Conservation Commission and satisfactory inspection by Engineering.

Public Comments:

None.

Motion/Action Taken:

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Pfaff, the board voted unanimously in favor to approve the Request for Reduction of Tri-partite Agreement amount for Morgan Farms Estates, with the conditions that the utility work and erosion control measures are completed to the satisfaction of the DPW and Conservation Commission.

Pre-application Conference to Discuss Proposed Shared Driveway Plan for 480 Summer Street

Summary & Presentation:

Ch. Rafsky welcomed Paul Sullivan, attorney for the owner of 480 Summer Street to discuss a proposed re-division of those lots.

- "Sketch Plan Lot Layout" dated 10-29-14 was presented to the Board. The plan depicted three reconfigured lots each with its own driveway with direct access onto Summer Street.
- Mr. Sullivan explained that the desire for additional driveways is to make the lots which have remained unsold for years, more attractive to prospective buyers. He said that separate driveways will make the lots more private and more marketable.
- Proposed driveways will be a similar grade to the existing driveway, with an initial 5-8% pitch and then flattening out.
- The existing right of way easement located on lot 8 (480 Summer Street) will continue to serve this lot only, in accordance with a previous Planning Board decision.

Board & Town Planner Discussion

- Ms. Loughnane said that a new Shared Driveway Special Permit and ANR will be required. She added that the existing Shared Driveway Special Permit is valid until 12-1-16.

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- In general Board members expressed dissatisfaction with the layout as presented; and Board members offered several comments and suggested alternatives that would hopefully be considered.
- Two board members agreed that a reduced sized subdivision road could resolve lot layout issues.
- Ms. Loughnane said that original intent of creating one shared driveway was to keep it as far away from the intersection and potential traffic hazards and to preserve more of the natural environment.
- Town Engineer Phil Paradis identified two main concerns; access and increased impervious surfaces. Mr. Paradis said that this subdivision would be a perfect candidate for a lane-type subdivision street; which would take away the burden of plowing and maintenance and will consolidate access.
- Ch. Rafsky suggested that Mr. Sullivan consider the Board's feedback and to revise the plans accordingly.

Public Comments:

None

Motion/Action Taken:

None needed.

Continuation of Public Hearing to Consider Proposed Far Reach Drive Definition Subdivision

Ch. Rafsky welcomed Project Engineer John Bensley and Attorney Chris Milton to the meeting.

Summary:

Ch. Rafsky stated that the purpose of tonight's discussion is for the Applicant's engineer to solicit guidance from the board on a new sketch plan of an Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) in an early stage before deciding whether to pursue OSRD or to stay with the conventional subdivision.

Highlights of Presentation by Project Engineer John Bensley

- Presented OSRD Sketch Plan - showed existing and proposed conditions with the conservation restriction in green, slopes greater than 15% in red. Most of the site is wooded and has been flagged showing trees 24" caliper and greater. Pond Meadow Brook and stone walls have been identified on the plan; exposed ledge, especially the back portion which could serve as the Open Space tract and the housing cluster areas on the left. The yield calculation allows six lots but he is proposing up to five houses on the site served by a short cul-de-sac.

Board & Town Planner Discussion:

- Mr. Wiggin commented that the purpose of suggesting development under OSRD was to provide a way to conserve natural and wetland resources; lessen the disturbance of earth in more efficient, less expensive and less intrusive ways than with a conventional subdivision. The suggestion was not given with the expectation that the applicant would suddenly want to maximize the number of lots with shared driveways and odd lot configurations.
- Ch. Rafsky said that he agreed with Mr. Wiggin's comments.
(Mr. Milton said that he envisioned that this process is going to be a lot longer process and expects that this process is going to be a lot more expensive for his client.)
- A board member said that the OSRD will allow for a reduction in lot frontage and lot width without a waiver.
- A board member said he was surprised to see the Applicant changing the proposal to include another house lot.

Public Comments:

G. Silver, 108 Far Reach Rd. – asked if the proposed lots meet the minimum lot requirement for Single Residence C. (Ms. Loughnane responded that the minimum lot size for OSRD is 10,000 sq. ft.)

G. Waterhouse, 136 Far Reach Rd. – asked why the remaining properties of Far Reach Estates do not have to be developed as a conventional subdivision.

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- A board member suggested that the original subdivision decision could have a condition of no further subdivision.

B. Delisle, 195 Skyline Drive – commented that any further subdivision should be developed in a similar manner that Far Reach Estates has been developed. She asked for clarification on what areas on the plan are considered not buildable.

G. Waterhouse, 136 Far Reach Rd. – commented that she wants the area to be maintained as wooded.

- A board member responded to this question and said that the only place that trees are protected is on land that has been designated as open space or located within 100' of a wetland.

R. Derubeis, 397 Far Reach Rd. – asked questions about how zoning amendments get changed. (Ch. Rafsky gave a brief explanation.) He also asked if land in a conservation restriction be reversed.

D. O'Dea – Far Reach Rd. HoA – Asked if the OSRD requires the open space to be contiguous.

Board & Town Planner Discussion continued:

- A board member suggested that the Applicant propose the original plan under OSRD as it is a quicker approval process and allows for greater flexibility and low impact design.
- Ms. Loughnane said that if the proponents decide to pursue an OSRD plan, then an OSRD-EIDR public hearing must be advertised. That hearing could be held concurrently with the ongoing Definitive Subdivision hearing, beginning on either December 2nd or December 16th, depending on the expected receipt of plans and application.
- Ms. Loughnane suggested that the board obtain the written consent of the Applicant for the selection of a peer review consultant at the third subdivision hearing session while awaiting further information on the scope of the proposed development.

Motion/Action Taken:

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Olanoff, the board voted unanimously in favor to continue this hearing until Tuesday, December 16th at 8:00 p.m. in the Champagne Meeting Room, 50 Carby Street.

Public Hearing to Consider Special Permit for Reduction of Parking Requirements for Hogan Tire – 14 Washington Street

Ch. Rafsky welcomed engineer Tim Paris, Applicant Ed Hogan.

Town Planner's Summary:

- Revised plans were recently received for the Hogan Tire property.
- Building Commissioner Joe Doyle reviewed the building reconfiguration plans and determined that 15 spaces will be needed to comply with the Zoning Bylaw parking requirements. There is thus no need for the applicant to request a Special Permit for the Reduction of Parking Requirements.

Mr. Paris confirmed that the revised and newly configured plans comply with the parking requirements and make the request for a Special Permit unnecessary. He asked the board for permission to withdraw the application.

Public Comment:

S. Zinno, Lull Street – A resident interrupted the process and requested that the board hold on its motion to allow the applicant to withdraw the Special Permit application until after the continuation of the EIDR public hearing.

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Motion/Action Taken:

Action Taken: Ch. Rafsky and other board members agreed with this suggestion and decided to move immediately into the continuation of the public hearing to consider EIDR approval for 14 Washington Street.

Continuation of Public Hearing to Consider EIDR Approval of Proposed Alterations at Hogan Tire - 14 Washington Street

Ch. Rafsky reopened the hearing.

Highlights of Presentation by Tim Paris:

- Since the last hearing, the residential lot in back right of the property which was previously shown on site plans as a parking lot has been removed from the site plans and will be left as is.
- The existing building addition on the left hand side of the property will be decreased by 750 sq. ft., 15' back from the street. With this reduction in square footage the total number of required parking spaces to 15. The revised site plans depicts 19 parking spaces.
- In response to a request by the Planning Board in response to comments from abutters, a wider area will be available for an increased amount of landscape screening between the site and Lull Street abutters.
- The following plantings are proposed for screening: emerald green arborvitae; azaleas; Canadian pine and low bush plantings.
- The grading, access and garage bays are staying as originally proposed.

Board & Town Planner Discussion:

- Ms. Loughnane asked Mr. Paris to confirm the number of parking spaces on the site plan as 20. *(Mr. Paris identified the parking spaces on the plans and then confirmed the number of spaces as being 20.)*
- Ms. Loughnane asked for clarification on the floor plan which shows a door with sidelights and the elevation plan shows two doors with sidelights with two additional windows on either side. *(Mr. Paris said that the elevation plan is correct.)*
- Ms. Loughnane requested that the Applicant provide a drawing or rendering of the color and type of surface materials proposed for the front, rear and side elevations.
- With the request for a waiver of submission of an Exterior Lighting Plan, Ms. Loughnane reminded the Applicant that no pole mounted fixtures are allowed, only wall mounted fixtures, mounted no higher than 15' above grade and shall be shielded to control glare. *(Mr. Paris confirmed that lights will remain in the existing locations and will meet the specifications.)*
- A board member asked questions about the canopy and exterior lighting. *(Mr. Paris said that the awning will be over the front door and the lighting will be located underneath the canopy, shielded down.)*

Public Comments:

S. Zinno, 6 Lull Street – appreciates the improvements that have been made though he said that he still has significant concerns about the view, noise and screening. He said that he wants the buffer to be composed of heartier evergreens, taller trees and not just arborvitae plantings.

B. Fleming, 10 Lull Street – asked questions about proposed lights on the building that face Lull Street now, how many more are proposed? How will the noise be remediated? Are all the windows needed? Will garage doors be left open? Where will the tires be stored? Will there be more cars added?

