



### **Planning Board Minutes – March 21, 2017**

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on March **21, 2017** at the Freetown Town Hall, 3 N Main St, Assonet, MA. **Present:** Keven Desmarais, , Robert Jose, Nicolas Velozo **Absent:** Debra Robbins

The Chairman called the public hearing to order at 6:02 PM. Evan Watson approached the Board to speak to the concerns that some audience members stated at the last meeting, and also wanted the Board to have the opportunity to ask more questions. He stated that the concerns relative to increased traffic, and the narrative they composed, are currently being reviewed by Environmental Partners Group (EPG). He states the concerns about well water supply are also being reviewed right now; for most of the last 2 weeks, he has been going through EPG's review letter and are composing a response, including information regarding the well issue.

Mr. Watson also addressed the Fire Chief's comments on the departmental review that alluded to a lack of water supply for fire suppression in the area. He is proposing a PVC dry hydrant standpipe, and submitted a cross section illustrated example<sup>1</sup> of what that would look like. The pipe would be fitted with an attachment that will be compatible with fire department apparatus and draw water from the detention pond, the permanent pool of which is estimated to be approximately 2 million gallons.

Mr. Watson stated that at the last meeting, some residents of Proprietors' Acres had mentioned their homes were under a covenant; a document that preserves how the community is built, according to use of land, home size, etc. In speaking with the project applicants, they are willing to detail a similar covenant for this project, which would result in a type of master plan which dictates some details of how the neighborhood is laid out. The Chairman stated that they are under no obligation to do so, but since they have listened to concerns and are making the offer, the Board would like to take a look at a sample of the wording prior to approval. Mr. Watson stated they could make that available.

Mr. Watson stated that there were concerns voiced over stormwater runoff, and if excess water will spill onto the existing properties. He displayed a detailed topographic map with the proposed roadway and lots overlaid onto it. He states that due to the natural slope water will be directed and filtered toward the wetlands and will not cause water to rise or increase elsewhere. The project's stormwater system is still under review with Con Com. He states that the Planning Technician contacted him for an example of a similar type of detention pond; this is similar to a regular basin, with 6:1 slopes, the only difference being that it is excavated deeper at the bottom in order to hold a permanent pool of water. He displays a picture<sup>2</sup> of the detention pond at Mansfield Crossing, which has a water surface of 2 acres, and the surface area of the entire tract including the perimeter road, is 4 acres. He states that in order to achieve the desired slopes, it needs to be a gradual decline 30 -40ft out. He imagines aquatic vegetation at the edges, with a 20ft wide access road around the perimeter, composed of top soil mixed with gravel to vegetate a little bit and blend in with the environment.

Mark Rogers asked how and where the fire access would fit around the detention pond. Mr. Watson stated that the fire apparatus can be placed behind the paved road shoulder and berm. Mr. Rogers asked if access to the pipe can be restricted to the fire department only, and if ductile iron might work better than PVC. Mr. Watson stated he imagines the pipe protected by bollards, and will leave other details up to the Chief. The Chairman stated that they probably do not want to place the standpipe too close to the side of the road, especially due to snowbanks from winter plowing. He states Mr. Watson should work with the Chief to show details on an additional plan sheet by the next meeting.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dry\_hydrant\_2.gif

<sup>2</sup> D Pond Example.jpeg

Mr. Watson stated that the applicants have a meeting with the Water Commission on Thursday, since hearing at the last meeting that they may not wish to grant a waiver for the installation of a dry water line, due to anticipated nearby water line improvements in Chipaway Road. He states that not many other projects in Town are required to do this installation, and they presumed that would be the case here. They are going to discuss how imminent the Chipaway line may or may not be, and are looking for more information before withdrawing the waiver. He states that typically, in communities with a water line, the frontage requirements are more relaxed, since more homes can be accommodated. In Freetown, the lot requirements are very generous, accommodating for well and septic installation; to add a dry line requires much more infrastructure investment.

The Chairman stated that some neighbors had spoken about being under the impression from realtors that the subject property was conservation land, and that at the last meeting the Board and applicants had talked about maybe leaving some sort of buffer between existing and new homes, particularly concerned were the abutters on Tommy's and Jordan Lane. The Chairman asked if some consideration can be given to a no touch wooded area, perhaps in the form of a wildlife easement/conservation restriction deed restriction. Mr. Watson replied that they are discussing the issue and need to look at where septic and wells need to be located first, but can look at placing it as a detail in the covenant. Mr. Rogers remarked that those features 20 ft away from the property lines anyway, and that a 15-20ft wide buffer could be accommodated. The Chairman opened the public hearing to the public for questions.

Norm Rivard of 8 Tommy's Lane asked how the applicants arrived at 54 house lots, and remarked that they looked to be squeezed in. Mr. Watson stated that they started with 130 acres, and identified the restraints on the land, accommodating for wetlands, drainage areas, roadway layout. From that point, they looked at the zoning requirements for minimum lot size and frontage and arrived at the number of lots depicted as the most efficient use of the remaining land. He states the project is similar in scale to the newer section of Proprietors' Acres, and less dense than some of the surrounding areas that were built up before zoning requirements were changed and the lot size requirements increased.

