

Meeting Minutes

Planning Board

Tuesday, September 10, 2019

Newbury Municipal Offices

APPROVED

Board of Selectmen (BOS)

BOS Members Present: Damon Jespersen, Acting Chair; Geoff Walker; Mike Doyle

BOS Members Absent: JR Colby, Chair; Alicia Greco

Planning Board (PB)

PB Members Present: Peter Paicos, Chair; Larry Murphy; Leslie Matthews; George Morse

PB Staff Present: Martha Taylor, Town Planner

Damon Jespersen, BOS Acting Chair, called the BOS meeting to order 7:01 p.m. Peter Paicos, Planning Board Chair, called the Planning Board meeting to order 7:02 p.m.

The Chairs of both Boards explained to all meeting attendees that this is an informational meeting to hear the presentation of the potential Byfield Estates 40B affordable housing development, 55 Rear Pearson Drive. It is not a time to contest or discuss any issues with the project

A. Walter K. Eriksen, Manager, Cricket Lane, LLC, et al – Presentation regarding Project Eligibility/Site Approval Application for proposed Byfield Estates 40B affordable housing development, 55 Rear Pearson Drive

Douglas Deschenes, Attorney, Deschenes and Farrell, came before the Board to represent Cricket Lane, LLC. D. Deschenes introduced the members of the team, including Walter Eriksen, Cricket Lane, LLC, who, according to Mr. Deschenes, has a lot of experience in this type of development, and Ben Osgood, Ranger Engineering, the firm that did the engineering for the original Application for this project. D. Deschenes explained that his firm is new to this project, but has worked on many affordable housing projects in this area.

D. Deschenes said that although it is the same project they have seen before, they have started the process anew and they are here tonight to give the Boards an overview.

Ben Osgood came before the Boards and gave an overview of the site and the project. He outlined the wetlands on the property and went through the layout of the development including the location of the buildings, septic system, sidewalks, and other relevant items. B. Osgood also showed an image of what the potential residences would look like.

W. Erikson came before the Boards and introduced himself. He explained that this development will have a low impact on the surrounding area and community. They expect the units to be energy efficient and the process will require limited resources.

D. Deschenes explained that there will be 24 units, six will be affordable, 18 will be market rate. He went through the sizes of the units, which include 3-bedroom and 4-bedroom units. D. Deschenes asked for questions from the Boards.

L. Matthews asked what the actual acreage of each lot will be. D. Deschenes said they are not actually creating separate lots – it will be a condominium form of ownership and there will be a

Homeowners Association. Each condominium will have its own designated area around the unit and there will be some community recreational area. The parcel is 15-16 acres total and the disturbed area is 7-8 acres. The road will remain a private way.

G. Morse asked how wide the two common driveways are. B. Osgood said that they are 16 feet wide and that they meet Fire regulations.

D. Jespersen asked what the shortest distance is from the proposed structures to the existing structures on Pearson Drive. B. Osgood estimated the closest structures are around 85 feet away from each other. D. Jespersen asked for more details on the septic system and B. Osgood gave a more detailed overview. This sort of system would have to be inspected every year and it has a life of around 20 years, but B. Osgood has seen ones that last 40 years.

P. Paicos asked about the mentioned solar panels. W. Erikson said that he has a solar company mapping it out now based on the orientation of the units. P. Paicos asked about water supply and W. Erikson said that they did not see that there would be any issues with water pressure using town water. They will probably drill a well for irrigation.

P. Paicos asked if there was any thought to making some of the units ADA accessible or design for elderly occupants. W. Erikson said that this would be easy to do if necessary.

There was discussion about the differences between the market rate units and the affordable units, such as the materials used and look. They discussed some of the general materials used and design of the units.

They discussed the possibility of local preference for the affordable units, which means that the town would be able to dictate who would get preference in 5 out of the 6 affordable units – they could be for the elderly, town residents, town employees, or another demographic the town might choose from the allowed preference categories under Mass Housing and State Law.

They then discussed how long the project would take to build out and the traffic impact on Pearson Drive. They discussed parking within the development.

Claire Dix, 192 High Road, asked a number of questions relating to the aesthetics of the development.

Russ Moser, 59 Pearson Drive, asked if they would meet with the abutters to discuss issues like buffers. The applicant said that they generally wait until after they receive their letter of eligibility. R. Moser confirmed that the project would take about two years. He asked if this lot was technically part of the Pearson Drive development and subject to all the restrictions and covenants that apply.

Barton Bracken, 69 Pearson Drive, asked the project team why they chose this property when there are a lot of reasons why it would not be a good site for this type of development. W. Erikson responded that he thinks they can address a lot of the concerns and that they did not look at any other locations for a project like this in Newbury.

The Boards also responded that it is not an easy task to find appropriate locations for affordable housing, as well as to find the right developer for the job.

Kristin Grubbs, 28 Elm Street, asked how much developable land they will be leaving undeveloped. B. Osgood estimated that it would be around two acres. K. Grubbs also asked how many lots could be built with a conventional subdivision and the answer was nine. There also is a question about whether a cul-de-sac off a cul-de-sac would be allowable. K. Grubbs asked the team to explain how this project conforms to the guidelines of a sustainable development.

There was discussion about what the drainage and stormwater management looks like. They then discussed environmental concerns including natural heritage and endangered species. They discussed the two Vernal pools present on the property and what impact if any those have on the development.

Rebecca Bryan, 69 Pearson Drive, asked about the requirement for sidewalks in the development and on Pearson drive. She expressed some concerns she has with the project and asked for clarification on the timeline of the project and when the houses would be built and sold. There was discussion on these topics.

Jen Solis, Daily News, asked what the median household income is that they are working off of. It is the Boston/Quincy/Cambridge Median Income.

A resident asked for an example of a development they have done that they could go look at to get a sense of what it would be like. W. Erikson suggested the ones he is working on now, Sugar Maple in Westford, or Maple Ridge in Tyngsboro.

B. Bracken asked about the degree to which the Boards and the residents have a say in how the landscape is maintained. D. Deschenes said they are amenable and they will have to clear in certain areas, but they do try to minimize the clearing necessary. There was also a question and discussion about the number of units, if the number they have is necessary.

There was discussion about an affordable development done in Newburyport by D. Deschenes office.

M. Taylor said that she is taking comments as she writes the Town's letter to Mass Housing on this project.

On a motion by L. Murphy and seconded by G. Morse, the Planning Board meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

On a motion by M. Doyle and seconded by G. Walker, the Selectman's meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Noble
Planning Board Administrator