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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Mon May 30, 2005 5:48 pm
Subject: SE Planning Board Recap 5/23/05

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Hi All,

Here is a rather late recap of the Planning Board meeting held last Monday, May 23rd.

This was an interesting meeting for several reasons but my favorite was the dust-up between my new hero, Dan Armstrong, and Chairman Rohrman. I mean, ya gotta love anyone who stands up to Mr. R. So if you skip everything else be sure to check out the Landau Subdivision.

I'm trotting out the coveted 'chutzpa award' as it's been on the shelf far too long. This week it's being presented to the Gair/Wells Riding Arena. The applicant actually said that there were no wetlands on the property- well maybe- if they've already been filled in... Even the Board wasn't buying. Of course the 168 unit Senior Housing at Mt. Ebo is always in contention. But since there was no mention of the superb recreational facilities offered (Walking Trail/Gazebo) I'm giving this project a pass- this week.

As always these notes are my own jaundiced take on life in Southeast. If there are corrections or comments that need to be made please let me know.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Quinn Subdivision & Lot Line Adjustment, Turk Hill Road- Subdivision and SEQRA
 This is a three lot subdivision in an R160 zone. The lot sizes are: 23 acres, 9 acres and 12 acres. There is a DEC wetland on the site. There will be a shared driveway. The Southeast wetland buffers will be affected.

A resident asked where the driveway would be in relation to Ridgeview Road. Theresa Ryan of Insite was not sure. After looking at a map with an area resident the location was determined.

A resident wanted to know how the driveway will affect the wetlands. About 300 feet of the shared part of the driveway will be within the buffer and 400 feet of the second portion.

Cherie Ingraham asked if there were going to be any conservation easements on the 23 acre piece. Ms. Ryan said, 'No'.

Another resident wanted to know where the gas lines were located. Ms. Ryan did not know. There will be a ten day comment period.

1. Landau Subdivision- Joes Hill Road

Mr. LaPerch asked why this would go in front of the ARB if the Landau's were simply selling lots. All agreed that this did not make sense so it will not be forwarded.

Mr. Armstrong wanted to know why there was no frontage for one of the lots as then this subdivision would be compliant with zoning law. It was explained that to minimize environmental damage there will be a shared driveway. Mr. Armstrong felt that the shared drive could remain and the lots could still comply with current zoning code. Mr. Rohrman explained that the new plan was better than the old one. Mr. Armstrong said he felt it was the Board's job to enforce zoning law and that the Planning Board should vote to against sending this project to the ZBA.

The Board voted a negative declaration 6-0, a referral to the Conservation Commission 6-0 and a referral to the ZBA.

2. Baker Farm Subdivision- Enoch Crosby Road

The Board declared themselves lead agency 6-0. There will be a Public Hearing on June 27th.

3. Vail's Grove Golf Course Amended Site Plan- Sketch Review

The buildings on site are being brought up to code. No dirt being moved. Peter Tavino-engineer.

4. Mt. Ebo Lot #6- Route 22

168 Units. Terry Hahn said the 'assisted living' designation had been changed to Senior Housing. The on site medical facilities will now only be used by residents. There will be parking underneath the buildings.

5. Drewville Realty- Route 6 and Drewville Road

This is a request to remove the two existing garage bays and use the building as a convenience store. There will be a building addition for 'coolers' as well. Some asphalt will be removed and some added. Rick O'Rourke, the attorney for the project, said that the moratorium had put the project on hold for two years. A special permit will be needed to allow 'retail' in a Gateway zone.

6. Gair/Welles Riding Arena, 100 Nelson Blvd.

The applicant is before the board as they have dumped over 3500 cu. yd. of fill (soil) on the site (with 1400 more expected) to construct a new riding ring. The applicant said that there were no wetlands on the proposed site and that they got the DEP and DEC to come in.

Chairman Rohrman said a soil specialist must be brought in to evaluate. The Board also questioned the lack of wetlands status wetlands border this property. The old riding ring was built on NYSEG property so a new one must be constructed.

7. Fox Lane Subdivision, Fields Lane-

Final subdivision was granted with three conditions. The plat will not be signed until all three are met. Passed 7-0.

8. Calcoitti Accessory Apartment:

The size of the apartment is based on the homes square footage of 2400. The owner insists that it is actually 2900. Chairman Rohrman advised the owner to get his assessment card changed him but warned him that his assessment could rise accordingly.

