

AGAWAM PLANNING BOARD
October 6, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Violet Baldwin
David A. Chase
Mark R. Paleologopoulos – Acting Chairman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Michael J. Morasssi
Travis P. Ward

ALSO PRESENT:

Deborah S. Dachos
Pamela R. Kerr

Mr. Paleologopoulos called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 29, 2011

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Chase to table approval of the September 29, 2011 minutes as they were not yet prepared.

VOTE 3-0

2. FORM A – North West Street – Brown

The Board received a memo from the Town Solicitor, as requested, regarding this plan as the property being conveyed is under Chapter 61A. According to this memo, because the land is being conveyed to a family member, the Town does not get first right of refusal. The Plan can now be acted upon by the Board and once approved, the owner will have to pay rollback taxes on the parcel.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Chase to approve the plan for Brown on North West Street under “Subdivision Control Law Not Required”.

VOTE 3-0

3. DISCUSSION & VOTE – Community Development Strategy – PVPC

Andrew Loew of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission was in attendance this evening. He explained that the Town is applying again this year for CDBG funds and as part of the application the Community Development Strategy must be approved by the Board. He stated that this year they will be applying for a regional grant with East

Longmeadow which should provide more points to the application. He went on to say that there is a CDBG Advisory Committee that was formed in town and they have voted to recommended approval of the CD Strategy. Mr. Paleologopoulos is on that committee. Components of the CD Strategy include a summary of community development plans in the community; community development goals regarding housing, economic development, open space and recreation, land use, historic and cultural resources, circulation and transportation, services and facilities and natural resources. The Strategy also contains information on the consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles; a community development target area which is bounded on the north by the Westfield River, on the northeast and east by Main Street, on the south by Wright Street, Birchi Hill Road, Mill Street and elm/Silver Street, and on the west by James Street and a line 150 yards west of Colemore Street. Prioritization of projects is another component of the Strategy. He explained that the Springfield Street sidewalk improvement program would be part of this funding for both design and construction and the housing component would include a rehabilitation program as well as Housing Authority improvements.

At this time Mr. Paleologopoulos handed over the Acting Chairmanship to Violet Baldwin.

Motion was made by Mr. Chase and seconded by Mr. Paleologopoulos to accept and adopt the Community Development Strategy element of the Community Development Block Grant Application as outlined this evening and prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

VOTE 3-0

Mr. Paleologopoulos took over the Acting Chairmanship at this time.

4. DISCUSSION – Suffield Street – DPW land

Ken Vincunas of Development Associates and Dave Bean of D.L. Bean, Inc. were in attendance this evening. Ms. Dachos began by briefing the members on the history of this property. She explained that the 24 acres of land behind the DPW facility was deemed surplus land by the Town Council in an effort to create an industrial park on the land as there is a minimal amount of industrially-zoned land left in town. Gold Street is adjacent to this 24 acre parcel and is owned by Development Associates, Ken Vincunas. The land was put out to bid and a bid was accepted from Mr. Vincunas in 2004. Initial studies concluded that there was a possibility of locating four industrial buildings on this site. The Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program maps were changed and now include this parcel. Mr. Vincunas hired a biologist to survey the turtles on the site and place transmitters on them. The survey found that the turtles were not nesting on this property but they do walk across it. Property directly adjacent to this land contains endangered species as well. As a result of many meetings with NHESP, they have agreed to let the Town set aside 140 acres of town-owned land on South Westfield Street in order to build on the Suffield Street site. The total acreage of the South Westfield Street

parcel is 190 acres of which approximately 40 acres are buildable due to wetland constraints. Ms. Dachos went on to explain that Mr. Vincunas has a former driveway on Gold Street that would be used as access to the 24 acre parcel and that Gold Street is currently an over-length dead-end street and therefore a waiver would be need to extend the street to this site. The public benefit of extending that street would be job creation and tax revenues. She also stated that there is a possibility of this being an Exceptional Opportunity Area with tax incentives for the owners. Dave Bean stated that he has spoken with the DPW regarding water pressure and a turn-around on the site. He went on to say that there would be no problem with creating a turn around that would accommodate emergency vehicles and that there is a 12" water main on Gold Street and a 16" on Suffield Street which according to the DPW should be more than adequate pressure and volume to support these industrial sites including sprinklers. Mr. Bean stated that fire flow tests may be done by Mr. Vincunas. Mr. Chase stated that these are the types of projects the Town needs and supports the concept. Ms. Dachos stated that the South Westfield Street site will be pre-permitted as well for industrial development. Ms. Baldwin stated that she agrees with Mr. Chase. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about the pond shown on the site. Mr. Vincunas stated that is a borough pit that holds water and that a wetland delineation was approved by the Conservation Commission. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that he is concerned with the length of the street but supports more industrial development in town. Mr. Bean stated that a right of way width waiver would also be needed but the pavement width and radii should be fine. He explained that they must also meet the required grade near the Tennessee Gas Pipeline which runs through the property; stormwater management facilities (detention pond) will be required and the soils will be evaluated. He went on to say that the sewer in this area is adequate with an 8" line in Gold Street that goes to a main in Adams Street. The members all agreed that if the Fire Department is satisfied with this proposed development that they are in full support of the proposal. The consensus was that the Town needs this type of development and they unanimously support the plan.

5. BOND RELEASE – White Fox Drive and Colonial Acres

The Town Treasure has notified the office that there are two old passbooks still being held on subdivision that were constructed in the mid-70's. The Board needs to formally release these bonds in order for her to return them to the developers. The passbook on White Fox Drive is in the amount of \$2500 and the Colonial Acres passbook contains \$750.00.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Chase to release the \$2500 bond being held on White Fox Drive and the \$750.00 bond being held on Colonial Acres.

VOTE 3-0

6. PVPC Updates – D. Chase

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Mr. Chase stated that the PVPC Annual Meeting is being held next week. He went on to say that while serving as Agawam's Commissioner he has found the work of the PVPC to be very interesting and informative however due to time constraints he will no longer be able to participate. Mr. Paleologopoulos is Agawam's Alternate Commissioner and stated that he will try to attend future PVPC meetings/functions. A vote to appoint a new Commissioner will be placed on a future agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.