

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

**PLANNING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 10, 2007
TOWN HALL 7:00 P.M.**

I. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Continuation: Special Use Permit Application for Age Restricted Housing, Eleanor Road, Eleanor Road, LLC

Chairman Karl Walton called the continuation of the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Carson read a letter dated and received May 9, 2007 via email from Design Professionals on behalf of the applicant granting an extension to the Commission in order to continue the public hearing to May 24, 2007. They are currently working with the State Health Department and Steve Jacobs, Town Sanitarian, to resolve outstanding septic system comments.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Greg Genlot and unanimously voted to accept the extension and continue the public hearing to Thursday, May 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

b. Resubdivision Application #401, 1 Lot, 70 Scully Road & Turnpike Road, Barnes

The public hearing was not opened. Mrs. Carson reported that 4 of the neighbors were inadvertently left out of the public hearing notification. The applicant has asked to be given time to notify these neighbors prior to the commencement of the hearing.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Greg Genlot and unanimously voted to reschedule the public hearing to Thursday, May 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Karl Walton called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Members Greg Genlot, Brad Pellissier, Karl Walton and Alternate Member Joe Iadarola (seated for Michelle Hayward) were present and constituted a quorum. Town Planner Patrice Carson and Town Engineer Mervyn Strauss were also present.

III. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion/Possible Decision: Resubdivision Application #401, 1 Lot, 70 Scully Road and Turnpike Road, Barnes – This item was deferred.

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b. Other

- Mrs. Carson reported that the time to file the Whitaker Property subdivision map is ending on May 17, 2007 and they are hoping to close on the property on that day.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

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a. 8-24 Referral: Substantial Improvement of Town Property, Expansion and Renovation of Somers Elderly Housing Project, 63 Battle Street, Town of Somers

- Hank Torcellini from Gardner & Peterson Associates, Harvey Attleman, Developer for the Housing Authority and Paul Salno from Henry Schadler Architects spoke on behalf of the applicant.

The existing housing (Woodcrest) is on 8 acres and contains 54 housing units. The applicant proposes adding an approximately 13-acre parcel situated behind the cemetery.

They will eliminate two of the units and add between 50% and 60% more space to the remaining 52 units. The driveway will be extended to the rear of the site to a new 2-story, 32-unit building. Public water will be extended approximately 500 feet up Battle Street, allowing for termination of the existing water supply.

- The parking lot will contain lighting designed not to spill over into the adjacent properties. The drop off area for the community building will have a series of low-level lighting. A flagpole and the courtyard will be lit, as well as the walkway.

The current units are studio and 1-bedroom ranging in size from 365 to 450 square feet. All internal non-bearing partition walls will be removed. The building will have additions on both sides to create new 1-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 715 to 880 square feet. There will be 2 different unit styles.

A community building will be included with a covered drop off area, outside seating, office space and laundry area, as well as community areas.

The 34-unit, 2-story structure will have its own laundry area and will have one-bedroom units ranging in size from 680 to 925 square feet. It will have a green metal roof, vinyl siding and New England style architecture.

Work is being done with David Askew regarding site drainage and application has been made to the Conservation Commission. There is 20 feet of sand and gravel on the site and impervious pipe will be used to help the water runoff and infiltrate back into the ground. The parking will be graded away from the building and a long swale will be created to take care of any water along the east side of the building. There is an existing storm drainage system which discharges into a vernal pool and they are working to minimize the impact to the pool with a new drainage system. Current plans have been submitted to Merv Strauss.

Mr. Strauss also expressed concern about the curbless pavement and its ability to take care of water flow over time. Mr. Torcellini noted that he is still working with staff on maintenance. Concrete wheel stops will be used at the back edge of the parking lot where there is a downward slope off the edge. Mr. Strauss warned against using wheel stops because of the tripping hazard they create.

All of the units will be ADA compliant and incorporate the age-in-place philosophy. The units are designed to meet the needs of the residents as their life stages change.

