

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
MEETING OF APRIL 19, 2006

A regular meeting of the Lexington Planning Board held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Office Building, was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Manz with members Galaitsis, Hornig, Canale, Zurlo and planning staff McCall-Taylor, Schilt and Tap present.

***** MINUTES *****

Review of Minutes: The Board reviewed and corrected the minutes for the meetings of January 25, February 2 and 8, March 1 and 8, 2006. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the minutes as amended. The Board agreed to postpone acting on the minutes of March 14, 27 and 28, and April 3 and 5, 2006 to a future meeting.

***** ADMINISTRATION OF LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS *****

PLANS NOT REQUIRING APPROVAL UNDER THE SUBDIVISION CONTROL LAW

Form A/2006-2, 15 Vine Brook Road: The Board reviewed an Approval Not Required Plan for land at 15 Vine Brook Road. On a motion duly made and seconded it was voted to endorse the plan entitled "Plan of Land Located in Lexington in Massachusetts", dated July 21, 2005, prepared and certified by Kevin E. Danahy, Land Surveyor, Meridian Associates, Inc., Beverly, MA, with Form A/2006-2, submitted by Laurence Tropeano, trustee of LTVB Trust, as it does not require approval under the Subdivision Control Law.

Form A 2006-3, 176 Cedar Street: The Board reviewed an Approval Not Required Plan for land at 176 Cedar Street. On a motion duly made and seconded it was voted to endorse the plan entitled "Plan of Land Located in Lexington in Massachusetts", dated February 14, 2006, prepared and certified by Kevin E. Danahy, Land Surveyor, Meridian Associates, Inc., Beverly, MA, with Form A/2006-3, submitted by Joseph Gelormini, as it does not require approval under the Subdivision Control Law.

SUBDIVISION OF LAND

PUBLIC HEARING: Pine Meadow Farm (Cedar Street), Definitive Conventional Subdivision Plan, JMG Development: The public hearing was convened at 7:45 p.m. Representing the applicant team were Mr. Joseph Gelormini, developer, Ms. Pamela Brown, attorney, Mr. Ron O'Brien, civil engineer, and Mr. David Jay, landscape architect. There were approximately twenty people in the audience; a sign-up list is on file at the Planning Department.

Ms. Manz introduced the hearing, and stated that the Planning Board had reviewed a sketch plan and a preliminary site development plan for this subdivision. Mr. Gelormini added that the applicants had last appeared before the Board with a preliminary plan on January 11, and had responded to all of the conditions that were requested at that time. In addition, the applicants have been before the Conservation Commission, which has approved the plans, but at the request of the applicants did not close the public hearing until the Planning Board approves the subdivision plan. Mr. Gelormini noted that the Engineering Department had approved all of the changes to the drainage plans that were requested by the Conservation Commission.

Mr. O'Brien presented an overview of the proposed 14-unit subdivision, noting that it would result in a net of 11 new housing units, and that all of the proposed lots conform to the dimensional requirements of the zoning by-law. He explained the changes to the drainage plans that had been made in response to requests from the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission to utilize a subsurface infiltration system. Mr. O'Brien detailed changes to the level spreader, noting that he worked with the Engineering Department and the Conservation Commission to reconfigure the outlet pipe to minimize the potential for clogging from debris. The size of the infiltration system has been increased by 10% due to suggestions

from the Conservation Commission to provide sufficient on-site services to minimize impacts to an adjacent wetland area. The utility plans call for a looped water line, and the sewer system is tied into the Town's lines. At the request of the Planning Board, the right-of-way of the new road has been reduced to the town's standards for a minor residential street, which provides less impervious surface and allows the road to be designed with some curves to reduce vehicle speeds. The looped cul-de-sac was modified to a "teardrop" shape, also reducing impervious surface area. Mr. O'Brien concluded by stating that most of the building footprints shown on the plans are the actual houses that will be built, and that the houses on lots 8 and 9 have been moved to preserve some existing trees.

Ms. Manz inquired about how the drainage system on the individual lots will accommodate roof runoff. Mr. O'Brien explained that instead of gutters and downspouts, the dwellings will have a stone drip edge that drains to a landscaped trench filled with stone. The trench will have an impermeable barrier at the bottom to divert water away from the foundations and into the ground water. The trench system was designed in consultation with the Conservation Commission and the Town Engineer. The Board asked for language in the homeowners' agreement that prohibits installation of gutters on the houses; requires a maintenance plan for the drainage trenches; and, states that the homeowners are responsible for maintaining the lighting and that they may not come to the town in the future to request that street lighting be added. Mr. Gelormini agreed to add these provisions to the covenants.

Mr. Jay explained the tree retention plan, describing a rating scale he developed to rank existing trees to be retained or removed. The applicants have relocated proposed houses and redesigned the new road to save more trees and the limit of work line was also modified to retain some clusters of mature trees. In addition, some tree clusters within the work area have been identified to be saved, if possible. Mr. Galaisis asked if notes could be placed on the plans stating how the trees in the work area will be protected during construction. Mr. Gelormini replied that it would be difficult to predict whether the trees could be saved until the work is underway, but that efforts would be made to reduce disturbance including using hay bales and silt fencing. Mr. Jay added that even if the trees are not disturbed, work in the area surrounding them could compromise their root systems to the extent that the trees could not survive. Mr. Hornig requested that the tree retention plan be referenced in the deeds for the individual lots. Ms. Brown indicated that it would be included.

