

AGAWAM PLANNING BOARD
September 29, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Travis P. Ward, Chairman
Violet E. Baldwin
David A. Chase
Michael J. Morassi
Mark R. Paleologopoulos

ALSO PRESENT:

Deborah S. Dachos
Pamela R. Kerr

Mr. Ward called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 1, 2011

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Paleologopoulos to approve the minutes of September 1, 2011 as written.

VOTE 3-0-2 (Chase & Morassi abstained)

2. BOND STATUS – Robin Ridge Estates

The developers were requested to attend this meeting and were not yet present. The Board agreed to table the item to the end of the agenda.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Chase to table the Bond Status for Robin Ridge Estates to the end of the agenda.

VOTE 5-0

3. BOND STATUS – High Meadow

Mr. Calabrese requested a one year extension of this Performance Agreement. The last extension of this Performance Agreement was a year ago and at that time all punch list items were completed but there were vacant lots. Mr. Calabrese did not own all of the vacant lots and put the two he owned under Covenant. The Performance Agreement was extended for Lots 2 and 7 Anvil Street. A new Performance Agreement has recently been signed by Mr. Calabrese which covers the sidewalks and treebelts only for Lots 2 and 7. The members felt that this Performance Agreement should have a one year Performance Guarantee rather than the standard two years. The length of the Performance Guarantee will be revised to one year. The Engineering Department submitted a memo with

outstanding items on the subdivision. A copy of this will be forwarded to the developer for him to address.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Chase to approve a one year extension to the Performance Agreement for Lots 2 and 7 High Meadow.

VOTE 5-0

Motion was made by Mr. Morassi and seconded by Mr. Paleologopoulos to sign a new Performance Agreement for Lots 2 and 7 High Meadow with a one year Performance Guarantee.

VOTE 5-0

4. SITE PLAN – Heritage Woods Parking Lot Expansion – Cooper Street

Norman Hill of Land Planning, Inc. was in attendance to present this Site Plan which shows a 31 space expansion of the existing parking lot at Heritage Woods. Additional stormwater facilities are also proposed. He stated that there will be a berm around the parking lot with three “spillways” where the drainage will flow to a sediment forebay and to the detention pond. He stated that there will be no increase in runoff to the existing detention pond. They are also proposing two islands within the parking lot and two light poles. He stated that the new lights will match what exists. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about pedestrian flow through the parking lot. Mr. Hill stated that the islands will be raised. The members asked that cut sheets be provided on the proposed lighting. The Engineering Department had no comments on the plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Chase and seconded by Mr. Morassi to approve the Site Plan for the parking lot expansion at Heritage Woods with the condition that the landscape maintenance note be added to the plan and cut sheets for the proposed lighting be submitted to the Board for their approval.

VOTE 5-0

5. SITE PLAN – Garden Street – Russo

Rob Levesque was in attendance to present this Site Plan for a 36 unit condominium project on 6.6 acres of land on Garden Street. He stated that the wetlands were delineated in 2010 and a Notice of Intent is pending with the Agawam Conservation Commission. The Engineering Department has submitted comments which he stated he will address. He stated that there will be cross easements with the office building next door for snow removal which is owned by Mr. Russo. He explained that would require a “break” in the landscaping and a waiver will be needed as the requirement is for a 15’ planted buffer around the entire site. Ms. Dachos explained that is a zoning requirement and cannot be waived. Mr. Levesque stated that he will accommodate it but pulling the plantings in or adjusting the easement. Mr. Ward asked if it specifies the type of buffer in the zoning. Ms. Dachos stated it doesn’t specify and it could be ground cover. He then brought up

