

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark R. Paleologopoulos, Chairman
Frank DeStefano
Violet E. Baldwin
Michael DiLullo
Charles Elfman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Taryn Egerton

Chairperson Paleologopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

1. PUBLIC HEARING CONT. – Definitive Plan – 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates LLC

Mr. Paleologopoulos noted that there are not updated engineering comments from the last submittal but there are two proposals for the sight distance study. He stated waivers have been put off for a while and that he would like to vote on them at this meeting. Mr. MacNaughton stated that there was a site visit with the Conservation Commission that Michelle Chase of Agawam Engineering attended as well. Mr. MacNaughton marked the sight line in the field where the sight distance study will be conducted and showed Ms. Chase the sight line. He stated there was a discussion regarding the necessity of a sight distance study when in the field it seems the sight line is clear. He stated Ms. Chase sent out an email requesting Anderson Associates mark the center line for the sight distance study, which Mr. Huot of Anderson Associates has done, and Agawam Engineering will check for accuracy. Mr. MacNaughton requests that the board does not vote on a peer review proposal tonight as there will be a newly submitted sight distance study and plan sent in to Agawam Engineering this week, and believes that a peer review will not be needed after this submittal and will show that the sight line is clear. Mr. MacNaughton believes that the sight distance study should be resolved prior to voting on the waivers. Mr. Huot stated he received a correspondence from Ms. Chase requesting he mark the center line of the road way. He stated he also marked the location of the tree and fence line and took shots from Doane Ave to the opposite lane and this was plotted this day to be submitted. Mr. MacNaughton stated he felt Ms. Chase was stating in her email that the peer review may not be needed. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that it is not just a safety issue and that there are other aspects to granting the waivers. Mr. MacNaughton said the plan received approval from the Conservation Commission at their last meeting. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated engineering is waiting on the board to act on the waivers so that they can be taken into account during their review.

Mr. Paleologopoulos opened the meeting up to the public.

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

Lisa Patnode, 40 Doane Ave, stated that the email never came up in conversation when she spoke with Ms. Egerton in the planning office. Ms. Patnode asked if Mr. Huot does sight distance studies regularly and Mr. Huot said that he does not do these studies because he is a surveyor. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated Mr. Huot can use his surveyor equipment to mark distances. Ms. Patnode asked if this was someone the Board would hire to do the sight distance study and Mr. Paleologopoulos stated no, it would be in lieu of. Ms. Patnode requested the Board do not grant the waivers for safety reasons and for the fact that bylaws are put in place for a reason.

Ruth Cosmini, 102 Doane Ave, agreed with Ms. Patnode and stated that rules are put in place for a reason, just like stop signs, and if the okay is given on this waiver it will allow other people to do the same, and instead of 3 feet off it will be 10 feet or more. Ms. Cosmini thinks this will get out of hand if the waiver is granted.

Dan Reibling, 101 Doane Ave, stated that there is a telephone pole at the end of the proposed street and asked where it would be going. Mr. Huot stated that the telephone pole will remain but it is not in front of the roadway and doesn't think it will impact the sight line. Mr. Huot stated that the Agawam Engineering department requested the road be moved up 15 feet, which made the project noncompliant with the 300' distance between streets. He stated that it has to do with the turning radius which is on town property, which caused the project to be 7 feet short of the 300' requirement. Mr. MacNaughton stated that the Board approved the preliminary plan prior to the Engineering Department requesting the road be moved north. Mr. Reibling stated that as an engineer, his firm was 1" short on a stair which caused a safety issue, and that the 7 feet short of the 300' requirement is a safety issue as well.

Ms. Patnode stated she is also in opposition of the sidewalk waiver and sent a letter into the Mayor's office regarding the waivers and complete streets policy, which any deviation from the policy would have to be approved by the Mayor. Ms. Egerton stated that the request comes from Engineering in conjunction with other departments and then goes to the mayor.