9. Lyrics Corp, Route 22-

This was referred to the Town Board for the release of the Performannce Bond. 7-0

New Business:

A resident asked about a piece of property that she owns in a Gateway Commercial zone. She wanted to have a huge garden with hoop houses. Chairman Rohrman said he had discussed with her that this was not a permitted use and she should consider selling the land and locating somewhere else. The resident then asked if there was somewhere else she could take this request. Mr. Rohrman said she could go to the ZBA but a land use variance would be very difficult to obtain.

COMMENTS:

1. Quinn Subdivision: Public Hearing:

Oh goody- not only another shared driveway but one the has 700 linear feet in the wetland buffers! Super. Theresa Ryan didn't seem as prepared as normal. It took an area resident to point out where Ridgeview Road was- and not knowing, or indicating, that there may be a gas line on the property seemed a tad sloppy, and kinda, sorta, important for the Board to see and consider.

Of course my other new favorite scam is telling the board that only a few lots will be developed while leaving one untouched... for now. There will be no Conservation Easement on the third lot so consider it fair game for future development. I'm not sure what the point is- unless more wetlands will be impacted so it's smarter to tackle it later when 'Incursions: Part I' have been forgotten.

1. Landau Subdivision:

Grrrrrrrr- go get'em Dan. I couldn't agree with you more.

Sure they're big lots but as Dan so astutely pointed out it is the Planning Board's job to enforce codes and **not** send every thing along to the ZBA. Remember: if the Board denies this project because of frontage conformance the Landau's may still seek relief.

I spoke to Mr. Armstrong briefly after the meeting. And he was very funny backing up and while uttering 'Stay away from me'. I'm such a social pariah I think he would have gnawed his leg off to get away. Seriously, Chairman Rorman is a difficult man to stand up to. He knows a lot and he can, on occasion (like Monday night), ever so slightly lose his temper. But Mr. Rohrman is not always right. And in this case I believe that Mr. Armstrong is. Bravo.

One final thought. If the Landau's really want to save that big piece of frontage for themselves they can always scale back to three lots.

2. Baker Farm Subdivision:

5 lots. Steep slopes, wetlands- this one has it all. Try to make the Public Hearing on June 27th.

3. Vails Grove Golf Course:

Call me crazy but I'm a little suspicious of this. Rumor has it that several developers bought the club several years ago... and are patiently awaiting that new sewer district. If anyone knows anything about this I'd love a heads up.

4. Mt. Ebo Lot #6:Senior Housing:

This plan has been amended to feature underground parking and the proposed medical offices will now serve the residents of the community. A step up? You bet.

But it's kind of like that last minute, extra credit project you threw together in eighth grade to mitigate all those lousy quiz scores. Too little too late. I can't blame Mr. Lepler for doing what he does. He always (and I mean always) gets away with it. Think of him as that annoying teacher's pet who got the same lousy quiz scores you did but somehow pulls an 'A' on his report card. Hey, wasn't that the teacher you really hated?

5. Drewville Realty-

This is the Mobil station on the corner of Route 6 and Drewville. In the grand scheme of things are two variances going to make or break our brand new Gateway Commercial Zone? Nah. But I say why not start eroding this newly designated zone just like we've been doing for years on Fields Lane. Because nothing says 'Welcome to our Community' like a convenience store. By the way, I think that this is within 500 feet of the Bloomer House- an historic site.

6. Gair/Welles Riding Arena:

Are there really no wetlands on the property? Did the applicant really call in the DEP? Is 1400 cu. yards of fill still to be brought in? Take a spin by- the possibilities are endless. It's no wonder the Chutzpa Award was a lock.

Still thanks go to Chairman Rohrman for insisting that soil specialists be brought in.

New Business:

This was probably the most disturbing portion of the meeting. I mean, it was great that a resident was so confused by the process that she sat through an entire meeting to run questions by the Board.

And here's the kicker. The advice given was, 'sell your land and buy somewhere else.' Huh? I've seen far more outrageous plans sail through the process than an applicant who wants to grow a 'huge garden' in a Gateway Commercial Zone. And I've never heard any applicant or possible applicant told to sell their property.

I can't believe she didn't burst into tears- I considered it.

Anyhow, that's it from my desk. I hope everyone had a wonderful long weekend! As always please feel free to e-mail me with any additions or corrections you may have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt



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