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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Thu Jun 16, 2005 5:09 pm
Subject: SE Planning Board 6/13/05

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Hi All,

Monday night the Planning Board met in another fairly short meeting.

It was a relatively quiet night (too hot to be otherwise) but there were several items of note. The highlight for me was a discussion re the Town Engineer and the timing of his letters. Wow- let the back-pedaling begin. Anyhow this little discussion took place under item 4.

There was a Twilight Zone moment under item 5. Which involved the words: 'Free clean fill from Yonkers'. Apparently these five words strung together send up red flags.

As always the opinions expressed are mine alone and relect no one else's warped take on life in Southeast.

1. Matter of Frederick Barbarossa: 6 Fields Lane

This is the last residential lot on Fields Lane and was in the original Sutton Place subdivision. An attorney was there representing a possible buyer for the lot. This lot had restrictions placed on it when the subdivision was done in the late '80's. Chairman Rohrman could not remember why and said that the subdivision had been 'painful' and had no idea why such a 'silly' decision had been made back then. The lot is sub-standard (not enough frontage- has 160' needs 175') and very narrow in places but it is pre-existing. There are also easements on it. This will go back to the Building Department where it will then be referred to the ZBA.

REGULAR SESSION:

1. Quinn Subdivision & Lot Line Adjustment, Turk Hill Road

The Board voted to issue a negative declaration- 7-0. Referred to the Conservation Commission 7-0. Mr. Rush asked if the property had been staked- would like to see where the entrance is. Theresa Ryan indicated that it had not.

2. Strazza Lot Line Adjustment: Doansburg Road

Theresa Ryan of Insite Design is now representing the applicant. There are 4 separate tax lots now. Lots 2 and 4 are substandard by R160 zoning so the applicant would like to do a lot line adjustment. One common driveway will serve the four lot subdivision (this was 9 lots) not a 280 a. Wetlands may be put into a conservation easement. Mike Manteo asked if the wetlands 'connected' to the great swamp. Ms. Ryan said 'no'. Ms. Ryan also mentioned that although located near a designated Historic Site, Kathleen Abels, Chair of the Historic Sites

Commission, did not recommend this designation. The property is owned by Felice Early and the Strazzas are the contract vendee. These lots are also in a Ridgeline Protection area.

3. The Campus at Fields Corners

The applicant asked to be taken off the agenda.

4. JP International Subdivision, Old Milltown Road

There was a letter from Town Engineer Tom Fenton where several issues needed to be addressed. Chairman Rohrman asked project engineer, Harry Nichols, if he was going to ask for a 'Tree and Forest Preservation Plan' waiver. Mr. Nichols said yes. He would like to do what was done on the Landau subdivision and that is to stake and then walk the site. Asked if the site was staked Mr. Nichols replied 'yes' but stakes have a way of moving.

There was a lot to address in Tom Fenton's letter which arrived on Friday. At this point Chairman Rohrman mentioned that although he had asked that Mr. Fenton's letters arrive on Thursday this was not imperative since the Planning Board need not discuss these issues. The public should not be concerned as the engineering is not discretionary and will be address by the Town Engineer.

Mr. LaPerch disagreed saying that it was important to receive the engineering letters in a timely fashion. He continued that Mr. Nichols had a lot to clear up before he comes back before the Board. Mr. Wissel pointed out that if there's to be a Public Hearing the public needs to be able to review these letters in a timely fashion. Town Planner, Graham Trelsted said that the process is not broken but that it's very busy but working well.

The Board declared themselves Lead Agency (7-0) and set the Public Hearing for July 11th.

5. Ficarra Grading and Filling Plan, Farrell Drive

This was new to the Planning Board. According to Chapter 69 a special permit will be needed. 1000 to 1500 yards of fill have been brought in to create a more level property. Mr. Trelsted asked to see a manifest for the fill. Mr. Ficarra said it was all clean brought in from Yonkers-free. Mr. Trelsted said that he was suspicious of free fill as it can be a way of getting rid of contaminated soil. The house is 2 years old. The drawings shown did not show effects on surrounding properties. Mr. Ficarra said he wanted to follow the contours. The Board said that they needed to ensure that run-off would not affect other properties.