Ms. Baldwin asked for clarification as to whether the work done on sight today would be submitted to Agawam Engineering and Mr. MacNaughton replied yes and that it will be a revision of sheet 10 of the plan.

Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that since he has been on the Board, he has not seen a waiver granted for the 300' distance between streets. He noted that waivers had been granted in the past but these streets were on opposite sides and that granting the waiver would set a precedent. He stated that the requirement has been in effect for over 20 years, does not want to set a precedent, and does not see how granting the waiver would benefit the town. Mr. DeStefano agreed that he does not want to set a precedent, but that the 300' is an arbitrary number and that the minutes from when the requirement was approved does not state any reasoning as to why 300' was determined. Ms. Baldwin agreed, but stated that defining a number for the requirement makes the regulation more enforceable, and without it, the regulation becomes a gray area. Mr. Elfman does not think that the 300' between streets is a safety issue, because then the board wouldn't have the authority to grant the waiver. He noted the Board received a correspondence from the Safety Officer that there was no safety issues for the project. Mr. Elfman states that the Board has granted waivers

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

in the past and if there is only one waiver for this project, he would allow it. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated this waiver is different because the connection is on a busy street.

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Ms. Baldwin to deny the waiver for the 300 feet between intersection requirement.

VOTE 3 – 1 (Elfman) – 1 (DiLullo)

Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that they would now discuss the sidewalk waiver. He stated that he doesn't see people walking on the sidewalks and will instead walk in the road. The Board heard from a resident who stated sidewalks will not get used since they are not connected to anything, and he would grant the waiver. Mr. Elfman said he would prefer to have the sidewalks and Mr. DeStefano agreed. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that the industrial lots are on the plan, but will have to be back before the Board before building and the Board could require the sidewalks then.

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to deny the request to waive the construction of the sidewalk on the South side of the street.

VOTE 2 – 2 (Baldwin, Paleologopoulos) – 1 (DiLullo)

The motion was denied without a majority in the affirmative to grant the waiver. Mr. DeStefano stated that the discussions for the proposals for the sight distance should be held off since it might not be needed.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to continue the public hearing for Definitive Plan – 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates to the April 21, 2022 meeting.

VOTE 5 – 0

2. SITE PLAN – 32 Shoemaker Lane – Beach Mountain, LLC

Filipe Cravo of R. Levesque Associates and Steve and Mike Riley of Beach Mountain, LLC, and was present to discuss the project. Mr. Cravo stated this is a proposed self-storage facility and is the old Crowley farm off of Shoemaker Lane. He said the property is 17.88 acres, but the project will stay within the existing improved areas on the site. He stated the high point is near the existing barn and there is an existing single family home which will all be demolished as part of the project. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there was a historic impact to demolishing the structures. Mr. Riley stated that they have been worked with David Cecchi of the Historical Commission to save certain aspects of the structures for the Commission. He stated they received the OK to demolish and the rest of the debris was cleaned up yesterday. Mr. DeStefano asked if there was a zoning issue with this project. Mr. Cravo stated that this is in Industrial B and this is a by right use in this zone. He explained the project consists of 12 self-storage buildings, with one of the buildings being a climate controlled and the rest being ambient units. Ms. Baldwin

