

**TOWN OF SOMERS
PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 308
SOMERS, CONNECTICUT 06071**

**PLANNING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, November 16, 2006
7:00 p.m. Town Hall**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karl Walton called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Members Brad Pellissier, Mike Collins, Karl Walton, and Alternates Greg Genlot, (seated for Cliff Bordeaux), and Georgeanne Kuzman (seated for Michelle Hayward) were present and constituted a quorum. Engineering Consultant Mervyn Strauss, and Town Planner Patrice Carson were also present.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

a. SUBDIVISION APPLICATION #396, 14 LOTS (HIGH RIDGE ESTATES), HALL HILL ROAD, HIGH RIDGE ESTATES, LLC (12/07) – Set Public Hearing

Engineer Guy Hesketh, of F.A. Hesketh & Associates, was present and represented the applicant, Mike Leaska of High Ridge Estates, LLC. The property in question is approximately 20.02 acres owned by High Ridge Estates. It is located on Hall Hill Road and there is a 2.16-acre parcel of land owned by Ms. Ida Roy that would be incorporated with this initial acreage for a total acreage of 22.2± acres. The applicant is proposing a 14-lot subdivision. The lots meet the minimum requirement of 40,000 square feet of buildable area and are accessible from Hall Hill Road. The parcel would be split by a road running from Hall Hill to McCullough Drive with a stub to land to the south, allowing access to what could potentially be another subdivision in the future on the “Kasperzak” property.

The grading plan shows a natural drainage divide; one way flowing towards Hall Hill Road and the other to a lower point, to a culvert located off of George Wood Road. The grading plan mirrors this same watershed area. The plans show no increase in peak runoff.

A larger detention basin is proposed on the property to which the majority of the storm water will be discharged running into a culvert on George Wood Road (this is the natural flow currently). Rather than cutting through the center of the Kasperzack’s property, the applicant has discussed an easement with them and they are in agreement. The water will be taken from around their property and placed in a culvert. This will alleviate any peak increase in runoff and would have no net reduction in the end.

In the event of an extreme rainfall event, there has been a small discharge overflow placed which allows the water to flow south of the initial site which is currently the natural flow of the above mentioned

property. Public water will be provided to the site from McCullough Drive. The following additional items were mentioned during Mr. Hesketh's presentation:

- The lots meet state Health Code requirements including sewage disposal
- The applicant has received assurance that the lots are suitable for building
- Deep test pits have been done and they have worked with Steve Jacobs to fine tune any other issues
- Majority of the lots are 4 bedroom, with some 3 bedroom lots due to size and soil characteristics
- A request for a fee in lieu of Open Space was discussed
- A number of comments from Staff have been received and responded too. There are some minor comments which are outstanding, but the major concerns have been addressed
- Those remaining concerns could be addressed before a public hearing on December 7
- The Wetlands Commission approved the above mentioned application on June 2, 2006 before some changes were made, but no changes were significant enough to change this decision according to Dave Askew
- The Fire Department has established that the road width should be 24 feet with postings of no parking signs on one side of the road
- Fire hydrant locations have been modified and are acceptable to the fire department
- The applicant has to go before the Board of Selectman for approval of streetlights
- A construction bond amount is needed for review by the Town Engineer

A motion was made by Mr. Genlot, seconded by Ms. Kuzman, and unanimously voted to schedule a Public Hearing on December 7, 2006 beginning at 7:00pm for subdivision application #396, 14 lots (High Ridge Estates), Hall Hill Road, High Ridge Estates, LLC.

b. OTHER – There was none.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Subdivision Application #397, 23 lots (Gillette's Crossing), 180 Battle Street & Eleanor Lane, KRL Builders (01/11) – Set Public Hearing Date

Sandy Aeschliman, Aeschliman Land Surveying and representing KRL Builders, discussed the latest information on this application.

