

Palmer Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 18, 2018

I. Call To Order

Chairman Michael Marciniac called the meeting to order at 7:00PM on Monday, June 18, 2018, in the Town Administrative Building Meeting Room. Present were members Norm Czech, Paul Burns-Johnson, and Kathy Burns and Tom Skowyra were absent. Also present was Town Planner, Linda Leduc, and Gillian Davis recording minutes.

II. Public Hearing

7:00PM - Finding for demolition of a pre-existing, non-conforming structure and construction of a new two story single family home and detached garage in place of mobile home and attached structure. The project is located at 3024 Pleasant Street. Also known as Assessor's Map 86, Lot 49.

The chairman opened the hearing at 7:06PM and Gillian Davis read the public hearing notice.

Applicant Julia Kozlik and father, Kenneth Kozlik were present.

K. Kozlik approached the Board and presented the project, showing the location of the existing structure and the location of the new proposed building.

K. Kozlik stated there will be an additional 150 square feet with the addition of the garage. He added there is a 15-foot setback from the road, aligning with other homes on the street.

N. Czech asked why the garage is going to be so close to the side of the property line.

K. Kozlik stated it is because the elevation drops towards the back of the property.

P. Burns-Johnson said the setbacks are typical with the neighborhood.

A motion to approve finding was made by N. Czech, seconded by P. Burns-Johnson. The motion passed (3:0).

7:15PM – 39 Bourne St, Site Plan Approval to operate a truck customizing and general repair business within an existing garage.

Applicant, J.R. Bolduc and father, Jerry Bolduc were present.

Joe Fernandes, property owner was present, will be leasing the garage to the Bolduc's.

J. Bolduc approached the Board and discussed what is proposed. He explained his son just graduated and has obtained licenses and credentials for operation. He said Joe Fernandes will be leasing out the existing three car garage for operation.

M. Marciniac asked if the trailers on the road will be removed.

J. Fernandes explained the trailers will remain but he is trying to clean up the site, removing hazardous pine trees.

M. Marciniac expressed concerns being in a residential area and asked what the hours of operation will be.

J.R. Bolduc replied hours of operation will be Monday thru Friday from 8:00am-5:00pm.

N. Czech asked if there will be anything other than customization and repairs, will there be any auto body.

J.R. Bolduc said there will be no auto body and just customization and general repair.

M. Marciniac stated a condition should be made stating no outside storage of vehicles, parts, or cars that are not registered. All parts must be stored inside. If there are proposed dumpsters, they should be on the plan and need to be screened.

Board Member, T. Skowrya arrives at 7:21PM.

N. Czech asked if there is a plan for discarding oils and antifreezes.

J. Bolduc stated they have a business that will be disposing of materials properly.

N. Czech asked if there will be any exhaust customization.

J.R. Bolduc said there will be some exhaust customization, approximately 5% of the business is exhaust work.

N. Czech said just be conscious of this being a residential zone and the exhaust work, even though minimal, needs to be mindful of the neighborhood.

M. Marciniac opened to the public for comments.

Robert and Carol Steele, 11 Bourneside Street, expressed concern about noise and asked about hours of service.

M. Marciniac replied hours of operation will be Monday thru Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Carol Steele, concerned with noise, asked what kind of cars and trucks will be worked on.

Marge Wielkiewicz, 38 Bourne Street, asked if there will be anything visible from the street and she asked if there will be an increase in air pollution.

J.R. Bolduc replied there will be nothing shown from the road and there will be no more air pollution than there is right now.

M. Marciniac added there are ten parking spaces on the site plan, therefore the number of cars and trucks will be limited to those spaces.

N. Czech asked if all trees are being removed.

J. Fernandes said all trees in the back of the property along the west side will remain. Trees along the east near the Steele's property will be trimmed.

M. Marciniac asked if there will be any exterior lighting.

J.R. Bolduc answered there will be exterior lighting and cameras.