The Board asked that soil samples be taken. In some places the fill is 10 to 12 feet deep. From now on they would also like to see a manifest. A Public Hearing will be required.

6. Cacciotti Accessory Apartment, Overlook Drive:

A conditional use permit was approved 7-0.

COMMENTS:

1. Barbarossa:

Ok- we have a now pre-existing substandard residential lot that the Board had asked to take a look at again whenever it was to be developed. And no one could seem to remember why (this subdivision was approved back in the '80's).

The dirt I've heard is as follows: (and I have not verified this, so take it with a huge grain of salt). As I understand it the Barbarossa lot was part of the original Sutton Place Subdivision. And that by figuring this 1.8 acres into the original equation more outside storage could be allowed. If this is the case (and granted it's a big 'if') obviously this should be taken into account when Alcon goes before the ZBA on June 20th. Substandard? Fields Lane? What else is new-

1. Quinn Subdivision: Turk Hill Road

Sure this is only 3 lots on a fairly large piece of property. So why do we have 700 linear feet of driveway in the buffer?

2. Strazza, Doansburg Road:

My favorite of the night. This one reads like a poorly written mystery. So stay with me on this one- it's a lot of fun.

For the record this was the same property that the Temple wanted to build on.

Change number one, Insite Engineering is hired. Lots are reduced from 9 to 4. The plat looks

like a jigsaw designed by someone on a bad trip. The two properties the subdivision surrounds mysteriously appear on the Historic Sites list last November even though the Historic Site Commission had recommended that they **not** be added to the list. So now The Brother's Strazza have to go before the Historic Sites Commission.

Completely coincidentally two Town Board members live around the corner (it might be interesting to see if either back up to this piece).

So here's the mystery: Several properties mysteriously 'disappear' off the newly adopted Historic Sites list. The two most interesting are (drum roll please) Drewscliff (Deans Corner Road- same property as the approved 104 lot subdivision) and the Diehl House (Route 22- yeah, where the proposed widening will take place). And we've been told by the Town Board that these 'fell through the cracks'. Fine. Mistakes happen. But how does it 'happen' that the two properties (the Historic Sites Commission didn't even want) get added?

While a seemingly small matter this definitely affects one proposed and one approved subdivision in Southeast. And maybe, just maybe the 'improvement' along Route 22. And we've been waiting for almost six months for these mistakes to be rectified. Ahem...

4. JP International:

Ya gotta love the name. I get all weak in the knees when developers add 'International' to their corporate name. So classy! Makes me wonder if this will be as '**International**' as Terravest International Corporate Park. Well, at least they're not claiming to be corporate too. Anyhow, I believe that the JP stands for John Petrillo since he's always hanging out for this particular item.

It seems that there's lots of 'clean up' work to do with this application. But the most interesting thing here was the discussion regarding last minute letters from the Town Engineer. Mr. LaPerch has the lofty honor of being my hero of the week with Mr. Wissel coming in a close second. Both feel that late letters serve no one well. And they're both dead on.

What I loved here was Chairman Rohman wanting to get word out to the public that this really isn't a serious issue even though it sounds like one. He might as well have asked me directly as I was the only audience member unrelated to any of the projects.

Yeah, it's certainly not earth shaking but it would be more helpful and professional to have more time to address engineering issues that have arisen.

5. Ficarra Grading & Filling Plan:

This was a brand new one to me too. But given the fact that it's in the Alberghini neighborhood it's wise to tread lightly. Suffice it to say that Chairman Rohman described the snaps being passed around as right off a 'Band of Brother's' set. Even from a distance this did look like a war zone and yet the house was only two years old.

The 'free, clean fill from Yonkers' set the Town Planner off more than the 'ravine' the house was built in. But still, I'm glad that the Board ask that soil samples be taken. One concerned neighbor was there as some of the fill was on his property.

That's it... finally. As always feel free to e-mail me with any comments or questions you may have.

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt

  

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