

**Town of Westwood Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Carby Street Building
January 24, 2006
7:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Steven Olanoff, Bob Moore, Rob Malster, Henry Gale

Board Members Absent: George Nedder

Staff Members Present: Diane Beecham, Town Planner; John Bertorelli, Town Engineer

The meeting was convened at 7:40 pm.

Continuation of Public Hearing: Parking Lot Improvements at the Bubbling Brook Restaurant

Applicant: Bubbling Brook Realty LLC

Address: 1652 High Street

Project: Parking lot improvements

In Attendance: Don Myers, Norwood Engineering

Mr. Myers stated that he is presenting the revised plan this evening after discussion with the client and the Town Engineer. He stated that the letter dated January 23, 2006 summarizing the changes is also provided [letter in file.] The main change on the revised plan deals with the ingress/egress points into the parking lot. The access point from High Street into the parking lot has been reduced from 80 feet wide to 20 feet wide and it is suggested that this only be an ingress point into the lot coming east on High Street. There would be no left turn from High Street into the parking lot and no exit onto High Street from this point. The North Street access point is also being reduced from 80 feet wide to 24 feet wide. This would serve as both an entrance and exit point from the parking lot.

The three spaces in front of the ice cream window were eliminated. Also, there were some additional, scattered spaces eliminated around the parking lot to provide for better internal circulation. He stated that the Stormceptor will be moved to the other side of North Street to catch more of the storm water runoff, as a result of a recommendation from the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Olanoff asked that by moving the Stormceptor to the other side of North Street, what happens in the winter to this water that has to skirt over to the other side of North Street? Will it cause it to ice over the street? Mr. Myers responded that this will not be a problem because there is no change in the location of the catch basins and so there will be no water over North Street; just moving the location of the buried Stormceptor so that it catches more water to treat and thus increase the water quality.

Mr. Myers stated that there were no proposed changes to the exterior lighting with the parking lot. There is not proposed change to the existing floodlights.

Mr. Olanoff stated that this existing lighting did not conform to the current exterior lighting bylaw. Mr. Moore stated that he was concerned that the existing light as it is now is sufficient. Mr. Myers responded that when the owner purchased the property, he thought that the lighting was insufficient and has since provided some additional lighting. An abutter across the street at the corner of Blueberry lane and High Street stated that he has had no problems with the lighting on this property.

John Bertorelli stated that the plan was changed according to his recommendations and has resulted in improved drainage. The only question he had now deals with the lighting of the parking lot in the back area. He also stated that he is waiting for a response from the Public Safety Officer regarding the traffic/circulation issues.

Mr. Myers stated that he has to provide for some additional parking spaces to offset the eliminated spaces, resulting in an overall net increase of one parking space.

Mr. Olanoff stated that the Planning Board needs to look at the issue of planter specifications in the area of the take-out windows. If they are supposed to protect pedestrians at the windows then the Board needs to know how high and how strong they are and so will need to get additional information. Mr. Myers responded that there are no specifications for them; they will be heavy duty decorative planters. The owner has in mind that they will be about 300 pounds and would be decorative and filled with flowers. Mr. Olanoff stated that he wants them to be concrete.

On a motion by Mr. Gale and seconded by Mr. Malster, the four members of the Planning Board in attendance unanimously voted to close the public hearing with the exception of getting the traffic report from the Public Safety Officer.

ANR Plan: 306 East Street

Applicant: Peter Heaney

Address: 306 East Street

Project: Change in lot line of previously endorsed ANR plan

On a motion by Mr. Malster and seconded by Mr. Gale, the four members of the Planning Board in attendance voted unanimously in favor to endorse, as not requiring approval under the Subdivision Control Law, a plan entitled "Lot Division Plan (ANR) 306 East Street Westwood, Mass.", dated January 12, 2006, prepared by Norwood Engineering Co., Inc., 1410 Route One, Norwood, MA 02062.

