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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>

Date: Sat Nov 27, 2004 4:29 pm

Subject: SE Planning Board Recap (11/22/04)

Hi All,

Mother of God. This was one long meeting. And don't get me started on the repetitive, drag-out-the-hindquarters aspect of it all. There were, however, some really bright spots.

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Star of the evening was our Town Planner, Graham Trelsted, who really held several applicant's feet to the fire. Very impressive. I believe that he even went up against the indomitable Mr. Lepler in questioning 'Westchester Tractor's' Terravest 9 status. Yahoo! I mean isn't this is what good Town Planners are supposed to do?

Also the Planning Board was thoughtful enough to hold the Public Hearing open on the Fisher Subdivision.

As always these notes are completely and utterly subjective. Official minutes will be available on December 6th.

WORK SESSION:

Campus at Fields Corner, Pugsley Road.

In this 143 lot subdivision there are six different models of houses. Homes will be approximately 3400 square feet. Different colors and facing stone will allow for 'diversity' yet make it easy for the SE Building Inspector.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Fisher Subdivision: Reed Road

This two lot subdivision on 47 acres had over 25 neighbors attend the public hearing. Part of one house will be built in the wetland buffer area. There will be a 'hammerhead' extension from Reed Road. Horse paddocks already in buffer area will be removed. Terri Hahn is the applicant's engineer. The applicant will go before the Town Board for 'cluster development' permit.

Questions asked: Will this remain a horse farm? Answer 'no' (although the EIS specifically uses the word 'horse farm'. Is it possible that the one house be moved outside the buffer area. Answer: no. Would the owner consider Deed Restrictions or Conservation Easements to preclude access to any properties beyond. No, to Conservation Easements- will look into deed restrictions.

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Since plans for the subdivision did not come in until Monday afternoon the Planning Board was asked if they would keep the Public Hearing open so that professionals would have an opportunity to review the plans and comment. The Public Hearing was extended until December 13th.

REGULAR SESSION:

1. Terravest International Corporate Park- T-3 Senior Housing

This was a review of the architectural designs. The three units with seven different floor plans are: The Willow, The Oak and The Sycamore. All are 3 bedroom and 1800 square feet. All are two story. All have 'comfort' height plugs, light switches and toilets. The ARB gave the designs unanimous approval.

2. Terravest International Corporate Park- T-9

Introduction of tenant: Westchester Tractor.

Westchester Tractor is presently located in Goldens Bridge. The footprint of the building is 34,000 square feet. Lighting will be 'shoebox'. The Board was concerned with outdoor storage. There will be sales and 'leasing' on site. The ARB has approved the generic design of this building.

The Town Planner had concerns about the 'light manufacturing use'.

3. Durkin Water Company- Amended Site Plan, Fields Lane

No variances approved yet. The Planning Board voted itself Lead Agency 7-0.

4. Back 'O Beyond Subdivision: Federal Hill Road

Theresa Ryan- Engineer

This is a very unconventional 2 lot subdivision. Buildings are on one 10 acre piece while the remainder of land which surrounds it will become a buffer to the golf course.

Graham Trelsted was not happy with this configuration which just makes setbacks. The Planning Board voted itself Lead Agency by a vote of 7-0. A request for waivers was passed by a vote of 7-0.

5. Quinn Subdivision and Lot Line Adjustment, Turk Hill Road

This was a sketch plan review. One common drive will be in the wetlands control area.

6. Barnes Warehouse, Fields Lane- Continued Review

This application (10,000 sq. ft., 25 parking spaces, wetland incursion, pump-up septic) is complicated and no one seemed to know why it was in front of the Planning Board now. There had already been a Public Hearing (last January) and the applicant still 'hadn't heard back from the DEP'.

COMMENTS:

Work Session: The Campus

I'm not quite clear on why applicants are now going back and forth from the ARB to the Planning Board. I don't know if Planning just wants to check up on the ARB, whether they can override or whether they're just nosy. Whatever. It sure takes up a lot of time.

Fisher Subdivision:

Well, you'd think that one two lot subdivision on 47 acres might fly through the process. However, there are several important questions that need to be answered. Is it really possible that even on 47 acres there must be wetland buffer incursion? That there's really almost no road frontage and will need a cluster variance? That it really won't become a 'horse farm'?

The neighborhood residents were organized, respectful and presented many valid concerns. They asked specifically for the Board to take a long, hard look at this proposal.

Thanks to the Planning Board for holding the Public Hearing open. When the applicant submits a site plan in the eleventh hour it should be a matter of course that the hearing be held open so that the plans can be properly reviewed.

1. Terravest International Corporate Park: Senior Housing

Well, what can I say that hasn't been said dozens of times. Senior Housing in a totally fake Office Park Zone next to the soon to be built (?) Waste Water Treatment plant. Great news though- the housing will have incredible amenities such as 'comfort height' plugs, toilets etc. so it will obviously be really, really senior friendly.

The models are ironically and tragically named for trees that'll have to be cut to make way for the units. The architect kept referring to 'aging in place' which, in fact, means aging in the home you've owned and loved for years- not brand new 'senior housing'. This has to be the lamest excuse for Senior Housing in the entire county. And given all that's proposed that's really saying something. Comfort level plugs. 'Walk to bulk cheese' and convenient to rent-a-dozer. Honestly, I think my head's going to explode.

2. Terravest (T-9) Westchester Tractor:

Nothing says office park quite like a tractor sales and rental concern. Sorry, make that 'leasing' which appeared to be the mitigating word. Oh yeah, outside storage? For some reason the applicant seemed to think that a constantly changing inventory didn't constitute outside storage. I mean, this isn't 'alternate side of the street parking' this is a heavy equipment sales and rental yard.

And don't get me started on the architectural rendering... which appeared to be drawn by a Pixar artist on acid. Yikes. Mr. Trelsted was right to question all he did on this project. Go get 'em, Graham. No wonder Supervisor Dunford wants to rename all commercial zoning and lose the 'Office Park' designation.

4. Back 'O Beyond Subdivision: Federal Hill Road

This was yet another fascinating configuration of subdivision. I can only compare it to looking like a keyhole surrounded by the second larger lot. I love the applicant's engineer Theresa Ryan, insisting that this made the most sense.

Look, Back 'O Beyond has always been a good neighbor in Southeast but couldn't they give a little on this? Ms. Ryan and attorney, Jim Bacon, insisted that there were no plans to sell either lot. Well, maybe not right now. But the 'key

hole' lot had been on the market as recently as several months ago.

5. Quinn Subdivision: Turk Hill

Ms. Ryan was up again and at least this project had some 'straight lines'. Naturally we have wetland incursion here, too.

6. Barnes Office/Warehouse: Fields Lane

This easily swept the 'who's on first' awards for the evening. No one had a clue where this was in the Planning process. And it seemed to be a complete shock that this had already been through a Public Hearing. Surprise! After the meeting even Planning Board member Mr. LaPerch remarked that the proceedings were 'embarrassing'. I'll say. But it was so late at this point that everyone was testy and tempers were frayed. And yeah, it almost goes without saying- but not quite, that this gem is in an Office Park zone.

That's it from here. I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments that you may have.

With best regards,
Lynne Eckardt

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