

TOWN OF WEYMOUTH
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES

There was a Planning Board meeting held on Monday, June 7, 1999 at 7:30 P.M. at the Town Hall.

Members present: Susan Abbott, Chairwoman
Mary S. McElroy, Vice-Chairman
Paul M. Dillon
Paul Hurley
Paul F. Lynch, Sr.

Staff present: James Clarke, Director of Planning & Community Development
Roderick M. Fuqua, Principal Planner
Paul Halkiotis, Economic Development Planner

RECEIVED
NOV 23 9 22 AM '00
OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK
WEYMOUTH, MASS.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Chairwoman Abbott.

1. Petr: Martin Murphy
Locus: off 612 Pond Street
Sheet 62, Block 642, Lot 3
Zoning: R-1

Decision on four (4) lot preliminary subdivision plan

Mr. Clarke stated that the Board received a memo with comments from the staff.

Mr. Fuqua reviewed comments received from DPW.

Mr. Clarke stated that he recommends approval of the preliminary plan with comments from Rod and DPW.

Upon motion made by Mrs. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Lynch, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to approve the preliminary plan entitled: "Preliminary Subdivision Plan, Pond Street, Weymouth, Mass." dated March 8, 1999, drawn by C.F. Arnold Associates, Inc. with comments from DPW.

2. Petr: Stephen Gosselin
Locus: Cranberry Road
Sheet 16, Block 211, Lot 1
Zoning: R-1

Request to set road conditions under Chapter 60-3 for one single family lot

Present was Stephen Gosselin.

Mr. Clarke stated that Cranberry Road is a paper street and Mr. Gosselin is requesting road conditions for one lot. The plan shows the paving, utilities, catch basin, water and sewer

lines.

Mr. Fuqua stated that what Mr. Gosselin has proposed is a standard layout for a roadway. Cranberry Road is an existing paper street. There is one lot that is undeveloped that is in the rear. We had looked at this one about the possibility of using just a driveway and eliminating Cranberry Road, but that would require frontage waivers. After a review of field conditions, they are recommending that Mr. Gosselin follow the standard road width. Combined with the driveway, it would allow vehicles to back up into the driveway and out. What they recommend is that this layout be approved with all utility lines – sewer, water and storm drain, subject to DPW review and approval. Where this is a laid out right-of-way, we have gone with standard position where the pavement comes 10' beyond the driveway.

Mrs. Abbott stated that the Board looked at this previously.

Mr. Clarke stated that we did look at this before and reviewed different options. The Board said to draw up a plan and then come back to the Board.

Mr. Dillon asked about the rest of Cranberry Road. Mr. Gosselin replied that the rest of Cranberry Road is undeveloped and very steep.

Mrs. Abbott asked about Conservation involvement. Mr. Gosselin replied that he must file a Notice of Intent because there is isolated wetlands.

Mr. Clarke stated that he recommends that the Board approve the plan as submitted under Chapter 60-3.

Upon motion made by Mr. Dillon and seconded by Mrs. McElroy, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to set road conditions under Chapter 60-3 of the Code of the Town of Weymouth for building on Lot 1 on Sheet 16, Block 20. Roadway conditions are based on a plan entitled "Plan and Profile Cranberry Road, Weymouth, Mass." drawn by C. F. Arnold, dated April 22, 1999, with the following conditions.

1. The Planning Board vote pertains to roadway pavement layout and design only.
2. All utility layout and extensions are subject to review and approval of the Town of Weymouth DPW Engineering.
3. Petr: Rick Coughlin
Locus: Sunset Road
Sheet 11, Block 163, Lots 2, 4
Zoning: R-1

Request to set road conditions under Chapter 60-3 for one single family lot

Present on behalf of the request was Rick Coughlin.

Mr. Fuqua stated that the Board received a letter from Mr. Coughlin requesting road

conditions for Sunset Road. The two lots have been in common ownership and for zoning purposes the lots would be considered as one. Under the roadway conditions, there was a plan approved some time ago with two houses. The cul-de-sac comes past the furthest house and goes across the frontage. What the staff is recommending is that they take a driveway off of the existing turn around and that we don't change any of the existing roadway layout on Sunset Road since what's there now functions well and would function with one more additional driveway coming off the cul-de-sac. There is no potential for any further development on Sunset Road.

