

Agawam Planning Board – March 2, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark R. Paleologopoulos, Chairman
Frank DeStefano
Michael DiLullo (6:05PM)
Violet Baldwin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Charles Elfman

ALSO PRESENT:

Taryn Egerton
Pam Kerr
Stefanie Kesecker

Chairperson Paleologopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

1. 6:00PM PUBLIC HEARING-Zoning Amendment-Permitted Uses in Businesses A Districts (TOR-2023-3)-Mayor Sapelli

Steve Buoniconti, Town Solicitor was present for this agenda item. He stated TOR-2023-3 is an ordinance that was filed with the City Council and is an amendment to change Chapter 180 of the Town Code. He stated this amendment would propose to closely mirror language in Town Code of the Business-B permitted uses and overlay them onto the Business-A uses. He stated Business-B restricts all new residential development and Business-A was originally drafted to permit agricultural and residential use. This proposal is to have a long-standing impact on Town. Mr. Buoniconti stated Springfield Street is the target for this, as it currently has a litany of uses and is currently zoned Business-A. He stated this makes for a diminished use of business owned property. He stated most intersections in Agawam are zoned Business-A. Mr. Buoniconti stated they are trying to maximize the use of these parcels to promote a healthier tax base. He stated they are encouraging commercial businesses to utilize these parcels. He stated there was one exception to this is that single family dwellings would be permitted on a Business-A parcel. He stated this has been discussed at length in Zoning Advisory Committee meeting for about two years. He stated this will promote a healthier tax base for the Town and a better blend of residential and commercial use and gives the Town a better opportunity for future growth. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about other areas such as North Agawam. Mr. Buoniconti stated that North Agawam was a different subject matter due to parcel sizes and density to the area and he doesn't expect much change in this area, but more where areas have more land. Mr. Paleologopoulos opened the meeting to the public, but there was no comments.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to close the PUBLIC HEARING-Zoning Amendment-Permitted Uses IN Business A Districts (TOR-2023-3)-Mayor Sapelli.

Agawam Planning Board – March 2, 2023

VOTE 4-0-0

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to send a positive recommendation to the City Council for Zoning Amendment-Permitted Uses in Businesses A Districts (TOR-2023-3)-Mayor Sapelli

VOTE 4-0-0

2. PUBLIC HEARING CONT.-Definitive Plan-Aspenwood Estates-Aspenwood Associates LLC.

This agenda item was previously continued to March 16, 2023.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DeStefano take agenda item 4 out of order.

VOTE 4-0-0

4. FORM A-South Westfield Street-Depalma

No one was present for this agenda item. Ms. Kerr informed the Board this Form A was submitted and was acted on by the Board for lack of adequate access on November 17, 2022. The new plan now shows a proposed 30ft. access easement associated with a common driveway. There is an existing retaining wall that crosses most of the frontage of the lot. Mr. DeStefano asked about the paved driveway near the retaining wall. Ms. Kerr stated they are looking at making a new driveway from this access point. Ms. Kerr stated frontage and adequate access to the lot is what is looked at for a Form A. Mr. Buoniconti stated case law is clear about illusory frontage, and is when you look on a map and it appears to be adequate frontage, the illusion is there is nothing but the other driveway, and the retaining wall does not permit access to it. The retaining wall was placed by Mass DOT and cannot be removed. He said there is no clarity about how the vehicles will ingress and egress from the driveways and there is a public safety perspective.

Motion was made by Mr. DiLullo and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to deny the FORM-A-South Westfield Street-Depalma due to inadequate access to Lot B.

VOTE 4-0-0

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to put the agenda items back in order.