the Site Plan Review by Ms. Dachos in which she stated that the landscaping plan is inadequate, there is no privacy screening for the units. Mr. Levesque stated that landscaping screening has been proposed and he can add more buffering to that. Some units will have decks off the back, others will have patios. He went on to say that he will provide cut sheets for the proposed period lighting. He stated that he submitted a rendering and the colors will be earth tones; the dumpster is not shown as they are proposing curb side pick up for a fee. He then stated that per the DPW he has looped the water line. Another issue in Ms. Dachos' review was the large parking areas with big driveways and concrete sidewalks running through them and no treebelts. Mr. Levesque stated that he has shown cape cod berms that will control the water from the streets. Mr. Ward asked if this proposes that people drive over the sidewalks. Mr. Levesque stated yes but he can omit the sidewalks in the asphalt areas. Mr. Morassi asked if he has designed other projects in the area with the raised berms. Mr. Levesque stated yes in Westfield and Wilbraham. Mr. Morassi stated he would like those addresses so that he could visit the sites. There was a lengthy discussion of this type of design and that in subdivisions the sidewalks run through the driveways. Mr. Levesque then went through the Engineering Department comments one of which was the 2.5:1 slopes proposed. Mr. Ward asked if they would be mowable. Mr. Levesque stated that they are proposing to let the slopes grow native and not be mowed. Mr. Morassi suggested a double tier slope rather than a continuous slope such as along the Turnpike. Mr. Levesque stated that could be done but it would bring it closer to the wetlands. He agreed to look into that further. Ms. Baldwin then asked if the islands shown are to be planted. Mr. Levesque stated yes and he could provide more plantings such as ornamentals and will provide a foundation planting detail/typical. He went on to say that underground utilities may prevent planting large trees. Ms. Dachos suggested that street trees be planted on the inside of the sidewalk and provide additional plantings in front of each unit. Mr. Chase questioned whether these plantings would be a maintenance issue as they mature and suggested they look at smaller plantings. Ms. Dachos stated that the plan now shows a large amount of pavement and shade trees are needed and suggested that the landscaping plan be re-evaluated. Mr. Morassi then asked about the required road width. Mr. Levesque stated that it is based on the number of vehicle trips and this plan shows 24' around the cul-de-sac (one way). Ms. Dachos stated that the pavement width could be waived to allow for less. Mr. Levesque stated that he could put another island in or "neck it down" a bit. The general consensus among the members was to eliminate as much paving as possible on the site. Mr. Morassi asked how much parking was available for additional vehicles. Mr. Levesque stated each unit will have one garage; one space available in the driveway and visitor parking. He went on to say that no on-street parking will be allowed and there will be signage stating that. Ms. Baldwin asked about handicapped parking spaces. Mr. Levesque stated that the number of HC spaces meets the regulations. He then suggested a 24' drive aisle at the entrance rather than the 30' as shown. Ms. Baldwin then suggested that the handicapped parking space and island be flipped in this area as well. Mr. Levesque then suggested that he could provide breaks in the berm where sidewalks go through the paved areas. There was a discussion regarding the 40' setback for the buildings. Mr. Morassi suggested that one unit be taken from building three and perhaps they could gain it back somewhere else. This would allow

them to accommodate for better traffic flow. Mr. Paelolgopoulos asked if there was a sign proposed for the development. Mr. Levesque stated yes, it is situated near the mailboxes and there will also be a street sign installed. In conclusion, the following items were discussed to be addressed: typical foundation planting to be submitted; additional ornamental plantings at the front of the units and shade trees to be provided; driveway width at street to be reduced from 30' to 24' (waiver request to be submitted); no on-street parking to be allowed; flip the handicapped parking space within the island; provide breaks in the berm if possible; provide continuous sidewalk; and provide lighting cut sheets. Mr. Levesque stated that he would like to request a continuance to the October 20th meeting. Henry Kozloski, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, was in attendance and stated that the Commission has requested a phasing plan so that the entire site is not opened up at once. Mr. Levesque stated that he will submit the phasing plan to the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Morassi and seconded by Ms. Baldwin to table the Site Plan for Russo on Garden Street until October 20, 2011 as requested by the applicant's representative.

VOTE 5-0

6. FORM A – North West Street – Brown

Mr. Brown was in attendance this evening. Ms. Dachos explained that a request was submitted to the Town Solicitor asking how to proceed with this plan as the property being conveyed is under Chapter 61A. A response was not received for tonight's meeting. Mr. Brown asked for an extension to October 6th to allow for the Town Solicitor's input.

Motion was made by Mr. Chase and seconded by Ms. Baldwin to extend the time for consideration of the Brown Form A on North West Street to October 6th as requested by the applicant.

VOTE 5-0

7. CHAPTER 61B – Agawam Sportsman's Club – Corey Street

Ms. Dachos explained that in 2005 the Town was notified of its right of first refusal when a purchase and sale agreement was signed with Mr. Bonavita and Mr. Grasso. The Council voted not to exercise its right and the owner paid the rollback taxes. The lien certificate had not been removed from the title (did not get recorded at Registry) and now Mr. Russo has a purchase and sale on the land. The Town received a Chapter 61B notification from the owners however, the land is no longer under Chapter 61B. The Town Solicitor issued a memo on the matter and a letter was received from the Town Assessor as well. She stated that the item was placed on the agenda for informational purposes and no action is needed by the Board.

8. PVPC Updates – D. Chase

There was nothing new to report.

9. CORRESPONDENCES

The Board received notification of Fall workshops through the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative.

2. BOND STATUS – Robin Ridge Estates – Banville/Toomey LLC

This item had been tabled to the end of the meeting in case the developers showed up as was requested of them. Since they did not attend tonight's meeting and no work has taken place on the site the members discussed securing the bond funds. Mr. Chase stated that he feels the Board has given them ample opportunities to address their concerns and provide the written timetable for completion of the punch list items. Abutters to the subdivision have been regularly attending the meetings at which this item has been discussed.

Motion was made by Mr. Morassi and seconded by Ms. Baldwin to initiate legal proceedings to secure the bond on the Robin Ridge Estates subdivision based on the developer's lack of response to the Board's requests (reference to the chronology of events/correspondences since June 14, 2011) and lack of progress on completing the punch list items.

VOTE 5-0

10. DISCUSSION – Zoning

Mr. Ward, Mr. Paleologopoulos and Mr. Chase attended the recent Town Council meeting at which Jessica Allan of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission presented her findings of her zoning review. The members all agreed she did an excellent job on the presentation and there were no questions from the Council.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.