Mr. Fuqua stated that the applicant will have to do some kind of embankment along the back similar to what was done to the other two lots. That is something that would have to be reviewed by DPW Engineering to make sure that you end up with a buildable area for the house and make sure that you stabilize that slope with the rip rap so that the esker does not continue to erode into the land. DPW Engineering is aware of this issue. What he would recommend is a condition that they would be allowed a driveway off the end of Sunset Road, but any rip rap embankment along the back of lots 2 and 4 be continued from the existing lot.

Mrs. Abbott asked what size the lot was. Mr. Fuqua replied that the lot was just under 24,000 square feet.

Upon motion made by Mr. Dillon and seconded by Mrs. McElroy, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to set road conditions under Chapter 60-3 of the Code of the Town of Weymouth for building on Lots 2 and 4 on Sheet 11, Block 163.

The Planning Board voted the following conditions:

1. A driveway shall come off the existing paved turnaround to service said lot.
2. All utility connections are subject to review and approval by DPW Engineering Division.
3. The applicant shall, in so far as possible, extend the existing rip rap on the hillside across the lot to beyond the back edge of the proposed building. All rip rap plans should be reviewed by the DPW Engineering Division and Building Department.
4. Tayla Drive – request to eliminate grass strip

Mr. Fuqua stated that the contractor is working on Tayla Drive and the paving should be done this week. In looking at the layout, the contractor is the one requesting to eliminate the grass strip because in some places it will be narrower than 2' because of the layout. The contractor is concerned that it is going to be difficult to get a uniform shape. The contractor is requesting to eliminate the grass strip in this particular area so that the sidewalk would come out to the cape cod berm. The contractor also mentioned that Dick Burns asked him to look at putting in two walls along the front to dress up the entrance into the subdivision.

Mr. Hurley stated that he would like the grass strip to stay.

Mrs. McElroy made a motion to eliminate the grass strip.

Mr. Clarke stated that he thinks this is something that the Subdivision Review Committee should look at. Where we have a sidewalk on one side, maybe what we need to do is shift the roadway over to allow for a 2' or 3' grass strip so that it's substantial enough so that people will maintain it. He does agree there is some validity to having that separation of the sidewalk occur but in most cases there is only a foot and a half.

Mr. Hurley stated that the grass strip differentiates the sidewalk from the street.

Mrs. Abbott stated that the grass strip should be at least 2'.

Mr. Lynch seconded Mrs. McElroy's motion.

Upon motion made by Mrs. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Lynch, it was:

VOTED: 3-2 (Mr. Dillon and Mr. Hurley opposed) to approve the request to eliminate the grass strip. Mrs. Abbott voted in the affirmative with the stipulation that the issue of the grass strip be reviewed by the Subdivision Rules and Regulations Committee.

5. Avalon Ledges – MHFA project application

Mr. Scott Dale stated that he represents Avalon Bay and he appreciates the opportunity to be here this evening. He would like to cover four fundamental issues.

Mr. Dale briefly explained the history and background of Avalon Bay. He listed other projects they have done.

Mr. Dale stated that they have just initiated the Chapter 40B - Comprehensive Permit process. He explained the program they mostly will be proceeding under. It is an affordable program that is really a moderate income program versus a low income program and it requires a higher set-aside of apartments for affordable units – 25% versus 20% which the low income program provides for.

Mr. Dale stated that the first step is to obtain site approval and they have filed with MHFA for site approval. They recognize that they have a long way to go with the process. They have a lot of people to talk to including this Board, Board of Selectmen, DPW and the neighbors.

Mr. Dale stated that comments from the town are due June 12th to MHFA, and MHFA would render a decision probably in late June or early July. Assuming that is favorable, they will begin their development process, refinement of their plans going forward based on comments and concerns and incorporate those into their plans that will be submitted to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Before they get to that point, they want to make sure they have something that is acceptable. He explained the process and timeframe for the process for the BZA. He stated that the BZA is obligated to render a decision within forty-five days from the closing of the public hearing. The Board of Appeals has authority to issue permits on behalf of all town boards exclusive of Conservation. Other approvals they need are MEPA approval, state curb cut approval, and Order of Conditions from Conservation.

