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From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>
Date: Tue May 24, 2005 4:34 pm
Subject: SE Town Board Work Session

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Hi All,

Below please find my recap of the May 19th Town Board Work Session.

This was a relatively short meeting with Senior Housing on Terravest taking center stage while the proposed Alcon development took the most time. There was the always classic 'who's on first' routine between Stuart Arbeit, the Board and Town Attorney, Willis Stephens. And two of my perennial favorites: Warehouses and Senior Housing in our Office Park zone.

As always the comments written are mine alone and reflect my own jaded view of life in Southeast.

AGENDA:

1. SCDA Ltd.

Supervisor Dunford asked Mr. Arbeit why he was in front of the Board. Mr. Arbeit explained that the Zoning Board of Appeals had sent him to the TB for a 'Special Permit'. That his variance for a 'car rental facility' had been approved and that he needed a special permit for outside storage.

Supervisor Dunford felt that Mr. Arbeit would have to appear before the Planning Board. And Mr. Stephens asked if 'Vehicle leasing was retail?' Arbeit was also asked how he originally got on the ZBA agenda. According to Mr. Arbeit Ron Harper (Zoning Code Enforcer) had sent him.

Mr. Arbeit asked if the Board could give him idea on how they felt about this particular special permit. The Board said they'd need time to 'analyze it'. Mr. Arbeit also asked why there is no 'flow' between Boards and why he was forwarded to the Town Board. The Board did not know.

2. MS4 Coordination Committee:

The Board would like to appoint Town Planner, Graham Trestead, to this committee.

3. Indian Wells Subdivision Lot 18

A driveway has been installed on Town land near the drainage basin. Jim Lawler has been out to the site. Representing 'Lot 18' was Michael Lusari (Hogan and Rossi Law Firm) who made the point that if the driveway had not been on town property more fill would have been needed. This will be on a June meeting and the Board will ask town engineer, Tom Fenton, to weigh in.

4. Alcon- Special Permit

A 9600 square foot building on 6 acres this is a landscaping concern owned by Rob Alfredo on Fields Lane. Councilwoman Mitts asked if the building could be seen from a neighboring residential area. Attorney for the project, Rick O'Rourke, said it would be screened. Councilman Johnson asked if the adjoining property was owned by the Brewster Central School District. Answer: No, this was the BCSD boundary line. Supervisor Dunford did not want to see the building from I684. Answer: It wouldn't be. Mrs. Mitts asked for photographs of the property taken from 684. This will be forwarded to the ZBA for an outside storage variance. The applicant is allowed 14,044 sq. ft. of outdoor storage and is requesting 29,000 sq. ft.

5. Terra 9-Establishment of Performance Bond

Could not hear what Board said.

6. T3- Special Permit, Senior Housing

There will be 60 Arts and Crafts bungalow style houses with 1800 square feet, not counting garage or basement. Basement will consist of utility room and will not be full. The Public Hearing will be set at the next regular meeting and will be in July.

ARB-

1. Press Express Printing- sign approval

Since the Architectural Review Board is still not functioning (still missing a chair) the Town Board discussed the proposed sign. The sign is internally illuminated. This is pre-existing, non conforming but 'grandfathered' in. This item will be on the next Town Board Work Session and the June 16th regular meeting.

The Board then discussed revising the Architectural Review Board guidelines as it has been difficult to find a chair.

COMMENTS:

1. SCDA Ltd.- Stuart Arbeit

In another 'who's on first' debacle I really felt sorry for Mr. Arbeit. I was at the last ZBA meeting (see recap sent 5/22/05) and heard the ZBA forward him on to the Town Board. So Mr. Arbeit dutifully gets on a TB work session and then is asked why he is there. And my personal fave, he is then questioned about the ZBA decision that allows a rental car agency on his property. Note to Board: You appointed the guys who made this decision- not Mr. Arbeit. If you don't agree with their decision you could always pick up the phone and give Chairman Colello a jingle. Questioning Mr. Arbeit on the decision itself was inappropriate, unnecessary and put him on the defensive.

Anyhow, the ZBA voted unanimously that rental car agencies fall into the wonderful world of retail. Ironically, this is the same meeting they decided that heavy equipment sales, parts sales and rentals are NOT retail. Huh? And, stay with me on this, completely coincidentally Westchester Tractor, who received this variance, is located at Terravest which is brought to you by Harold Lepler.

Mr. Arbeit ended by asking the Board if they were inclined to give him a special permit for 'outside storage' so he 'doesn't waste time'. The Board said they'd need time to 'analyze' it. Mr. Arbeit asked why there is no 'flow' between town agencies. No answer was given. I guess because there is none.

So, it's back to the Planning Board for Mr. Arbeit. Oooooo, I can hardly wait for the Planning Board to ask him why he's there instead of in front of the Town Board. Someday someone's gonna go postal.

2. MS4 Coordination Committee:

While appointing the town planner to this position makes sense I'm curious as to the cost.

3. Indian Wells Subdivision Lot 18:

It sounded like the driveway built partially on Town property was more environmentally sound. I'd love to know who discovered this faux pas and I'd love to know why this piece of property doesn't seem to be on the list of Town owned property.

4. Alcon- Special Permit:

Ready for my Fields Lane rant- sure you are...

OK, another landscaping concern in the Office Park 1 zone yet Councilman Johnson was more concerned by how bad the plans 'smelled'. That's right we have tons of gravel, mulch and truck storage proposed and he's worried about stinky drawings. My head's gonna explode.

Project attorney Rick O'Rourke did quite the presentation. This is done by telling the Board what the applicant was allowed do while neglecting to mention the fact that it would be an idiotic plan given the business he's in. I suppose the Board was grateful that we'll be saddled with yet another 'small' thinly disguised Butler building, albeit hidden.

Bottom line: We could have an office building which just might gainfully employ residents, pay more taxes and be attractive. Instead we get an 9600 square foot warehouse surrounded by piles of gravel, mulch and landscaping trucks. Super- sign me up.

5. Terra 9- Establishment of a Performance Bond:

No one I sat with could hear a thing that the Board said. Let's just leave it at that.

6. T3- Special Permit, Senior Housing:

Yeah, we got to hear about the fabulous 'Arts and Crafts' style 1800 square foot 'bungalows'. We got to hear that there'd be 60 units. We got to hear there wouldn't be full basements as the applicant wants to maintain the 1800 sq. ft. (excluding garage, of course). What we didn't get to hear was any substantive discussion on Senior Housing.

How maybe... just maybe, three bedroom, two story houses aren't the best design for seniors. How there are no amenities for seniors save 'walk to food-packaging plant' and now Westchester Tractor (if they're 'in the trade' that is). In more good news, if they need to renew their drivers licenses to further burden traffic on Route 312 or register to vote, The DMV and BOE are only steps away. There are no recreational facilities save town fields (coincidentally also in the wetland buffers) and the senior community will be bisected by the waste water treatment plant. On the plus, side this may mitigate the diesel smell emanating from I84 and surrounding businesses.

I know, I know I'm not being nice about this. But I don't believe that this is a 'nice' or even appropriate site for Senior Housing. And I believe strongly that the Board needs to have an open discussion defending **their** Senior Housing law and whether or not this is quality development for our town and our seniors.

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

With Best Regards,
Lynne Eckardt



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