VOTE 4-0-0

3. SITE PLAN-240 Bowles Road-SolBid, Inc.

Agawam Planning Board – March 2, 2023

Amanda Langer with JDE Civil, Inc. was present for this agenda item. She explained to the Board this was an existing industrial building with wetlands in the front and they have already received a Negative Determination from the Conservation Commission. She stated this will be a solar array with a 20 ft. gravel accessory road around it. She stated the solar panels will be installed on pylons that are driven into the ground with footing. The site will have two access gates on both ends of the existing drive. She stated the Fire Department had received the Sweep Path analysis and they were satisfied. She stated they received Engineering comments this morning and have not yet officially responded to them, but a lot of the comments center on ground water and drainage. She stated they are not increasing the impervious area, what they are increasing is .003% concrete pad that will house the electrical unit. She said there was concern about run-off being increased, but she stated the proposed seed mixture for underneath the panels will reestablish as brush, so they will be less of a water flow. She stated a small stone trench is proposed for the left side of the sight that will help mitigate the water flow. She stated the utilities are listed as an approximate location, prior to construction they will be more definitively located. The solar panels can be located 16ft. apart. She stated the solar array is just for the business and will not be distributed. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if the electric was underground. Ms. Langer responded yes. Ms. Langer stated they will be maintaining as many trees in the front as possible to act as a natural buffer. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if the rip rap spillway already exists. Ms. Langer stated yes. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked how many solar panels and how big. Mr. Dan Renna with SolBid, Inc. responded to this question stating there will be 2,784 panels that are 2ft. by 4ft, and it will offset 100% of the sites yearly electrical need. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there was anything that would be planted for screening. Ms. Langer stated they could add a row of trees or arborvitaes. Ms. Langer stated there would be a 6 ft. chain link fence surrounding the solar array, with gates on each side. Mr. DeStefano asked about the dust during construction. Ms. Langer stated they have measures in place to control the construction debris. Ms. Kerr asked about the waiver of the financial surety. Mr. Renna stated they are requesting a waiver for financial surety because of the inherent design of the system and that the proposal is engineered for onsite consumption. He stated the solar array would be owner operated. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about the wetlands and Ms. Langer said it was a drainage easement, and a Negative Determination had been given by the Conservation Commission. Ms. Langer stated they would add notes to the plan and resubmit it with proposed plantings.

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to table the SITE PLAN-240 Bowles Rd-SolBid, Inc. until the March 16, 2023 meeting until Engineering comments have been addressed and satisfied.

VOTE 4-0-0

5. SITE PLAN-Suffield Street-TCR Properties, LLC

Filipe Cravo with R. Levesque Associates, LLC was present for this agenda item. He stated they had addressed items with the Engineering Department and they had received a letter from them stating they had no more comments. Ms. Kerr had requested trees to be planted at the frontage and Mr. Cravo showed photos of Cleveland Pear Trees that would be planted and he stated they grow straight up quickly and bloom white flowers. He stated the Board had asked what type of trucks would be utilized by the business and he provided pictures of the trucks to the Board. He

Agawam Planning Board – March 2, 2023

stated the new plan has not changed much since the original plan, but that some contours were added to the basin to have more storage for water, and well as added curbs to direct the water to the correct drainage locations. He showed the framing of the building and it is a prefabricated metal structure. Mr. Paleogolopoulos asked about the number of stories on the building and Mr. Cravo stated it was a one story, but a taller building. He said they moved the ADA space to adjacent to the door, added trees to landscaping plan along the frontage, and a contour to the basin for storage of water. Mr. Cravo stated rip rap was added around the inlet to create a sediment forebay. Curbed area was added he stated to slow down water to the basin. Mr. DeStefano asked how far back the building is. Mr. Cravo stated it was about 76 ft. from roadway. Ms. Baldwin asked about any grading in the back as the parcel is steep. Mr. Cravo stated grading would be completed at the higher level to even the land out more. He said the higher point will be cut down to be more consistent with the grading that exists. Mr. Cravo stated there will be a sign in the front to match the other signs along Suffield Street, but no details on the sign at this point. Ms. Baldwin asked about plantings on the South side of the location. Mr. Cravo stated there would be 3 Cleveland Pear Trees would be added at this location, and inside the vegetation will have different grasses and scrubs. After a lengthy discussion regarding screening, it was agreed that 18-20 arborvitae be planted along the southern property line.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to approve the SITE PLAN-Suffield Street-TCT Properties, LLC conditional upon any other professional comments and 18 to 20 additional arborvitae planted on the southern property line to provide additional screening of the rear of the parcel.

VOTE 4-0-0

6. VOTE-Nomination for Community Preservation Act Committee

Mr. DeStefanos' term for CPA expires in April of 2023.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to nominate Frank DeStefano as the PB representative for the Community Preservation Act Committee.

VOTE 4-0-0

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES February 9, 2023

Minutes should read February 16th, 2023 and was inadvertently mistyped on this agenda and members will table until the next meeting March 16, 2023.

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to table the February 16th, 2023 minutes until the March 16, 2023 meeting.

VOTE 4-0-0

Agawam Planning Board – March 2, 2023

8. Correspondence

Nothing under this agenda item

Motion was made by Mr. DiLullo and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to adjourn the meeting,

VOTE 4-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.