Mr. Dale stated that in terms of design issues and community overview, he passed out information. He pointed out the site and what was around it which includes a mixed use such as BJ's, apartments, restaurant, and residential in the back. The site is 58 acres in total. Their development plan leaves about 75% of the land area either in a natural, open space or landscaped areas. What they tried to do was to deal with the constraints of the site in a very responsive way. He explained the site conditions which includes wetlands and stream, a plateau of ledge with a very steep slope leading up to it.

Mr. Dale stated that in terms of what is on the site, they have eleven buildings, eight of which circle the plateau at about elevation 140'. The road basically circles the plateau at elevation 130' – 140'. The secondary road rises to elevation 150' and there are three buildings there. The buildings are three stories in height. There are 304 apartment units with 124 one bedrooms with 750 to 800 square feet, 140 two bedrooms with 1,000 to 1,450 square feet and 40 three bedrooms with 1,250 square feet. He pointed out the site drive and upland area.

Mrs. Abbott asked about water usage. Mr. Dale explained the water usage and what the average figures were per apartment unit.

Mrs. McElroy questioned the water usage. Mr. Clarke stated that what they are showing is 60 gallons of water per bedroom.

Mrs. McElroy questioned why Avalon picked Weymouth instead of another community that did not have as many affordable units. Mr. Dale replied that they think that Weymouth has a tremendous market and they will do a nice job. It will look similar to the one they did in Quincy.

In response to comments from the Board, Mr. Clarke stated that since Avalon has asked for MHFA financing, one of the first steps is they have to follow certain procedure. MHFA sent us a letter saying that this project was being proposed and is looking for project application approval. MHFA solicits comments from local officials so we have an opportunity to lay out issues and concerns prior to MHFA making a decision. If MHFA looks at the site and says it's an appropriate site, they will approve Avalon submitting a comprehensive permit. This is one of the early stages of the process.

Mrs. McElroy questioned why there was not a traffic report. Mr. Dale replied that it is not their intent to side-step any issues or any board that has a concern that can reasonably be addressed. Once they get site approval for this, they will submit a detailed application. They will have neighborhood meetings and solicit comments from the neighborhood. They know there are some issues and they fully intend to address all of those issues to the extent they can be addressed.

Mrs. Abbott asked Mr. William Ryan from the Board of Selectmen if he had any comments.

Mr. Ryan stated that the Selectmen are in the process of preparing comments to MHFA. He does share many of the concerns raised by Board members.

Mr. Dillon asked Mr. Dale if they have the property under agreement. Mr. Dale replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Dillon asked Mr. Dale if he is aware of the history of this property and the court case. Mr. Dale replied in the affirmative. Mr. Dillon stated that this proposal will probably generate more traffic than the shopping center. Mr. Dale replied that he does not believe so. They have done a preliminary traffic study. He explained that they will have approximately 15% to 20% of the traffic that a retail development would have. They are not a traffic intense use. Mr. Dillon questioned that statement. He stated that a shopping center shuts down at night and this will be a 24 hour use with probably two cars per unit. He stated that Avalon Bay is going around the town's zoning laws.

Mr. Dale stated that he appreciates the Board's concerns, but they have done these developments before and they will do a traffic study and come up with mitigation as warranted. He thinks that the traffic study will show that this proposal will generate less than what is allowed in the POP district.

Board members expressed concern over water.

Mr. Dale stated that he has talked with the DPW Director regarding the water and sewer issues. They have discussed many alternatives and are willing to contribute in a number of ways. If they don't have the water, they can't build. They recognize that there is a problem and they want to be part of the solution.

Mr. Lynch asked about the wetlands. Mr. Dale replied that they do have to cross the wetlands, but they will try to minimize the impact to the wetlands.

Mr. Hurley asked about access to the site – whether it will be a single access or if there is any possibility of another entrance. Mr. Dale replied that they are looking at a single access. It would be very difficult to provide another access without another crossing of the wetlands.

Mr. Hurley asked if Avalon will make information available to the Planning Board or just to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Dale replied that he would be available to come back to this Board with information.

