

Minutes Meeting of September 24, 2003 – Washington Green, Collins

Members Present: Stuart Schulman, Bob Cadle, Dave Gandle, Mark Mulligan, Chase Duffy

The Chairman reconvened the Washington Green hearing. Three things are on the agenda: 1) more extensive plans; 2) engineer from JNEI; 3) many things to be read into record, which he did.

- 1) Two memos from Con. Comm.
- 2) Planning Board
- 3) BOS
- 4) Two letters from abutters

Discussion ensued regarding width of driveway.

Atty. Lyons, Scott, Steve Dresler, Ross Tanner, etc. want to discuss the engineering report presented by JNEI.

Rick Gorham, JNEI, said that he will go through report.

Atty. Lyons submitted a rebuttal to the JNEI report, which he went through line by line.

The Chairman said that all boards will need to be consulted before the ZBA can make any decisions.

Mr. Degen, earth removal advisory committee, will need an erosion control permit.

Atty. Lyons said that #11 will be addressed by Mr. Dresser. Discussion ensued regarding retaining walls. He said that he wants to keep the topography as a natural buffer, and wants to limit cutting as much as possible and keep the grading gradual where possible. Of note: it will be tricky for a vehicle to get around the retaining wall where the driveway curves.

The Chairman asked about why 3:1 slopes do not need stabilization and asked how stable will it be and what guarantee is there. He noted concern regarding the right to limit tolerance. Mr. Dresser said that 2:1 slopes are acceptable.

Atty. Lyons said that a wall might be built around the substation for security and a noise buffer. Discussion ensued regarding the lack of a recreational area. The Board suggested removing some buildings for a recreational area, or perhaps locating it over the septic system. He said that the project is not age restricted and that they can probably set up a school bus waiting area. There will be a total of 99 parking spaces.

Mrs. Duffy felt that there needs to be a rear access to the backyards. She noted that this is not the

city.

Mr. Degen asked how wide the driveway is, and whether a car parked in garage can get around a car in driveway without moving car in driveway.

Mr. Dresser said that the vehicle parked outside would need to move, but noted that this is typical of townhouse developments. He said that the only alternative would be additional paving outside of the buildings.

Mr. Tanner said that this is a standard townhouse design.

Discussion ensued regarding what would happen if a snowstorm occurred and cars needed to park in the street.

Bob asked what a lane standard is regarding road construction.

Atty. Lyons said that a lane standard is for 20 units, for a quiet street. A school bus could drive on the road but he expects that kids will wait for the bus on Lowell Road.

Discussion ensued regarding the size of the retention basin and whether it could accommodate a 100-year storm. Mr. Dresser said that ground water levels will not be affected.

The Chairman suggested a site walk and asked whether stormwater management systems are hard to analysis.

Chairman asked whether the GELD site is lit. Mrs. Chonowski said that there is only one light on a pole.

Atty. Lyons suggested reviewing the PB suggestions.

Mrs. Chonowski noted that GELD has serious concerns regarding the safety and health of residents. She said that noise is a big issue, and noted that the dwellings to the rear of the substation will be most affected. She said that the noise is constant and a sound barrier needs to be in place. She said that the noise could increase because the substation can be enlarged from two transformers to three. She said that most people don't know they currently exist there and stressed that they will be very visible to the dwellings and will be an attractive nuisance to children living there. She stressed the seriousness of the situation. She said that this project will be a long-term problem for GELD b/c of possible magnetic field scares. She said that the applicant should do a study for prospective buyers, and noted that this could affect resale values.

The Chairman asked about the sound issue.

Atty. Lyons said that they have informally met with GELD and will put up sound barriers, etc. He said that they will begin to get more specific about logistics in the future.

Mr. Gandle expressed concerned regarding the proforma and comparables. He said that the proximity of the power station needed to be included in the figures.

Mrs. Duffy suggested that a pull off area for the school bus would be good.

Mr. Dresser said that he wants to wait to make a decision regarding moving the sidewalk as suggested by the PB.

The Chairman noted that of 13 reviews there are likely to be 4 to 5 changes as a result.

Mr. Degen asked whether JNEI suggested a separate review of the retaining walls.

Mr. Gorham said that he did not suggest this because of the scope of the review and noted that the walls are not complicated.

Mr. Degen said that it is within site plan review requirement to have a structural engineering drawing/review done. He said that the ZBA could and should ask for it, to find out what the wall is made of, etc. He noted that a driveway built to lane standards can only serve up to 12 units unless there is a dead end, whereby only 10 units can be served and a secondary access is required. What is proposed for the road could be moved up to minor street standard which will increase the pavement area somewhat.

Mrs. Perkins, PB noted that this is a challenging site which is further complicated by the GELD substation. She suggested that this could be a 55 plus development b/c there is no recreational area proposed. She said that there are many units and suggested having some mitigation through architectural design. She said that a plan for planting and screening, etc. should be presented ASAP.

The Chairman said that he wants to pursue Mr. Degen's idea regarding wall drawings, etc.

Bruce Clemens, PB and Con Comm., asked about a MEPA review.

Mr. Dresser said that it is not required.

Clemens said that there are potential environmental issues that need addressing. He also asked what the vertical height of the slope drop off is. Dresser said that the drops is six feet over 18 feet.

Discussion ensued re: a site walk that was scheduled for October 4th at 9:00 am.

Mr. Degen suggested marking the center-line of the proposed driveway.

The hearing was continued to 10/29/03 at 8:00 pm. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Chairman reconvened the Collins hearing.

Mrs. Duffy said that the roof needs to be slanted away from the existing building.

Mr. Collins said that that is how it will be and noted that the abutters would not be faced by a tall gabled wall.

Mrs. Duffy noted concern about creating more shade.

Mr. Mulligan said that the pitch should be made lower on the front section.

Discussion ensued and the applicant said the pitch could stay lower.

Mr. Dearborn asked that the main roof be kept as low as possible.

Chairman said that because of topography, the abutting house drops down three to four feet.

Discussion ensued regarding different framing options.

Mr. Collins said that an engineer told him that he needs twelve inch cuts.

The Chairman felt that they were talking about the same thing.

Atty. Collins said that they are talking inches and not feet.

Mr. Dearborn noted concern about rain runoff b/c the roof will be much bigger. He currently has a dry basement.

Mr. Collins said that gutters will be installed where currently there are none.

Discussion ensued regarding what is being requested, which is a special permit.

Discussion ensued regarding whether the roof could be lower. Mr. Collins said that if the roof were any lower it would look funny because the building is so wide.

The Board suggested conditioning gutters.

Chase said that that the building will have more visibility when it is built up.

The Chairman said that the house already looks huge b/c of the drop off and noted that he doesn't think this will be significantly worse.

Mr. Dearborn submitted drawings that made the roof line lower.

Discussion ensued regarding the engineering logistics of how to frame the roof.

The Board suggested a condition that the roof will only go up as allowable by the Building Code. The height should be consistent with code and with reasonable considerations for aesthetics and no dormer will be added on the Dearborn side. Any additional changes will require an additional permit from the ZBA.

Board moved to grant a special permit as requested with the specification that the roof be as low as possible in keeping with the building code and with consideration for aesthetics. The portion of the structure closest to the street is to remain at the existing roof pitch and there will be no dormer. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.