Mr. Rivard stated that he is concerned about the wildlife; it doesn't go into the forest, the deer come out and the offspring are born in his backyard, and then return to the forest. He inquired as to the number of building permits issued each year. The Chairman stated that he does not know offhand, but it can be unlimited as long as the applicant has a compliant lot. Mr. Rivard is concerned about the growth rate, about more schools and police stations needed, when he moved here to be in a small town. The Chairman stated that he did not believe the growth rate has increased substantially over the past 20 years, and that the very same concerns he is voicing have been said about other subdivisions in town when they were being built. Freetown is a good community that people would like to live in. Mr. Watson stated that those communities that have imposed building caps have been challenged and thrown out of higher courts.

Joe Medeiros of 20 Jordan Lane stated he looked at the initial EPG review letter and had a question if proposed lots 18-21, which each have a portion of the Proprietors' Acres detention pond on them, are actually considered to be wetlands. He also inquired as to whether those lots could accommodate a home, well, and septic. Mr. Watson responded that in years past, stormwater management systems that were not maintained over time sometimes evolved into wetlands, but DEP has clarified the situation. If a detention pond is built and maintained as a stormwater facility, it will always be considered as such, and not a wetland resource area. He stated that as far as those lots having enough room to build upon, they are putting together a sketch and response to EPG to demonstrate the buildability. Mr. Medeiros asked if the market has an appetite for 54 new lots, as there are still 2 vacant lots for sale near his home. Mr. Watson stated that analysis can be performed by the owners, but that they will be constructing the development at the rate the market dictates.

Doug Desjardins of 10 Algonquin Way inquired as to how the detention pond will fill in; Mr. Watson responded that the land is essentially a large valley, water will flow down roads and into the catch basins, where drainage piping will divert to forebays and fill in the pond. Mr. Desjardins inquired as to why the water collected by the swale doesn't get diverted to the pond. Mr. Watson replied that the applicants are responsible for the water running off of their project only. In this case, they are improving the water accumulation from the existing homes through the swale, because they do not want to undergo the added expense of piping it over to the basin at which point the basin size might have to be increased. The swale is designed to further improve the runoff from the existing homes. Mr. Desjardins inquired as to what the volume of water traveling through the swale would look like. Mr. Watson replied that there is a 15 inch diameter pipe underneath the swale, designed for a 25 year storm and is not designed to be flowing all of the time. Most of the water will flow underground; only during torrential rain events will any water be visible in the swale.

Mr. Velozo inquired as to whether all lots depicted are buildable; Mr. Watson replied yes, and stated that the review letter had mentioned that an incorrect zoning setback was written on the plan, which they will be adjusting. Diane Boucher of 5 Pierce Way East inquired as to who would be responsible for the maintenance of the berm and drainage pond. Mr. Watson replied that initially all would be the responsibility of the project owners, and as houses are sold, owners will be partly responsible for the maintenance. When the project is complete, the roads would be petitioned for acceptance, upon which it would become the Town's responsibility.

Kate Camara of 25 King Philip stated she was not at the first meeting and asked if any main road (Chipaway or Bullock) access was proposed. Mr. Watson stated the access will be through an extension of Algonquin and Buddys Crossing. Ms. Camara asked what the proposed width of the extension of Buddys Crossing would be; Mr. Watson replied it would be similar to the existing portion, 28ft of pavement with a berm and sidewalk on one side. Mark Rogers referenced a comment made last meeting about a phasing plan for the project; his main concern is the installation of drainage and roadway. Mr. Watson stated they can provide a mandatory construction sequence. The Chairman stated it should attest to how far development of the site will go before the road is paved and drainage structures installed.

Carol Weiner of 14 Algonquin Way voiced concerns about the traffic; Algonquin Way has been a dead end street for years and it will not become a thoroughway for the new development. The Chairman stated that there are assumptions made within the industry that a road constructed to a certain width can accommodate a certain amount of traffic volume. He stated that the audience may be surprised at the amount of volume a road can actually handle. The reviewers are looking at vehicle trips generated at the points of entry, at the intersections with the main road and line of sight issues. Mr. Watson stated that Freetown requires generous roadways which can accommodate vehicles; other projects he has worked on give smaller road widths, which are sometimes used as a speed control method.

Dave Lundrigan of 16 Algonquin Way stated he thought there was no room for a sidewalk on Algonquin Way; Mr. Watson explained that the actual right of way of the road owned by the town is much wider than the paved way. He stated the right of way accommodates everything they are proposing relative to paved portion, berm, and sidewalk. He stated there are not proposing to install sidewalk along the existing portion of Algonquin, and that an ADA ramp will be installed at the transition where the road extension begins. Relative to the traffic increase, Mr. Watson stated that an increase will likely be observed at peak hours, but an overall day to day increase will not be as noticeable, with an anticipate increase of a car every few minutes during the peak hour.

Motion to continue the public hearing to April 25<sup>th</sup> 6: 00 pm at the Senior Center: Mark Rogers; Second: Nicolas Velozo; all in favor. The Chairman called a 5 minute recess, and departed the meeting. The Board reviewed the minutes of 2/21/17. Motion to approve the minutes: Mark Rogers; Second: Nicolas Velozo; all in favor.

The Board briefly discussed potential articles for Town Meeting, including the addition of a Medical Marijuana Overlay District. The large parcels near Stop & Shop on S. Main Street were identified as a potential location. The Board discussed thinking about possible sites in East Freetown if appropriate.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Moreau, Planning Technician

RECEIVED  
FREETOWN TOWN CLERK  
2017 AUG 16 PM 12: 53

*J. Brown*