M. Marciniac commented that no light should be on the abutter's properties.

A motion to approve the site plan approval was made by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by N. Czech. The motion passed (3:0:1). T. Skowrya abstained.

7:30PM – Seasonal Cottages on Forest Lake

The following professionals representing this project were present:

Rick Licht, Professional Engineer, of Licht Environmental Design LLC.

Steve O'Connell of Andrew's Survey & Engineering, Inc.

Leslie Fanger, of Bohler Engineering

Lloyd Bristol, of Bristol Traffic and Transportation Consulting LLC.

Land owner, Joe Paolini and investor, Steve Lopes were also present.

John Furman, of vhb, representing the Planning Board was present.

R. Licht went over PowerPoint presentation as an introduction to the project.

R. Licht introduced the project by stating this property, owned by Joe Paolini, is comprised of two parcels of land, known as Assessor's Map 36, Lot 86 and Map 31 and Lot 11-1. The actual surveyed acreage is 90.46+/- acres. He gave a brief history explaining the applicants have been in control of the property for approximately 27 years and have been working with the Town to re-purpose the vacant property.

R. Licht continued the project is being submitted as a seasonal cottage resort as defined in the Palmer Zoning Ordinance, Article XXII (§171.25) Seasonal Cottage Resort requirements.

R. Licht reviewed existing conditions which included site location and access, existing site conditions, zoning, soils, and utilities.

R. Licht then explained the proposed development, stating the applicants are proposing to develop 222 seasonal cottages clustered in neighborhoods and developed as a phased master planning project.

He emphasized direct frontage and access to Forest Lake will provide a beach, swimming, kayak and canoe activities and acres of preserved open spaces. The master plan has envisioned a community where seasonal “residents” can relax with their families, enjoy recreational activities and explore surrounding areas.

The Seasonal Cottage Ordinance (§171.25) allows for the cottage units to be open from March 1st to November 30th capturing the summer and fall seasons.

R. Licht explained the cottages will be similar to the ones currently being constructed at the Arundel, Maine project. He touched on architectural styles which plan to compliment the Community Center architecture, which was shown to the Board.

R. Licht then went over site grading, stated, the steep, eroding gravel embankments along River Street and outside of the 100-foot buffer to Forest Lake will be excavated and removed to provide for a much softer landscaped 4-6 foot high berm along River Street and to provide a base elevation for the units above Forest Lake along the “Waterview” loops where the higher elevation cottages will have a filtered view of the lake through the wooded buffer.

He continued the project abuts residential properties in two locations: One private lot along the north property line and adjacent to the Forest Lake residences at the eastern portion of the site. The balance of the site abuts River Street, the Breton Gravel Pit or remains as natural open space adjacent to and including the wetlands along the southeast property line.

Stormwater Management design is underway and will be finalized within the coming weeks. In general, Low Impact Development (LID) techniques will be used.

R. Licht explained to the Board, this project is proposing a public water main and sanitary sewer force main extension from the site up River Street approximately 1.6 miles to Center Street. The water and sewer force main extension represent a significant investment by the applicants to serve the project and will provide upgrades to the existing mains located in the River Street-Center Street area.

Leslie Fanger, gave a presentation on the entrance experience, community center, recreation area, and general landscaping.

Lloyd Bristol, presented traffic report detailing existing conditions, trip generation and distribution, site traffic mitigation recommendations, and traffic counts. He concentrated on the intersection of Stimson Street and Route 32, stating realignment is needed to alleviate safety concerns.

J. Furman reviewed memo dated June 18, 2018.

J. Furman stated the property is reported to have resource areas regulated under the Wetlands Protection Act, as well as areas subject to flooding. Work is planned in the area subject to flooding, which will be reviewed and approved through the Conservation Commission. A portion of the site contains areas mapped by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.

J. Furman continued to say vhb has not yet received a Stormwater Application or documents required as part of that process. Once a complete Stormwater application is received, a complete review will be performed.