Joe Iadarola questioned using so much area for community facilities, two in this project with the Senior Center right next door, when the primary objective is to provide as many housing units as possible to meet the needs of the town. Recent trends in senior and elderly housing reveal the need to provide more facilities and services to residents.

Mr. Walton expressed concern about the duplication of services because such services are currently available to residents at the senior facility already provided by the town.

A motion was made by Joe Iadarola, seconded by Greg Genlot and unanimously voted to accept the improvements to a portion of the town property at 79 Battle Street for the expansion and renovation of elderly and disabled income-assisted housing and recommend the same to the Board of Selectmen for their approval and Town Meeting if required, in accordance with the recommendations of the town staff and Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes. This recommendation is conditioned upon conformance with the comments from the Town Engineer and his review of the plans presented at the meeting. For the purpose of complying with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, this resolution along with the minutes of the Commission's meeting as to this matter shall constitute the Commission's report for this proposal to be duly recorded and transmitted to the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Somers. The applicant is to have one or more conferences with staff, including the Town Engineer, Merv Strauss as this project continues.

b. Subdivision Application #402, 6 Lots, 455 Ninth District Road (North Farm Estates), Bernier

Sandy Aeschliman presented plans for a parcel on the south side of Ninth District Road. One lot will front on Ninth District and the remaining 5 lots will front along a 640-foot proposed cul-de-sac. The drainage from the road will go through a detention pond and then about 1,200 feet along Ninth District Road to an existing culvert. The site contains no wetlands. Application is being made to the Conservation Commission because they are within 100 feet of the regulated area.

Most of the staff comments have been addressed with the exception of the street name change and bond estimate. Merv has commented that drainage from Lots 1, 2, 3 and a portion of Lot 4 bypass the proposed drainage system, thereby missing the catch basin containing the separator designed to take care of the 80% suspended solid requirement. The project engineer will be addressing this situation.

Additional comments were received today from David Askew requesting stone check dams instead of hay bale check dams along the road and changing the plant list on the excavated area because some invasive

plant species are currently included.

Mr. Aeschliman received a fax from Patrice today of correspondence from a resident. He discussed the items contained within the fax. One of the items was whether or not this was a “subdivision” or a “resubdivision”. The Commission’s policy is to hold a public hearing on any proposal of 5 lots or more, so this application would require a public hearing.

The applicant wishes to donate a fee in lieu of open space. The Commission will refer this application to the Open Space Committee.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Greg Genlot and unanimously voted to take Items h and i under New Business, out of order.

h. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit for Liquor Store, 95 South Road, Nilsson

Chuck Bomley, Plan B Retail Design, presented plans for the applicant. Mr. Nilsson was also available to answer any questions. The applicant proposes using two bays of rental units adjacent to Geissler’s Supermarket, approximately 4,000 square feet, for a retail liquor store. Receiving will be off of a dock at the rear. There will be no entrance into the grocery store from the liquor store.

A motion was made by Greg Genlot, seconded by Brad Pellissier and unanimously voted to recommend to the Zoning Commission approval of Nilsson’s Special use Permit for a liquor store at 95 South Road as an appropriate commercial business in a commercial zone.

i. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Somers Crossing Phase II, 87 South Road, Somers Crossing, LLC

Chuck Bomley and Chet Ladd presented plans for Phase II of Somers Crossing, explaining the layout design as proposed and the traffic flow, drive through areas and parking fields.

The various buildings would each have separate septic systems and the buildings are to be constructed as tenants are obtained. All buildings will be single story and range in size from 4,000 to 8,000 square feet. It is expected that the buildings will be used primarily for non-retail services, although the parking is designed for retail use.

Landsacaping style and lighting will continue with the same style as in Phase I. The light poles and fixtures will also be the same in the parking fields. Photos of the fixtures were presented.