Mr. Galaisis asked if the entry to the site from Fremont Street could be relocated to save a few more trees. Mr. Gelormini responded that the sewer easement in the area limits where the road could be constructed, and that the current layout was developed to save trees in another area. Mr. O'Brien pointed out that the easement to the town land would be enhanced with plant material to invite public access. As to who would be responsible for maintaining the landscaped entry, Mr. Gelormini agreed to add language to the covenants and the homeowners' association documents detailing the association's responsibility maintain it.

Mr. O'Brien described changes made to lots eight and nine to address the Recreation Committee's concern about golf course impacts. He noted that the setbacks from the houses have been increased to 67 feet, up from 46 feet. The rooflines of the houses were designed to break up the scale and height when viewed from the golf course. He added that the applicants prefer a picket fence rather than the chain link requested by the Recreation Committee, as it would better fit the character of the development. It was noted that there are no safety issues with the houses that are currently located adjacent to the golf course. Mr. Canale inquired about the height of the fence that the Recreation Committee had requested, and Mr. Gelormini stated that a height of four feet had been specified. Ms. Manz inquired if the fence would be extended around the perimeter of lot ten. Mr. Gelormini noted that the area around lot ten is fairly wooded; the fence would be extended as far as feasible without encroaching on the wetland buffer.

Mr. Galaitsis inquired about the height of the basements of the houses on lots eight and nine, noting that the houses appear to be three stories. Mr. Gelormini stated that they are walkout basements, but the grade changes on the lots would inhibit views from the golf course. Additional plantings would provide screening as well.

Mr. O'Brien described where stone walls would be constructed on the site, using stone from existing stone walls on the property. Asked if any stones would be removed from the site, Mr. Gelormini stated that no stones would be removed, as they are too hard to come by. He added that the easement to the town land would be well defined by stone walls. Mr. Canale inquired where horse-style fencing would be located. Mr. Gelormini indicated that it would be used along the entryways to the site from Cedar Street and Fremont Street, and it would be constructed of a PVC material to ensure less need for maintenance.

Mr. Canale inquired about the proposed lot sizes. Mr. O'Brien noted that decreasing the right-of-way for the road allowed for some of the lots to be increased in size, but that this did not result in increased impervious surface on the sum of the lots. He referred to a table had been added to the property rights and dimensional standards plan that specifies the maximum amount of impervious surface allowed on each lot.

Audience Questions and Comments: Mr. Larry Belvin, 10 Denver Street, asked how public access to the adjacent public land would be identified. Mr. Gelormini described the entry way landscaping and the proposed pathway that would be connected to the sidewalk. With no additional questions or comments from the audience, Ms. Manz closed the public hearing at 8:40 p.m.

Mr. Canale thanked the applicants for listening to the Planning Board, and for their efforts to address all of the issues raised during the review of the preliminary plan. Ms. McCall-Taylor asked Mr. Gelormini if he intended to ask the Town to accept the new street. Ms. McCall-Taylor said that generally when the Planning Board approves waivers from the Planning Board's design standards it is with the understanding that the roads will not be accepted by the Town. Mr. Gelormini expressed his concern that if the street were not accepted by the Town that DPW would not plow it. Mr. O'Brien asked if it could be accepted because it meets the standards for a minor residential street. Mr. Canale indicated that he has no problem with including language in the SPS that would not preclude acceptance of the streets. Ms. Manz said that because this is a conventional subdivision with a street designed to the standards for a lower street classification, she did not see why it should be excluded from future acceptance. She added that street acceptance is a separate process requiring approval by Town Meeting.

Regarding the proposed street names, Martingale Road and Richmond Circle, the Board indicated that they are acceptable.

Ms. McCall-Taylor asked the Board how it felt about the proposed use of picket fence, rather than chain-link as requested by the Recreation Committee, and how far it should be extended around lot 10. The Board indicated its preference for a picket fence and that it would defer to the Conservation Commission on the matter of how far to extend it. Mr. Zurlo asked the applicants their opinion about providing no trespassing signs on the fence. Mr. Gelormini stated that he thought providing one sign per lot would be sufficient. Mr. Galaitsis indicated that he felt it should be an option for the property owners to decide and the other members agreed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously to approve the definitive plan for a conventional subdivision development, dated April 14, 2006, with 14 dwelling units as submitted, subject to the conditions agreed to during the Public Hearing. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was also voted unanimously to grant a special permit with site plan review (SPS) for a planned residential

development in an RO zone, and to grant waivers of Regulations in §175-45E of the Code of the Town of Lexington, Design standards for streets and rights-of-way as follows:

- From the requirement for a local street with a minimum right-of-way of 50 feet to a minimum right-of-way of 40 feet.
- From the requirement for a local street with a minimum pavement width of 24 feet to a minimum pavement width of 22 feet.
- From the requirement for vertical granite curbing to be installed at the back of all catch basins that are at low points, on all sections of a street with a grade greater than 5%, and on all corner roundings, to allow sloped granite curbing throughout the entire subdivision.
- From the requirement for a minimum grade of 2% within 75 feet of an intersection to a minimum grade of 2% within 12 feet of Richmond Circle's intersection with Martingale Road
- From the requirement for a dead-end street to have a circular turnaround to allow a "teardrop" configuration in Richmond Circle.
- From the requirement to provide a sidewalk on one side of a minor residential street to having no sidewalk on Richmond Circle.
- From the requirement for a minimum radius of 25-feet for a right-of-way rounding at intersections, to a radius of 20-feet on Martingale Road at Cedar Street.
- From the requirement to provide a minimum center-line radius of 150 feet for a local street to provide a minimum center-line radius of 100 feet.
- From the requirement to provide a minimum center-line tangent length of 100 feet between reverse curves for a local street to providing a minimum center-line tangent length of 50 feet.
- From the requirement to show provisions for street lighting to allow alternative lighting on each lot.

Robinson Road, Sketch Subdivision Plan Alternatives, Homes Development: Mr. John Essarian and Mr. Joseph Marino, Homes Development, the applicant; and Mr. Gary Larson and Mr. Ti Johnson, landscape architects, were present. Mr. Marino said that Homes Development had three different concepts for developing a 2.67-acre parcel of land off Robinson Road. They would like the Planning Board to indicate which of the development concepts it would advise them to pursue before they consummate a real estate transaction on the property in the fall. He said that Homes Development is committed to pursuing one of the development scenarios.

Mr. Larson went over the locus and site analysis drawings and explicated the three concept plans: a reduced frontage subdivision with two dwelling units on a shared driveway; a cluster subdivision with eight dwelling units in four structures around a common driveway; and a conventional subdivision showing three dwelling units on a cul de sac. The reduced frontage and conventional plans showed the dividing off a parcel representing approximately 20 percent of the total site are, via an approval-not-required subdivision, the development of which, the Board noted, would incur a great deal of destruction to the site.

Option 1, Reduced Frontage subdivision: The plan showed two new dwelling units sited on the higher portion of the site, not including the ANR lot, served by a shared driveway. (Presumably, a third single-family dwelling would be built on the ANR lot.)

Option 2, Cluster Subdivision: The plan showed eight attached dwelling units in four structures in the center of the entire site clustered around a common driveway. One of the units would be offered as affordable.

Option 3, Conventional Subdivision: This plan, on land not including the ANR lot, showed two large single-family dwellings on two lots fronting on a new standard street with a cul de sac turnaround. Mr.

Marino noted that the economics of the three scenarios are about equal. He asked how the Board would react to a four-unit conventional plan with dwellings of about 4,000 square feet of living area each.

Questions from the Board had to do with the proposed house sizes in each option relative to that of existing homes in the neighborhood, which range widely in size – from roughly 1000 to 7,000 square feet square feet of living area; the cluster option's impacts as calculated in the worksheet – which were seen as too high; the lack of stormwater runoff structures in Robinson Road; and the likely destruction of most of the natural features on the ANR lot when it is built on.

A majority of the Board expressed its strong hope that a cluster scenario could be worked out that would satisfy it as well as the developer. The Board would prefer a cluster with no more than six units, attractively sited and with an affordable component. Mr. Galaitis preferred Option 1 of those presented, and urged the developers to consider a cluster based 3-unit plan (with impacts far below the maximums on the cluster worksheet), if they are determined to construct large-size units like the ones they presented in options 1 and 3. He also added that if they pursue a cluster, it should have fewer units of the size shown in Option 2, and preferably smaller units.

In terms of guidance to the applicant, the Board said that it will look for design sensitive to the site's character and existing vegetation and for moderate house sizes. Ms. Manz indicated that they would not want to see dwellings with 6,000 square feet of living area.

Mr. Marino asked if there is a particular cul de sac configuration that the Board prefers. He thanked the Board for its input on the development proposals.

***** PLANNING BOARD ORGANIZATION, SCHEDULE *****
Meeting Schedule for May and June: The Board set meetings for May 3, 17, 31, June 14 and 28, 2006.

***** REPORTS *****

Staff

Metropolitan Parkway North: Ms. McCall-Taylor reported that Avalon Bay's variance expires in May. It has applied to the Board of Appeals for the same variance allowing a reduction in the required setback of a parking space, driveway and maneuvering aisle. This is a backup measure in case they were not able to implement the existing variance before it expires.

Transportation Mitigation Group: Mr. Schilt reported that at its next meeting the Traffic Mitigation Group will be reviewing possible uses of the AvalonBay mitigation funds. He suggested that the Board formulate theories principles positions approaches to traffic issues so Mr. Canale and he can represent them at TMG meetings, as appropriate and relevant.

Planning Board

Mr. Canale reported that a CD developed by several state agencies on Low Impact Development is available to those interested.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Anthony G. Galaitis, Clerk