

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
MEETING OF MAY 3, 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 and planning staff McCall-Taylor, Schilt and Tap present. Mr. Zurlo was absent.

***** MINUTES *****

Review of Minutes: The Board reviewed and corrected the minutes for the meetings of March 14 and 28, 2006. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the minutes as amended.

The Board reviewed the minutes for the meetings of March 27 and 29 and April 5, 2006. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the minutes as written.

The Board reviewed and corrected the minutes for the meeting of April 3 and 19, 2006. On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the minutes as amended.

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

SUBDIVISION OF LAND

48 Summit Road, Preliminary Conventional Subdivision Plan, Yuan-Shion & Shu-Lin Tung, Public Information Meeting: Present for this proposal were Mr. Frederick Russell, P.E., and Mr. Shion Tung, the applicant. There were 10 people in the audience. Mr. Russell presented a preliminary plan, dated April 4, 2006, for a two-lot subdivision for land at 48 Summit Road. Mr. Tung's existing house is on Lot 1 and will remain. The plans show one new dwelling on Lot 2 and an interior drive with a cul de sac serving both dwellings. He noted that the plans respond to the Board's comments on earlier submissions. (At its meeting on December 21, 2005, the Planning Board had voted to disapprove a preliminary plan dated January 27, 2005, as the applicant did not submit sufficient information after the Board granted extensions of time in which it could act.)

Mr. Russell explained the changes to the plan, as follows:

- The new dwelling is sited closer to Summit Road, on more level ground, necessitating less site disturbance.
- The width of the road pavement is proposed to be 20 feet.
- Instead of a turnaround with a radius of 60 feet, a hammerhead 40 feet wide is shown.
- Drywells would capture runoff from the roof of the new dwelling.
- The landscape plan identifies trees to be retained.
- Two streetlights are proposed.

Board Comments and Questions: Mr. Galaitsis noted that the relative size of the new and existing trees is not accurately shown on the landscape plan. Ms. McCall-Taylor noted that the condition of the unaccepted portion of Summit Road needs to be addressed. There were questions about the stormwater management and the desire to minimize the impervious surface ratio. The Board requested that the water line be looped, or that the dead-ended line beneath Summit Road be extended to Fern Street. The Board also asked for a full turnaround rather than a tee or hammerhead as this will serve the entire street, not just the additional house.

Audience Questions and Comments: The neighbors expressed their serious concern about any needed blasting and its impacts on the flow of groundwater and asked for more test pits to determine the amount of ledge on the site. Furthermore, they wanted more information about the proposed improvements to Summit Road and the design of the new road. In response to one abutter who feared that the new road

might be extended to provide access to property to the rear of the new subdivision, it was pointed out that if the road were to be extended that an easement would need to be indicated in the plans currently being proposed.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Planning Board voted to authorize the applicant to proceed to the definitive plan stage with the following conditions, which must be addressed in detail in the definitive submission:

- The end of the dead-end street should be either a teardrop-shaped or a full circle turnaround designed to use the minimum amount of impervious surface needed to provide adequate access for emergency vehicles.

- The definitive street construction plan should provide details of improvements to Summit Road along the property frontage and up to its intersection with Pinewood Street along with a list of requested waivers from the local street standards.

- The Planning Board requests that improvements be made to the existing pedestrian and bicycle path between Summit Road and John Wilson Lane.

- The Board indicated that the two proposed streetlights may be replaced with suitable, alternative light fixtures at the front of both lots in order to reduce light shining onto abutting properties.

- The water line to Lot 2 should be reduced to a 1½-inch line in a looped system. The Board prefers that the dead-ended water line at the end of Summit Road be extended to connect to the town line under John Wilson Lane. The proposed hydrant should be relocated to Summit Road.

- In requesting a waiver from the minimum required radius of right-of-way rounding at the intersection of the new road with Summit Road, the applicant must address potential impacts on the abutting property from vehicles turning into and out of the new road.

- The applicant should consider adjusting the siting of the road and the new house to reduce the amount of site disturbance and vegetation removal, especially the large pine tree at Summit Road. The definitive plan should show the new locations of the stone walls which are to be moved. No stones from these walls may be removed from the site.

- More test pits are needed in several locations on Lot 2 in the area of the proposed infiltrator and dry wells in order to assess more accurately the extent of ledge and the amount of blasting that may be needed for construction, as well as to assess potential impacts on subsurface drainage. Low impact development techniques should be explored to maintain a more natural drainage pattern along the proposed road and driveways. The table of development data should include the maximum percentage of impervious coverage allowed on each lot so future owners will be aware of what expansion possibilities they may or may not have.

- The definitive submittal should include draft homeowners agreements and covenants relative to maintaining the drainage system and the existing vegetation.

Robinson Road Sketch Cluster Subdivision Plan II, Homes Development Corp.: Present for this item were: Mr. John Esserian and Mr. Joseph Marino, Homes Development Corp., the applicant, and Mr. Gary Larson, landscape architect.

After giving a brief review of site conditions and the previous concept plans shown to the Board at its meeting on March 8, 2006, Mr. Larson presented a new plan showing four single-family dwellings served by an interior drive off Robinson Road. He noted that the proposed development's impervious surface ratio is within the acceptable limit and there is 25,000 square feet of common open space. The proposed footprint of each dwelling is 1,750 square feet, plus two-car garages; living area would be approximately 3,500 square feet per dwelling. He said that their impacts calculations indicated a resident population of nineteen, which would generate 46 to 58 vehicle trips daily. The density of the development would be 1.5 dwelling units per acre; the average density of new developments in Lexington is 2.5 units per acre.

Responding to the Board's request at the previous meeting for an indication of the impacts of developing the ANR lot shown on the concept plans, Mr. Larson presented a fully-complying two-unit subdivision with a cul de sac street. The dwellings would each have a living area of 6,000 square feet.

The Board's comments on the cluster plan had to do with the size and type of the proposed units and the amount and configuration of the open space. The Board expressed its frustration with the way the cluster provisions are used by developers. Like this Robinson Road development they rarely show moderate-sized or attached units, only large single-family dwellings, and the open space is usually configured in such a way as to make its usability as a recreational resource marginal. Mr. Galaitsis characterized the Robinson Road plan as another "conventional subdivision in drag".

It was suggested that the developer consider smaller dwelling units, with no more than six units in three buildings clustered together more tightly, or with at least one small dwelling among three larger ones. The Board wants to see the cluster provisions used as intended to produce diverse and moderate alternatives to large single-family homes. It would prefer to see no more of the site disturbed than shown so far.

Mr. Esserian responded that attached homes are a marketing challenge and that a development with a small home next to bigger ones is not the look he is after. He asked the Board about the acceptability of a development with five units, each with 2,800 square feet of living area. He agreed to explore the six-unit concept, perhaps with garages underneath. He noted that he is still working against a real estate closing deadline.

The Board indicated that the applicant could proceed to the preliminary plan stage.

***** REPORTS *****

Planning Board

Design Advisory Committee (DAC): Ms. Manz reported that the DAC has recommended the use of wire-cut brick for sidewalks in Lexington Center, but that there are issues of initial cost and maintenance. The Board declined to make any recommendation on the type of bricks. The DAC prepared more detailed plans for Prince Estabrook Way, the proposed pedestrian connection between parking areas and Massachusetts Avenue. It is hoped the adjacent bank will provide funds for the improvement and the Town has allocated DPW funds for improvements to the area adjacent to the bike path.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC): Ms. Manz reported that the CPC has designed an application form for use of Community Preservation funds, which includes design guidelines. Information about the Community Preservation Act will go out with the tax bills, including an explanation of the exemptions from the 3% surtax.

Historic Roads: Mr. Canale reported on the panel discussion held this week. Participants at the conference were offered an opportunity to take the Liberty Ride and about a dozen did so.

Heritage Landscapes: Mr. Canale reported on a recent meeting of the Heritage Landscapes initiative. There is a draft of priority sites. On Friday there will be a field visit by the consultants and local interested parties to some of the sites

Tree Committee: Mr. Canale reported that the Tree Committee has expressed interest in pursuing a scenic road bylaw. This is different from the scenic byway that was voted on at Town Meeting.

Staff

Traffic Mitigation Group (TMG): Mr. Schilt reported that at its most recent meeting the TMG discussed potential uses of the traffic mitigation money that AvalonBay Communities, Inc. will soon be paying into the Transportation Demand Management Fund.

Waltham Street-Marrett Road Intersection Work: Mass Highway will hold a 25% Design hearing on its plans to improve the Waltham Street-Marrett Road intersection. Ms. McCall-Taylor added that the Gulf Station and VHB approve of the proposed design.

***** PLANNING BOARD ORGANIZATION, SCHEDULE *****

Work Program for the Coming Year: Due to the lateness of the hour, it was decided to postpone discussion of the Board's work program to its May 31st meeting.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 p.m.

Anthony G. Galaitsis, Clerk