J. Furman stated no waivers were officially requested as part of this Application.

J. Furman explained vhb intends to thoroughly review the submitted application once documentation of the Stormwater management system is submitted.

J. Furman said the landscape plan appears to provide limited screening along the property line in common with the Solar Application. He said while this article does not provide a screening requirement for residential abutting an Industrial use. However, the applicant may want to enhance the buffer on the property to ensure no impacts from the abutting use.

J. Furman then said the project proposes a ball field adjacent to the property line of the abutting solar facility. Additional protection may be warranted to ensure no damage occurs to the abutting use by this amenity.

J. Furman suggested, while the internal streets will remain private, the Board should determine if they are to comply with the Palmer Subdivision Regulations Design Standards. Vhb would recommend so, as the design standards were designed to accommodate the Town's Emergency Vehicles. However, vhb has not verified compliance with the standards.

J. Furman asked if an ANR plan will be submitted for the purchase of parcel, necessary for the realignment of Forest Lake Road and if moving the Road is even possible.

J. Paolini stated he would be filing an ANR for the additional land and that relocating the Road is allowed through existing easement language. He will provide a copy to the Board.

J. Furman stated a Plan key sheet would be helpful to identify which sheets pertain to which portion of the property. He also mentioned the project was proposed that it was going to be phased. He asked if there was a phasing plan or a general guide.

R. Licht responded that there is a general phasing guide that can be submitted.

J. Furman asked if a MEPA filing has begun and what triggers this requirement.

S. O'Connell discussed the MEPA application and stated the triggers are land disturbances, impervious coverage, Chapter 91 waterways, water systems and sewer system extensions.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) process has just begun.

J. Furman asked if there was an "opening day" and "closing day", as he questioned if there was an influx of traffic.

J. Paolini responded there no influx of traffic due to cottage owners being on different schedules, and people come and go on their own time.

J. Furman additionally asked what states or areas are these cottages being marketed to and the possibility of the MassPike corridor impacts.

J. Paolini replied various states within New England as well as Pennsylvania and New York.

The chairman opened to the public for questions and comments.

Gary Rodrick, 28 Forest Lake Road, stated his immediate concern was the lake itself, how will it be cleaned. He thought the traffic study was misguided and Forest Lake Road will be impacted. He additionally asked if the “seasonal” will be seven months or nine months.

M. Marciniac read a section of the ordinance, stating it is nine months.

Lori Hinkle, 624 River Street, stated she is not in favor of the project. She asked what the existing residents would be benefitting from this project. Additionally, expressed concerns about noise, traffic, and wildlife.

Mike Warren, 44 Forest Lake Road, mentioned existing berm on River Road as well as around Abutter’s and asked if the applicant is allowed to take those berms down. He asked how that will effect sound.

M. Marciniac responded that final grade is shown on the plan set and should display how much of the berms will be removed, which Mr. Warren can look at.

James Roberts, 61 Bennet Street, asked if there has been a study on the lake, especially regarding pH of the water. He stated there are plenty of weeds overgrowing in the lake. Lastly, he asked what will happen to the beaver and dam.

M. Marciniac answered, by the cottages being connected to Town sewer, rather than sceptic tanks, it might improve the conditions of the lake.

Robert Faulkner, 1014 Hillside Drive, agreed the lake is overgrown with weeds, but asked if there will be sanding along the beach.

M. Marciniac that is not within the Planning Board’s jurisdiction but rather, Conservation Commission.

Elaine McNeil, 34 Forest Lake Road, expressed concerns about wildlife and had pictures, which could be submitted to Conservation Commission. She also asked about zoning and what the acreage requirements are. Lastly, she asked how taxes will be affected and if there are any Airbnb regulations.

M. Marciniac replied that this project is being applied for under a specific section of the Town’s zoning, addressing seasonal cottage resorts. A copy is online or can be picked up in the Planning Department office. He continued, the Planning Board cannot consider tax revenue and there are currently no local regulations specific to Airbnb.

Christina Pike, 635 River Street, stated her family has been living on the lake for over 40 years. First, she expressed concern regarding her driveway being close to the main entrance to the cottages and the potential impacts of traffic. Secondly, she was concerned of the density of the project, as she feels there is not enough acreage for the proposed number of cottages. She mentioned the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) saying this organization will need to do an extensive amount of work for the rare species habitats. She continued, mentioning the water level being a concern as the lake is spring fed. She questioned if the cottages in Maine had the season extended. Lastly, she stated she is not opposed to development but is concerned of the scope.

Kenneth White, 273 Gates Street, asked if the Board is concerned with the increase in infrastructure and the effect to police, fire, and water departments.

M. Marciniac answered stating a notice has been sent out to all departments, accepting any comments they may have.

K. White asked if these cottage owners will be allowed to have guests as well as how many people would be in each home.

M. Marciniac answered he would assume the owners would be allowed to have guests.

J. Paolini explained the maximum square footage will be 1,250 sq. ft., between two and three bedrooms.

M. Marciniac stated this will be a residence, which will require the resources that everyone else will have.

Sharon Schaeffer, 561 River Street, asked if there would be any children in the schools.

M. Marciniac said there will not be any children in the schools because you would need to be a resident in Palmer.

Gary Rodrick, 28 Forest Lake Road, mentioned the history of the area, referencing the dust bowl.

Christina Pike, 635 River Street, added previous projects have impacted the lake with all the dust. She said no study has been done about siltation.

Marie Pike, 635 River Street, asked who will be taking care of landscaping and brought up concerns of the use of fertilizers.

M. Marciniac stated he supposes the Home Owner's Association will be taking care of landscaping.

Rachel Johnson, 32- 34 Forest Lake Road, expressed concerns about an earlier reference to road flooding.

R. Licht responded that the term flood control was used to explain how the Stormwater system will manage the 100 year storm, utilizing overflow release valves.

Christina Pike, 635 River Street, said Old Forest Lake Road was supposed to be returned to its original location.

M. Marciniac replied that the deed for that road was issued a long time ago. A copy is in the file and

J. Paolini will provide one as well.

Kenneth White, 273 Gates Street, questioned the access to Forest Lake Road.

S. O'Connell answered Glenn Hitchcock is giving the easement to Joe Paolini. Purchase and sale to buy a section of land, they will grant Mr. Hitchcock an easement to cross. Glenn Hitchcock will have legal frontage.

Lori Hinkel, 624 River Street, asked what the cost of the homes will be.

P. Burns-Johnson explained the Board cannot legally discuss this issue.

Rachel Johnson, 32-36 Forest Lake Road, asked about traffic on the weekends.

M. Marciniac replied that our engineer, John Furman of vhb, has not yet reviewed the traffic study at this time.

Christina Pike, 635 River Street, asked about minimal lot size for seasonal cottages. She also asked about the intersection of Stimson Street and Rt. 32, mentioned in the traffic study.

M. Marciniac said it was a recommendation to the Board for the state to improve.

A motion to continue the public hearing to July 23, 2018, was made by N. Czech, seconded by P. Burns-Johnson. The motion passed (4:0).

III. New Business

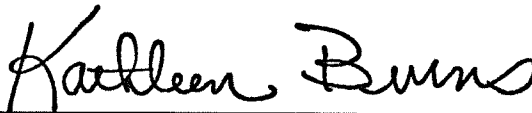
Meeting Minutes – June 4, 2018

A motion to approve meeting minutes from June 4, 2018, as amended was made by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by N. Czech. The motion passed (4:0).

Abutting Town Notices and Monthly Interest Allocation Report were distributed to the Board.

V. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn at 10:00PM was made by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by T. Skowrya. The motion passed (4:0).



Kathleen Burns, Clerk