He has received Mr. Strauss' comments and has addressed them all except for #13 and #14, because they are a Fire Marshall issue dealing with the fire hydrants. Mr. Leno has subsequently met with the Deputy Chief and resolved this issue. The hydrants will be placed every 500 feet. Mr. Leno also provided copies of the two previous letters from the Fire Department which outlined these concerns. The Fire Department and the Assessor have also approved the names of the streets as Bailey Lane, which would continue from the current Bailey Lane, and Mason Lane.

Mr. Askew has reported that he is satisfied with the revisions that have been made to the plans. The Town Sanitarian has approved the plans because they meet the public health code.

Mr. Strauss is still concerned about the line of sight at Main Street and Bailey Lane and feels the shrub-line needs to be trimmed. It was noted that this was an issue for the Town Selectman's office and not an issue for the applicant. The applicant will also have to meet with the Board of Selectmen regarding the placement of streetlighting.

Eleanor Lane must be discontinued in order for this subdivision to take place, unless Mr. Leno can give or sell property frontage to the neighboring Reilly piece, or as a last resort, try and obtain a frontage variance.

At this point, the Planning Commission took a 5-minute recess for Mrs. Carson to check with the Board of Selectmen.

Upon returning, Ms. Carson informed the Commission that the Board of Selectmen would take up the discontinuance of Eleanor Lane which was on the list of streets which was presented to the Selectmen a number of years ago. They felt like that issue would be heard before the December 7th Planning meeting.

The Commission decided not to set a public hearing date for this subdivision until a decision from the Board of Selectman on Eleanor Lane is rendered.

b. Zoning Referral: Application for Modification of Special Use Permit Application for Gravel Bank 164 Hampden Road, Grower Direct Farms

A gravel operation permit was need and granted in April 2006 including the normal hours of operation allowed in the Zoning Regulations. When the renewal came up in June, the hours of operation were restricted. The normal hours are:

M-F 7:30am – 5:30pm
 Saturday 8:00am – 12:00noon
 Sunday and Holidays closed

Restricted hours

M-F 8:30am – 5:30pm
 Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays closed

Currently there are a number of individuals utilizing this gravel pit road entrance: the normal greenhouse operation, the Bruce Woods Gravel operation, some Town activity going into the Woods Gravel operation, and the Gavlak Water operation. To appease the concerns of the residents, the Zoning Commission thought it would be in the best interest of traffic flow and safety that the hours be restricted. Mr. Walton stated that it was outside of the scope of the Planning Commission to make any suggestions as to the hours of operation. Mr. Pellissier and others agreed. The Planning Commission's original referral was that the application be given the special use permit, but it was the Zoning Commission who restricted the hours. Ms. Carson explained the specifics for why the Zoning Commission thought it necessary to restrict the applicant's hours originally. She also explained the reasons the applicant has stated in a letter to the Town of Somers for the modification request, including an economic disadvantage for both himself as the owner

and Herb Holden the operator, the difficulty in enforcement, and the ridiculousness of everyone's ability to use the road from 7:30 to 8:30am when the owner of the road cannot.

After much discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Pellissier, seconded by Mr. Genlot, and unanimously voted that in keeping with the original decision to stagger hours of operation for the ease of traffic flow and public safety, the Planning Commission recommends to the Zoning Commission that the hours of operation be the same and no modifications be made to Grower Direct Farms' Special Use Permit for a Gravel Bank at 164 Hampden Road.

c. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Home Occupation for Real Estate Office, 3 School Street, Conklin

The applicant showed the Planning Commission a map of her property. She wishes to use the front room (12 x 16) for her real estate office. The plan is in the future to move the business to where the Barber Shop was located, which needs to be fixed up. The applicant spoke with the State DOT regarding the means of egress and will be working with them in the future. The entrance would be on School Street. Suggestions were made by the Commission as to the best way in which to enter and exit the property. The State did mention that there is already a driveway access established.