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

asked what the approximate footprint of the buildings are. Mr. Riley stated its about 56,000 square feet and Mr. Cravo stated the largest building is 12,000 square feet. Mr. Cravo displayed the site plan and explained where the new access drive would be located, the parking spaces, and where the units would be located. Mr. DeStefano asked the distance from the driveway to the end of Shoemaker Ln and Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if the driveway was the existing curbcut. Mr. Cravo stated the driveway is farther away from the end of Shoemaker than the existing curbcut. Ms. Baldwin asked if a dumpster would be located on site and Mr. Cravo stated no, and Ms. Baldwin asked about lighting. Mr. Cravo said there would be one light for the parking area and downcast wall packs for the storage units and that a photometric plan was provided. He stated that for stormwater management, there will be catch basins at the low points. He stated there is a historically icy spot in the winter on the driveway and that a swale was provided to catch the water, and that there will be no runoff onto Shoemaker Lane. Ms. Baldwin stated that Agawam Engineering was concerned about the culvert on the south west portion of the property and the turning radius for fire department. Mr. Cravo stated that they had a meeting with Agawam Engineering and that they will verify the condition of the culvert. He stated that the Fire Department approved the layout. Ms. Baldwin asked about landscaping and screening. Mr. Cravo stated they are providing trees and that the plan set has the list of species that will be put on site. He stated that not many utilities are required for this use but that they will be hooked up to Shoemaker Lane, but the office building will need water and sewer. Ms. Baldwin asked for what the buildings would look like and Mr. Cravo pulled up pictures of a different facility that the applicant owns. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked for the building height and Mr. Riley stated it would be under 12 feet. Ms. Baldwin asked if there would be a gate to access the buildings and Mr. Cravo stated that access would be 24/7 through the keypad gate but that the office would be open from 8am-8pm. Mr. Cravo displayed where the ADA parking spaces and gate would be located. Mr. Elfman stated that some businesses get run in storage units and asked how they would handle that. Mr. Riley stated that electricity is not provided inside the storage units and that the rental contract prohibits that. Mr. Riley stated that there is an assortment of sizes for the units. Ms. Baldwin asked about snow removal and Mr. Riley stated that they plow their own facility that they currently own with no problems, and noted that the road will be paved. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there are issues with the roofs of the storage units for snow, and Mr. Riley said they haven't run into any problems so far as the sun heats up the metal relatively quickly to melt the snow, which gets caught by the drains. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there would be water treatment and Mr. Cravo states they are installing water quality units which have oil capacity built into them, and showed the located on the plans. Mr. DiLullo questioned the marsh area on the map and that the project overlaps the buffer zone. Mr. Cravo stated that wetland lines have been established by the Conservation Commission and that the wetland lines have been reviewed multiple times, and are currently in front of the Conservation Commission. Mr. Paleologopoulos thanked the applicant for investing in Agawam. Edward Cecchi, 1342 Suffield St, abuts the property and asked which way the roof would be pitched on the building closest to his property and Mr. Cravo stated it would be pitched away from his property toward the driveway. He then asked which way the drainage would pitch and Mr. Cravo stated that the runoff would be collected in the swale. Mr. Paleologopoulos said that the Agawam Engineering department ensures the development would not negatively impact abutters.

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Elfman to continue the site plan review for SITE PLAN – 32 Shoemaker Lane – Beach Mountain, LLC to the April 21, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Egerton added that there were no comments from Fire, Police, or Inspection Services.

VOTE 5 – 0

3. SITE PLAN – 830 Silver Street – Behavioral Health Network

Mr. Paleologopoulos started by disclosing that he had previously worked for Behavioral Health Network 9 years ago and can be impartial, but asked if the applicant felt more comfortable he would recuse himself, which they did not think was necessary.