Mr. Dale stated that he will try to incorporate all of the comments from the Board into their submittal to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mrs. Abbott asked if they were planning to have any public meetings. Mr. Dale replied in the affirmative. He explained the process.

Mr. Clarke stated that MHFA sent him a letter requesting comments. He wanted the applicant to present in detail what they were proposing so that he could put together comments to MHFA. He will incorporate comments from the Board in a letter to MHFA.

Mrs. Abbott asked if MHFA turns Avalon down, will they build on the site. Mr. Dale replied that they do not build offices which is what the property is zoned for.

Mr. Clarke stated that he would like approval from the Board to draft a letter to MHFA.

Upon motion made by Mr. Dillon and seconded by Mr. Hurley, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to authorize the Planning Director to draft a letter to MHFA regarding issues and concerns raised this evening.

6. Economic Data Base – review

Mr. Clarke stated that he asked Paul Halkiotis to come in and give the Board an outline of the economic data base report that was completed.

Mr. Halkiotis stated that he is here tonight to report on a project that was allocated funds in 1996. The project was initiated in 1997. The project is a culmination of work that has been going on for some time. It involved retaining a consulting firm to inventory the local business community and to conduct a survey that would result in the creation of a data base of Weymouth's businesses. He invited Board members to stop in the office and he would show them exactly how the software for the program works. It contains photographs of most of the businesses and it is designed to quickly access information about all of the businesses in town. The objectives of the project were to use the data base to quickly look up information about businesses; to provide this information on the business community so that the local boards, committees and decision makers could better understand our local economy. The survey that was done received a 13% response rate which for this type of survey was pretty good. It was enough to generate statistical analysis so that we can draw some conclusions.

Mr. Halkiotis stated that there are a total of 3,106 businesses in Weymouth as of when the project was initiated about a year or so ago. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents rated the business climate as excellent to good. Twenty percent rated the business climate as fair to poor. Most of the business in town are small. Sixty-eight percent of the businesses have ten employees or less. Ninety percent of the businesses in town have twenty employees or less. The survey that was done involved a variety of questions on the availability of capital and banking financing, availability of space for commercial and industrial purposes, town services, taxes, responsiveness of government, schools, code enforcement, parking, etc. They tried to get a good sense from the business people of how they felt the town was operating. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents said that Weymouth was a good place to do business.

Mrs. Abbott asked if the survey was on the web page. Mr. Halkiotis replied that is something for the future that they are looking to do. Some of the responses to the survey were confidential so they have to determine which information should be made available to the public and which should not.

Mr. Halkiotis stated that they have a lot of useful information to work with, but the inventory that was done did not identify the number of acres or square feet that was vacant or underutilized. One of the things he would like to do is take what has already been done and build upon that and try to obtain some more information so that when they get to a point where they are working with local realtors, they will know exactly how many acres are

a. Form A Plans

Sea Street

Mr. Fuqua stated that this Form A Plan is to subdivide out the site Town Meeting voted to purchase. It is a perimeter plan that shows two lots. Lot 1 has the existing houses on it and Lot 2 is the parcel that the town will be acquiring.

Upon motion made by Mrs. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Dillon, it was:

VOTED: 4-1 (Mr. Lynch opposed) to endorse the Form A Plan for Sea Street.

Randolph Street

Mr. Fuqua explained the Form A Plan which is subdividing one lot out of the parcel with 1.6 acres remaining. He recommended that the Board endorse the plan with the note that Planning Board endorsement has no standing for zoning compliance.

Upon motion made by Mr. Hurley and seconded by Mrs. McElroy, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to endorse the Form A Plan for Randolph Street with the note that the Planning Board endorsement has no standing for zoning compliance.

b. Certification of Officers

The Board endorsed the letter to the Registry of Deeds certifying the Planning Board officers.

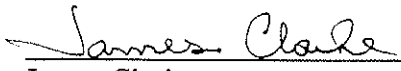
c. Meetings

Mr. Clarke stated that the Planning Board is scheduled to meet on June 21, 1999 and July 12, 1999.

Upon motion made by Mr. Hurley and seconded by Mr. Dillon, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 P.M.

Date Signed/Approved: 11/21/00


James Clarke
Planning Director