Mr. Strauss asked that the plans be reviewed with the Fire Marshal early in the planning stages.

c. Request for Extension of Subdivision Approval: Subdivision Application #331, 3-Lot Subdivision, George Wood Road, Camerota

This subdivision was approved in 1998 and the applicant is requesting an extension to finish out the 10

years allowed by statute to complete the subdivision. A bond is in place.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Greg Genlot and unanimously voted to extend the approval for Camerota's 3-lot subdivision application #331 on George Wood Road until April 09, 2008. This will be the last extension granted for this subdivision because any further time would be beyond the ten years allowed by state statute.

d. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Gravel Bank, Egypt Road, Charter

e. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Gravel Bank, South Road, Pleasant View Farms Realty

f. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Gravel Bank, South Road, Bordeaux

Items d, e and f were deferred until the next meeting when the Town Engineer's reviews will be complete.

g. Zoning Referral: Special Use Permit Application for Office Trailer, 367 Hall Hill Road (High Ridge Estates Subdivision), Leaska Construction Co.

Mrs. Carson explained that the applicant is seeking to put in 3 sections of trailer along the road spur that goes into Kasperczak's property which should not be visible from outside the subdivision.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Joe Iadarola and unanimously voted to recommend to the Zoning Commission approval of Leaska Construction Co.'s office trailer on the High Ridge Estates Subdivision as a normal use in construction.

j. Discussion of Property on Tax Sale as Open Space, Mountain View Road

This parcel will be sold at a Town tax sale for back taxes of approximately \$20,000.00 plus fees owed to the Town. The minimum bid will be about \$25,000.00. If no one bids on the property it will go back to the town and it is hoped that the town will give it as open space. The property creates a connection between town land, state land and NCLT land. If someone bids on it, the Open Space Committee is recommending to the Planning Commission to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to elect a representative for the town to go in and bid on the property.

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Joe Iadarola, and unanimously voted that in accordance with Section 8-24 of the State Statutes the Planning Commission requests the Board of Selectmen appoint a representative to attend the tax sale on May 31, 2007 and bid on the Mountain View Road properties for purchase as open space which will also need confirmation at a Town Meeting.

k. Other – No other Old Business was presented.

V. DISCUSSION: PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

On Thursday, May 31, 2007, there will be a public hearing in Somersville at the Grammer School at 7:00 p.m. regarding the plans for the streetscape that the Somersville Planning Committee is recommending which will later come to the Planning and Zoning Commissions for implementation. It was recommended that the Commissioners attend.

VI. STAFF/COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Mrs. Carson reported that the Land Use Department is very busy. Staff is working on 5 subdivisions, 2 Age Restricted Housing developments, Somers Crossing and Geissler's. And the Building Inspector and the Fire Marshal are both leaving.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – There was none.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

- A written request has been received pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-227 for notice via mail of each regular meeting and any special meeting called regarding Ninth District Road at least one week prior to the date set for the meeting. The writer has requested the notice for one-year's time.

The Department's policy in accordance with the State Statute is as follows. A letter will be sent to the resident by mail including the Commission's list of regular meetings for the year. The letter will include an explanation that agendas are done on Tuesday prior to the meeting date and not a week in advance. If they want a copy of the agenda, there is a notification system set up via email for free. If they wish to have the agendas sent by mail, they may supply self-addressed stamped envelopes at the new postage rate and an agenda will be mailed as soon as it is available. Notification will be included that all of the meetings are open to the public.

Notice was received for courses to be held by the Connecticut Land Use Academy on May 10, 23 and 30, 2007. Registration is \$20.00 for all 3 classes.

A bill was received from the Journal Inquirer for \$251.84 for the hearing and meeting on April 12, 2007.

IX. MINUTES APPROVAL

A motion was made by Brad Pellissier, seconded by Joe Iadarola and unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2007 meeting as written.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Cliff Bordeaux, seconded by Brad Pellissier and unanimously voted to adjourn the May 10, 2007 Planning Commission meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Pellissier, Secretary

Robin Timmons, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.