Record Owner: Peter Heaney
66 Chute Street
Dedham, MA 02062

Land Affected: 306 East Street
Assessors' Map 24, Parcel 119

Deliberations: 1541-1561 High Street Senior Residential Development

Applicant: Edward Musto

Address: 1541-1561 High Street
Project: 19-unit Senior Residential Development proposal for 5.04 acres pursuant to the SRD and Environmental Impact and Design Review sections of the Zoning Bylaw

Mr. Moore stated that before the Board began their deliberations on their decision for this application, he first wanted to get a general sense from the Board as to whether or not the members thought that the plan as it was in its current form, could be approved? The straw vote was as follows:

Mr. Olanoff - No
Mr. Gale - No
Mr. Malster - No
Mr. Moore - No

Mr. Gale stated that even though he thought that the plan before the Board is not one that he could approve at this time, in the past the Board has made their approvals conditional on meeting specific conditions; the Board in fact almost always does this for subdivisions. Mr. Malster responded that the difference is that this is a special permit and those conditional approvals were done for subdivisions. For subdivisions, the Board does not have to endorse the final plan until it feels that all the conditions in the approval have been met. For special permits, once the Board issues a conditional approval, the Board will lose its enforcement authority with regards to whether it believes that the conditions have actually been met; that authority will belong to the building inspector.

Mr. Olanoff stated that he felt that the following changes need to be made to the plan before he could approve the plan:

1. Some of the buildings on the westerly side of the site need to be moved.
2. There are still too many breaks in the sidewalks; the pedestrians are essentially crossing driveway after driveway.
3. There is no continuity with the edge of the roadway. The ideal would be to have the brick paver sidewalks like on Washington Street. If not, then there will need to be a series of crosswalks.
4. Where the walking path goes between the porous parking area, there needs to be a better way to distinguish the path entranceway from just another parking space.
5. There still needs to be more information about grading.
6. The Lighting along the sidewalk is inadequate.

Mr. Gale stated that there needs to be significantly more information on the off-site drainage; the design needs to be engineered and the calculations have to be computed and provided to the Board and Town Engineer for review and approval. Also, the architectural plans are inadequate; they need to be restructured. In addition the architectural plans need to show the buildings in relation to the front steps and decks all the way to the retaining walls in the back.

Mr. Gale also stated that the driveways for Unit 19 and Unit 14 need to be reexamined. Also, the retaining wall that is practically on the lot line of one of the properties on High Street needs to be pulled back. The stone from the property's existing stone wall should be used as much as possible and there also needs to be more granite curbing on the front entrance.

Mr. Malster stated that he has many concerns with this plan that he has documented over the long course of these public hearings. He still struggles with the grading of this property. All along, the process has hit "real snags" with trying to marry the number of buildings with the topography of the property and so the final design had resulted in an excessive number of retaining walls, steep grades for driveways and no landing areas. He stated that a significant rework of the plan will be required in order to address these issues.

Mr. Malster also stated that he is concerned with the location of some of the units relative to the location of some of the retaining walls; essentially some of these units will have stairs leading directly to the retaining walls.

Also, at some point earlier in the designs of this plan there was a significant distance between the location of the buildings and the roadways from the abutting neighbors; he calculated that on an earlier plan the distance was at least 53 feet and now on this final plan it is only 35 feet. In fact, the distance of the roadways went from 50 feet away from the neighbors to only 17 feet. This was a result of the problem with the building footprint size. He believes that there was a serious step back in terms of site design because of the wrong footprint size. He is totally supportive of putting an SRD on this property but is uncomfortable with the status of the incomplete plan that is now before the Board. He is also uncomfortable with abdicating the responsibility of ensuring compliance with all the conditions that the Board would have to place on its approval to the Town Engineer and the Building Inspector. He does not know how the Board could have had a better process for this application because most of the issues that the board has with this plan were recorded by the Town Engineer and the consultant. He does not know if the issue was just driven by engineering or a bottleneck caused by the site itself.

Mr. Gale stated that he did not think that the plan could be any better than what is shown given the density. He thought that what is now before the Board represents a valid compromise. Given the 19 units and this particular parcel of land, this plan is the best that the Board can get.

Mr. Moore stated that the plan does not work because of the site design and the density. He stated that all the parameters set by the Planning Board early on in the process have been moved away from in later plans. There are issues such as grading, retaining walls, off-site improvements, as well as the density that have not been fully vetted by the Board. He can not endorse the plan in its present form. He would be amenable to seeing another application for this property and would also be amenable to waiving all or a portion of the application fees.

[There was discussion that the Planning Board was concerned having a conditional

approval in which there would be some many significant conditions in the approval that it would, in effect, materially change the plan and there would not be the opportunity for the public to comment on the material changes.]

Mr. Moore stated that the plan was just too dense.

On a motion by Mr. Malster and seconded by Mr. Moore, Mr. Malster and Mr. Gale voted to deny the issuance of a special permit for the Reynold's Farm Senior Residential Development application and Mr. Olanoff voted to grant the special permit.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.