Brendan Greeley of R.J Greeley Company, Michelle Michaelian of Behavioral Health Network, and Dan Daigle of Architectural Insights were present to describe the project. Mr. Greeley states there is an existing 10,000 square foot building for a lab space on 3.6 acres of land on the corner of Shoemaker Lane and Silver St. He states the proposed change of use is to an educational group home, and because it is an existing building, there are very little changes being made. Mr. Greeley stated the changes include adding fencing to create play areas, adding doors and a landing and accessible ramp. He stated there will be a black chain link fence in the front with a landscape barrier to the street and a gate for maintaining access. He stated the fence was initially proposed to be larger, but was decided to be smaller to keep back from the wooded area. Mr. Greeley stated that fences are exempt from the Conservation Commission review, but felt it was better be further from the buffer. Mr. Greeley stated the fence continues along the property line with a gate at the curbcut to control access into the site, with emergency services having access to open it on their own. He stated there is an ambulance space and a large enough turning radius for the vehicle to turn into the site and back into the space. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if this was all existing and Mr. Greeley said yes, there would be no changes to impervious surface. Mr. DeStefano asked how long the building has been vacant and Ms. Michaelian stated at least two years. Mr. Greeley states the building is accommodating to this reuse and Mr. Elfman questioned the zoning. Mr. Greeley stated this is a Dover Amendment applicable use, meaning it is a by right use in every zone, which was affirmed by an opinion by the Building Inspector. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked who the abutter towards the top of the plan was, and Mr. Greeley stated that it is OMG Inc. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted that there was screening towards the front of the building from the street and asked if there would be other screening in the back and Mr. Greeley stated no, since there is a dense wooded area to block the view. Ms. Baldwin asked about lighting and Mr. Greeley said that there would be lighting added by the door. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked what CBAT meant and Ms. Michaelian said it stands for Community Based Acute Treatment and that this would be a short term stay for intensive care, education, and various therapy. She stated the time in the facility is about 7 days or so. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about security and if someone could walk out of the play area. Mr. Greeley stated these would be access controlled. Ms. Egerton added that the plans in front of the board are dated 4/7/22 and therefore this set of plans have not been reviewed by the departments, but the only change is the size of the play area as described earlier. Ms. Baldwin asked about the dumpster and Mr. Greeley said it would be screened and fenced. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there were

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

going to be enough parking spaces and Mr. Greeley stated that there are 44 spaces provided, which exceeds the amount of required, and showed where the ADA spaces were located. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted this would be a 24/7 facility but would not add any more traffic than was there before. Ms. Baldwin asked if there is a photometric plan and Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that the building is in an industrial zone and the lighting is preexisting. He stated they also get worried with lightings for signs in residential zones, in case the signs are lit at night. Ms. Baldwin stated that the plans say privet for the screenings but that they mentioned arborvitae. Mr. Daigle stated that arborvitae would be best and that there are privacy screenings in the chain link fence as well. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about snow removal and Mr. Greeley stated that there is plenty of room for snow removal on site. Ms. Egerton noted that for the plans dated 3/29/22 there were no comments from Engineering, Police, Fire, or Inspection Services. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked if there was any correspondence regarding the project and Ms. Egerton has not received anything. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked for an example of this type of use. Ms. Michaelian stated that this would be an expansion of an existing program in Springfield, Ma which is in an old home, and they have been servicing the population since 2015 successfully. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked how many people would be employed at the facility and Ms. Michaelian stated at least 50 since there is rotating staff. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about the signage and Mr. Greeley stated that there wouldn't be any change of signage except for putting the Behavioral Health Network name on the existing sign. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked about building elevation and Mr. Greeley stated the note could be added to the plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to approve the site plan review for SITE PLAN – 830 Silver Street – Behavioral Health Network conditional upon satisfying all professional staff comments.

VOTE 5 – 0

4. SITE PLAN – Tuckahoe Farm – 0 Pine Street – Town of Agawam

This application was previously continued to the May 5, 2022 meeting.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES March 17, 2022

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to approve of the minutes of March 17, 2022 as written.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Elfman)

Agawam Planning Board – April 7, 2022

6. DISCUSSION + POSSIBLE VOTE – Planning Board Representative for Housing Committee

Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that the committee meets once a month to discuss issues on housing in Agawam. He states that one topic of discussion was accessory dwelling units and is a very important job. He states Ms. Baldwin was on for a few years and that he has been on for the last few years, and that one member of the housing committee has to be from the Planning Board. Mr. Paleologopoulos stated that other members include the public, city council, zoning, and CPA, with a total of 7 people. He states they talk about senior housing and lower income, and that keeping these residents in town adds vitality. Ms. Baldwin noted that the median income in Agawam is \$66,000 and that the committee helps make it possible to live in Agawam and that it affects people of all ages.

7. Correspondences—

There was one correspondence from Stu and Lisa Patnode that was discussed during the public hearing for the Aspenwood Estates definitive plan application.

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

VOTE 5 – 0

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm