

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, June 15, 2005 – 5:00 PM
Home Economics Room-Amherst Regional Middle School, 170 Chestnut Street
MINUTES

PRESENT: Paul Bobrowski, Chair; Aaron Hayden, Mary Scipioni, Carl Mailler, Adrian Fabos, David Kastor, Chris Boyd, Pam Rooney

ABSENT: Rod Francis

STAFF: Jonathan Tucker, Interim Director; Niels la Cour, Senior Planner; Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant

Mr. Bobrowski opened the meeting at 5:04 PM.

I. MINUTES – Meeting of June 1, 2005

Mr. Boyd MOVED: to approve the Minutes of June 1, 2005 as submitted. Mr. Mailler seconded, and the Motion passed 4-0 (Hayden, Rooney, Kastor, Fabos abstained).

II. PUBLIC HEARING – PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION APPLICATION

SUB 2005-00001, “Lawrence Circle” - Owen Drive – Constructive Enterprises, LLP

Mr. Bobrowski opened the public hearing for this request for approval for a 6-lot, single-family preliminary subdivision, west of East Pleasant Street off Owen Drive (Map 5D/Parcel 4; R-N District).

Mr. Kastor submitted a signed disclosure, noting that he is a supporter of a community farm project on an abutting parcel and has contributed funds to that project.

Mr. Bill Garrity, landscape architect, presented the proposal which is located on a wooded plateau next to a former gravel pits. He expressed dissatisfaction that he had not been sent copies of a letter from the Town Engineer that the Board had just received. He said the applicant may be willing to explore a suggestion raised at the site visit of connecting the proposed cul-de-sac to adjacent Town land via a trail easement.

Mr. Garrity asserted that a sidewalk is not really necessary but the applicant would put one in if the Planning Board wanted it. Mr. Garrity told the Board that the Fire Chief’s comments concerning turning radii contradict the Subdivision Regulations. He asked Mr. la Cour to work out the issue of street light type and ownership with the Town Engineer. The Town usually takes responsibility for street lights after accepting the road, he said.

The Board discussed the street lights and which fixtures it prefers. After discussing the road width and noting that a residential cul-de-sac with single family homes did not need to accommodate the largest fire truck in the fleet (the ladder truck), it was suggested that a 22 foot paved way with 2 foot reinforced shoulders will be adequate.

At Mr. Bobrowski’s request, Mr. Garrity pointed out that the inconsistencies that he spoke about between the Subdivision Regulations and the Fire Chief recommendations arose over recommendations numbers 2 and 3, and he did not understand number 5.

Board members were generally in favor of creating connections/access to walking trails for the development. However, it was noted that concerns had been raised by DPW about potential liability issues because of the adjacent Town land's previous use as a dump site. The applicant was encouraged to discuss the trail issues with DPW, including alternative connections, and pursue it if possible.

In response to a comment that some of the lot numbers were inconsistent on the plans, Mr. Garrity said that the project was an old one which had been around for a long time, and a number of plans had been generated for it—some numbers survived from earlier plans.

Ms. Scipioni commented that a lot of the issues discussed could be resolved if one lot was omitted.

Mr. la Cour said that staff would schedule a meeting with the Superintendent of Public Works to discuss his concern(s) about the Town's gravel pit and what might be buried there.

Ms. Sue McCutcheon, abutter, commented that although she had no major issues with the proposal, she will miss the view.

Ms. Maura Connor, #7 Owen Drive, expressed concern about low water pressure on her lot south of Owen Drive. Mr. Garrity suggested that it was probably due to an undersized water service line into the house.

Mr. Bobrowski guided the Board through the Development Application Report. Additional issues raised were common drives and sidewalks. Mr. la Cour also noted the need to install street trees.

The Board did not discuss the Site Visit report.

Mr. Bobrowski asked the abutters present if they knew of any concerns or objections to the proposal. They did not.

There was no additional public comment.

Ms. Rooney MOVED: to close the public hearing. Mr. Boyd seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

Mr. Kastor MOVED: to approve preliminary subdivision plan SUB 2005-00001, "Lawrence Circle," with the following recommendations:

1. The applicant should explore the options for pedestrian access and connections to the proposed North Amherst Community Farm.
2. A street light at the end of the cul-de-sac.
3. Road pavement width be 22' with a 24' reinforced base and cap cod berms.
4. The applicant is encouraged to consider a common driveway for lots 9&10 (as shown on the plans) and possibly for lots 6&7.
5. A sidewalk should be included on the west side of the subdivision road along the property line to the trail easement or beginning of the cul-de-sac, whichever distance is the longest.
6. Attempt to utilize the cul-de-sac for utilities such as the storm water management system.

7. Resolve the issues raised by the Town Engineer's comments.
8. Resolve the issues raised by the Fire Department's comments.

Mr. Boyd seconded, and the Motion passed unanimously, 8-0.

III. NEW BUSINESS

B. Lot Release Requests, Lots 3 & 4, Moody Field Road – Snell Street LLC

The Board received a request from Snell Street, LLC asking for the release of the above lots. Mr. la Cour noted that the road is to be paved next week. The Town Engineer has indicated that no security will be needed until the next lot is released, he told the Board.

Mr. Boyd MOVED: to release lots 3 & 4, Moody Field Road. Mr. Hayden seconded, and the Motion passed 8-0-1 (Scipioni abstained).

The Board signed the Certificates of Performance.

A. North Pleasant Street Streetscape Improvements – Mr. Tucker described the improvements which, he said, the Town hopes to begin in July.

C. Upcoming Meeting Schedule - The Board scheduled its annual picnic for July 6th. Mr. Bobrowski offered to host. The next regular meeting will be Wednesday July 20th.

V. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – None

VI. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS

The Board decided not to review the following:

ZBA2005-00034, 325 Middle Street – Tordis McKay
ZBA2005-00035, 321 Main Street – Candee Wong

VII. UPCOMING SPC/SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS – Mr. la Cour said that a Preliminary Subdivision Application has been filed for an 8-lot cluster subdivision at 447 Bay Road. The public hearing will be scheduled for July 20th. The Board scheduled a site visit for Wednesday, July 13th at 8:00 AM.

VIII. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Zoning** – No Report
- B. Atkins Working Group** – No Report

IX. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission** – No Report
- B. Community Preservation Act Committee** – No Report
- C. Farm Committee** – No Report

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D. Comprehensive Planning Committee – Mr. Hayden reminded the Board that the Community Forum is scheduled tomorrow evening, 7:00 PM, in the Community Hall at Grace Church.

X. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – Mr. Bobrowski asked if the Board wanted to discuss any of the Special Town Meeting warrant articles. On the proposed rescission of the funding for Plum Brook, Mr. Boyd said that the Board had previously voted to support the soccer fields. Mr. Kastor said that he felt it was inappropriate for the Board to act on issues for which it may grant permits.

Mr. Hayden MOVED: to oppose Article 1 rescinding the funding for the Plum Brook Recreation Area. Mr. Boyd seconded. The vote was 6-0-2 (Scipioni and Kastor abstained).

Mr. Boyd MOVED: to not recommend Article 1 and have Mr. Bobrowski speak to the article on the Board's behalf. Mr. Bobrowski suggested "opposing" the article rather than "not recommending," and Mr. Boyd accepted the amendment. Mr. Mailler seconded.

It was suggested not taking action on Articles 2 and 3 because there was not enough information. Mr. Boyd suggested strongly opposing them. Mr. la Cour said this could be an appropriate time for showing justification for a master plan. Mr. Mailler said that the Board should not spend a lot of time opposing or supporting the articles.

Mr. Boyd MOVED: that the Board oppose Articles 2 and 3.

Ms. Scipioni MOVED: the Board take no position because there is no master plan to guide these actions.

There were no seconds, and no votes were taken.

XI. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – Mr. Tucker noted that Mr. la Cour was celebrating his birthday that evening. The Board congratulated Mr. la Cour on the advent of his birthday. Mr. Tucker reminded the Board that the Community Forum for the comprehensive plan was scheduled for tomorrow night at 7:00 PM in the Grace Church Parish Hall, which people should attend after sampling the Taste of Amherst on the Common and attending the West Cemetery Mural Dedication being held at West Cemetery at 5:00 PM. He noted for those interested in cultural and historical events, that the Western Massachusetts Highland Games are scheduled for Saturday, June 25th at the Franklin County Fairgrounds in Greenfield.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boyd MOVED: to adjourn this meeting at 7:20 PM. Mr. Hayden seconded, and the Motion passed 8-0.

Respectfully submitted:

Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant
Approved:

Paul G. Bobrowski, Chair

DATE: _____