M. Reardon, Lull Street – what is the reason to have the bays on the other side? Why 6 bays?

M. O'Keefe, Lull Street – will it always remain as unrented? (Yes)

P. O'Keefe, Lull Street – will the lighting be removed? (Yes) Will maintenance of the trees be required?

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S. Zinno, 6 Lull Street - How will the garage doors operate? Will six doors remain open all day long? He suggested the use of a sensor.

(Steve Wilson for the Applicant responded to some of the questions: There are high intensity lights on the building now; proposed lighting in the same location will not be as bright, be shielded and will be directional. Lights will be under the canopy and will glow softly. The proposed lighting will be controlled on a timer.)

Ch. Rafsky asked Mr. Wilson to describe the proposed screening.

Mr. Wilson said that along the property line staggered arborvitae with another evergreen tree plus fence – would provide better screening. The landscaping should create depth perception.

Applicant Ed Hogan responded to questions about noise remediation. He said they are trying to make better use of the building/space. He said it will be much quieter and much less traffic without a tenant sharing the building.

Board & Town Planner Comments:

- Board members asked questions about the garage doors and whether they will remain open all day long; whether the inside layout could be reconfigured so two doors could be relocated to the back of the building only four doors would be facing the neighbors.
- Ch. Rafsky asked Ms. Loughnane for guidance on the next steps.
- Ms. Loughnane said that site plan review should be completed by Phil Paradis next. The stormwater, landscaping, materials and colors and make recommendations on the buffer zone. The main question for the Planning Board is will it allow a less than 20' buffer zone and grant a waiver. Ms. Loughnane also recommended Canadian spruce in the buffer.
- A question was asked whether there would be more than one sign requested. (No.)
- A board member asked for more information is needed on the defined landscaped area in the front; the proposed berm in back and suggested an added triangular area of plantings with cross-hatching.
- A board member suggested that Applicant reduce parking and to require the 20' buffer.
- A board member suggesting reducing the front landscaping and to remove the parking spaces in front of the neighbors and increase the buffer.
- Ms. Loughnane said that the landscaping will not provide a noise buffer. The best noise buffer is a solid wall suggesting that if the doors were kept closed noise would be reduced.
- There was a discussion about whether garage doors should be required to be opened and then immediately closed. Ch. Rafsky said that noise is a determinant in EIDR and should not be considered detrimental to the neighbors. (Mr. Hogan commented that this condition of operation is not realistic. He suggested increasing the buffer to meet the 20' requirement and to decrease parking spaces.)
- Ch. Rafsky said that the Board needs to make a determination that this change to the business fits into the neighborhood.
- Some board members said that requiring doors to remain closed could be a burden to the owner.

More Public Comments:

M. Reardon, Lull Street – How will noise be remediated? The arborvitae are not going to deaden the noise.

S. Zinno, 6 Lull Street - continued to comment on his desire for noise mitigation.

Residents continued asking the Board what can be done to remediate the noise and the possibility of requiring the garage bay doors to remain closed.

Ch. Rafsky said that the board is going to move on and Ms. Loughnane suggested that the engineers can meet and finalize plans and find resolution to the noise over the next week.

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Motion/Action Taken:

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Wiggin, the board voted unanimously in favor to allow the applicant to withdraw the Special Permit Application.

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Olanoff, the Planning Board voted unanimously in favor to continue this public hearing until Monday, November 10th at 8:00 p.m. in the Champagne Meeting Room at 50 Carby Street.

Continuation of Public Hearing to Consider Amendments to the Town of Westwood Zoning Bylaws for Recommendation to Special Town Meeting

Town Planner's Summary:

- At the October 20th public hearing, the Finance & Warrant Commission voted to recommend Town Meeting approval of the Planning Board articles, as proposed.
- Each of these articles was unanimously recommended by the Planning Board to Town Meeting.
- No further action is required.

Public Comments:

None.

Motion/Action Taken:

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Wiggin, the board voted unanimously in favor to close this public hearing.

New Business – Reserved for topics not reasonably anticipated to be discussed

Ms. Loughnane asked the board to review the outstanding draft minutes for consideration at the next meeting.

Adjournment:

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Wiggin, the board voted unanimously in favor to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:50 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Monday, November 10th at 7:30 p.m., in the Champagne Meeting Room at 50 Carby Street.

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List of Documents:

Copy of Morgan Farm Estates – Phase I, Request for Reduction of Tri-partite Agreement Amount	PDF
Sketch Plan – Lot Layout for 480 Summer Street, 10-29-14	PDF
Site Plans – 14 Washington Street	PDF