A motion was made by Mr. Genlot; seconded by Mr. Pellissier and unanimously voted to recommend to the Zoning Commission approval of Conklin's Special Use Permit Application for a home occupation for a real estate office at 3 School Street, because this use was in keeping with the Plan of Conservation and Development and does tie in with the efforts to revitalize the area by promoting mixed use and appropriate business.

d. Zoning Referral: Discussion: Possible Moratorium on all Applications for Non-Residential Uses Located in the Commercial Zone Along Main Street (CT Route 190) From Maple Street & Shaker Road Intersection to the School Street and Hall Hill Road (CT Route 186) Intersection

In keeping with moving forward on the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development, the Somersville Planning Committee has met and they are putting together an RFP to hire a consultant to help in the planning for Main Street between the Hall Hill Road and Shaker Road/Maple Street intersections. The temporary moratorium has been proposed not to exceed 9 months to halt all new non-residential activities until a time when a plan has been put together. This plan includes a review of setbacks, uses, building sizes and shapes, street scapes, landscaping, sidewalks, access, etc.

A motion was made by Mr. Pellissier, seconded by Ms. Kuzman, and unanimously voted to recommend to the Zoning Commission approval of the temporary moratorium as outlined by the Zoning Commission, given that this is the best method to allow the town to be consistent with the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development as well as the 190 study Committee.

e. Request for Bond Reduction/Release, Work in Greystone Farm Estates Subdivision, Stafford & Rocky Dundee Roads, Schober

More information is needed for the Commission to make a decision. It will be reviewed at the next meeting.

f. Other

A motion was made by Mr. Genlot, seconded by Mr. Pellissier, and unanimously voted to add the following two items;; Mylar extension for application #394 on Wells and Mountain View Roads and Reconfiguration of Lots Pioneer Heights-Grant to the agenda.

1. Extension of Time to File Mylars, Application #394, 3-Lot Subdivision, Wells & Mountain View Roads, Town of Somers

Ms. Carson stated that the mylars have not been filed with the Somers Town Clerk for this subdivision yet because there are some timing issues with the Land Trust and State DEP.

A motion was made by Mr. Pellissier; seconded by Ms. Kuzman, and unanimously voted to approve the applicant's request to extend the time to file mylars with the Somers Town Clerk for the Town of Somers's 3-lot subdivision application #394 on Wells and Mountain View Roads. This extension is granted for an additional ninety (90) days from November 18, 2006 to February 16, 2007.

2. Reconfiguration of Lots, 87 Pioneer Heights and Land on Green Road in Ellington (Somers Map 01 Block 10 & Ellington Map 179 Block 001) George M and Leslie J. Grant

Ms. Carson explained that the town line was actually the lot line and the Grants wanted to make the property one piece.

A motion was made by Mr. Pellissier, seconded by Mr. Genlot, and unanimously voted to approve the reconfiguration to combine property of George M. & Leslie J. Grant at 87 Pioneer Heights (Map 01 Block 10) and land on Green Road in Ellington (Map 179 Block 001), as shown on map entitled, "Reconfiguration Plan, Compilation Plan Prepared for George M. Grant, Pioneer Heights, Somers, CT", dated: 8/23/2006, revised: 10/04/06, 1 sheet. This reconfiguration does not constitute a subdivision because no new additional lot is created.

IV. DISCUSSION: PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

Staff is currently working with the Somersville Planning Committee on the design standards for Main Street in Somersville.

VI. STAFF/COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Staff is currently working on Age-Restricted Housing proposals, Gillette's Crossing, the Leaska subdivision, the County Road litigation, as well as receiving interest from three developers eager to work on the Mill.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – There was none.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

First Quarter bill for Town Engineer Mervyn Strauss (July 1st to September 30th) was received in the amount of \$7,415.75 and within budget. Yearly calendar order between \$26-\$30 was also requested for the Planner.

A motion was made by Mr. Pellissier, seconded by Mr. Genlot, and unanimously voted to pay the above-mentioned bills.

IX. MINUTES APPROVAL: October 26, 2006

A motion was made by Mr. Genlot, seconded by Ms. Kuzman, and approved by a vote of 3 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention (Pellissier) to approve the minutes of October 26, 2006 meeting as written.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Kuzman, seconded by Mr. Genlot, and unanimously voted to adjourn the November 16, 2006 Planning Commission meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Boudreau
Recording Secretary

Bradley Pellissier
Board Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING