

**Planning Commission  
Minutes of January 27, 2016 Meeting**

1670 Flat River Road  
Coventry, RI 02816

Meeting Called to order at 7:07 pm by Chairman Russell Crossman.

Members Present: Chairman Crossman, Secretary Mr. Flynn, Mr. Crowe, Mr. Mattson, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Osenkowski and Ms. Fagan-Perry.

Members Absent: Mr. Kalunian, Vice-Chairman Mr. Nunes

Also Present: Attorney Assalone, Mr. Sprague,

*Mr. Crossman reviewed the exits in the room in case of an emergency.*

Approval of Minutes:

December 8, 2015 and December 16, 2015

*Mr. Bouchard made a motion to approve both of the meeting minutes. Ms. Fagan-Perry seconded. All members were in favor. Motion passed.*

**OLD BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING - Continued from November 18, 2015**

Master Plan: “**Green Farm Estates**”; North Road Land Dev Co

*Proposed 19-Lot Major Subdivision w/Street Creation*

AP 24, Lots 26 & 31; Zone R20

Old North Road

This matter comes before the Planning Commission on continued Public Informational Hearing for Master Plan Approval concerning a proposed 19-lot Major Residential Subdivision.

Thomas Cronin from the Law Offices Of Nolan, Brunero, Cronin & Ferrara LTD., of 1070 Main Street, Coventry, RI 02816 is representing on behalf of the applicant. Chairman Crossman inquired if Mr. Cronin had represented the applicant the last time. Mr. Cronin had not been there however the same Engineers etc returned with Master Plan adjustments - some at the request of the planning Commission and some in response to public

Mr. Cronin stated that conceptually the plan stays the same - 19 houses on 12 acres off of Old North Road with public sewers and public water.

They have submitted a couple of plans and it is noted that the applicant prefers Plan A which is the original plan that was submitted to master plan. Plan B was distributed but is not the plan on the PowerPoint Presentation. The Commission was given hard copies of conceptual plans A and B. Some discussion then followed regarding the differences between the two plans.

Mr. Cronin started with changes to Conceptual plan A. The proposal requires a couple of waivers to Lot one and Lot 2 for frontage. The cul de sac would also require a waiver. There is concern that Lot 10 may require a future frontage waiver from DEM due to the size of the road. Lot 11 will need drainage area easement.

The road will be platted as a road so they will have the frontage.

**Lot 17** has a former entrance at the crest of the hill. They want keep that entrance for drainage, sewers, and water and utilities but are not going to pursue any kind of entry through that lot on North Road due to safety requests from the public. Developer will retain ownership of the lot and eventually be split between neighbors. Ms. Fagan suggested eliminating the lot and dividing it now but Mr. Cronin said they prefer to preserve the lot for utility easements.

They are proposing drainage on either side of Old North Road opposite of Sweet Fern Lane.

Conceptual Plan B adjoins several more house lots but the developer feels that that is not as suitable to the site. Mr. Cronin went on to discuss the Traffic Study produced by Beta Group. The report states that traffic levels remain acceptable even at peak hours.

Benjamin Cato from Beta Engineering offered to answer questions.

Chairman Crossman inquired about the 60 foot right of way being cut down to 50 ft.

Mr. Cato said creation of the stub took lot area out of the line. They will keep 30 feet and have a sidewalk on one side.

Next came Mr. Bannon the traffic engineer and Senior Project Manager with Beta Group to present the traffic study and answer any questions. He gave a brief presentation of the automatic traffic recorder counts on Old North Road and

more data on traffic impact assessment as it related to the addition of the addition of the single family homes and safety and operations of future use.

He discussed the safe access and site distance studies on Old North Road. They conducted automatic traffic recorder counts on Old North Road obtaining 24-hour data including accident information to determine safety issues. The road varies in width from 22-24 feet and services approximately 1,400 cars per day with a morning peak of 100 cars and an afternoon peak of 180 cars.

With respect to the proposed northerly entrance to the project, sight distance to the north is in excess of 500 feet; sight distance to the south is in excess of 250.

At the conclusion of the traffic study presentation, once again Attorney Cronin requested that Conceptual Plan A be considered the Primary.

Mr. Crossman announced that this was a public hearing and that at the last meeting the public hearing was not closed, and was in fact still open. He afforded the public the opportunity to speak.

**Public Comment:**

John Tworog, 232 Tiogue Ave, approached the Planning Commission and expressed confusion as to the different plans presented and pointed out lot dimension differences between the plans and asked that those discrepancies be clarified. Specifically Lot 1 had multiple variations Jason Osenkowski also noticed discrepancies in the plans being discussed. Some discussion followed to clarify the confusion between the multiple plans. Mr. Cato stated that the plan labeled **New Plan** is Plan A for present use and has lot 1 as having 107.85 ft. on the western property line.

Mr. Tworog inquired if the commission votes on everything presented and are dimensions changes in the future possible. Mr. Crossman explained the planning process of Master Plan Approval and said yes that some dimensions could change but once the applicant receives Master Plan Approval the number of units cannot change. Then Mr. Tworog asked if there were to be new changes did the public have the right to comment. Mr. Crossman explained that yes, this was the first public hearing and that the public would have additional opportunities to comment before final approval. Mr. Sprague went to further explain the development of plans from conceptual to preliminary approvals and the changes that can happen as well the applicant being subject to acquiring all engineering permits and approvals before coming back to the Planning Commission.

Bruce Hanson of North Road approached the Planning Commission asking for a 3 way stop sign and that the PC offer a way to slow down cars at north entrance. Mr. Crossman stated that he does not like to employ stop signs for speed control, furthermore, it is out

of the PC's purview to install such signs as the Police Department is in charge of stop signs. The PC will definitely take the speed and safety issues under advisement.

Mr. Sprague said that he will recommend safety measures be incorporated into Mr. Bannon's Traffic Report and then referred to page 5 of the report which addresses safety enhancements to North Road.

Mr. Crossman cautioned that taking any trees down must be done so carefully and in agreement with property owners. He suggested reflector rods as an alternative. Mr. Flynn inquired if the entire traffic Report could be incorporated into the motion. Mr. Crossman suggested incorporating all of page 5.

Charles Calenda of 29 Old North Road approached the Planning Commission and expressed concerns regarding visibility from his driveway and from Sweet Fern Road. He challenged accuracy of Traffic Study's visibility conclusions due to inclines in North Road near his driveway. He added that there is obstruction to visibility at the crest and he has his concerns. Also he is concerned about proposed road and its width and the requested waiver.

Mr. Crossman explained that the new road will be 30 ft. with 4 ft. sidewalks on one side and Old North Road is already a slender 22 -24 ft. road. He would be in favor of granting a waiver from a 60 to a 50 foot right of way for the road.

Mr. Crossman asked Mr. Bannon to explain sight distance and the specific criteria for what speed limits correlate.

Mr. Bannon said they use AASHTO's (American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officers) recommended sight distances in their designs. The design speed of this road is 25, but 20 at best with the curvature of the road. Typically design speed is 5 mph over posted speed limit and used for stopping times. These sight distances are greater than AASHTO's (American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officers) recommended sight distances. Mr. Bannon understands Mr. Calendas viewpoint as his driveway is down in the sag. The proposed road will be higher than his and they are 100 ft. up from his drive. He went on to discuss sight distances and speed and suggested that there should be ample time for drivers to adjust.

Mr. Osenkowski asked if there are any potential options to put in place to satisfy Mr. Calenda's concerns. Mr. Bannon said it was difficult to assess because the resident is relating his particular experience of backing out onto Old North Road. The speed limit should be strictly enforced. *Intersection Ahead* signs will be posted.

Pauline Kelling of 48 Old North Road approached the Planning Commission. She has lived here for 46 years and has seen the traffic increase and feels Mr. Bannon is sugarcoating his findings. The traffic at the top hill is very difficult to see. He is not mentioning the Southside. It is very difficult to see anything coming out of driveways at 40 and 42 because of the crest. 42 is a blind driveway. The road signs are postage stamp

signs and need to be replaced with larger more visible signs. Some are hidden by branches. When cars and trucks come around the curve they hit the gas and speed to climb crest and continue to speed down North Road. She wants people to be aware road is hazardous and a thruway used by tractor trailer trucks. She has gotten no relief from the State Highway Dept.

Mr. Crossman recommends 30 inch signs. There is no reason for Tractor trailer trucks to be using North Road. Ms. Kelling should talk with the Police about no thru trucking signs. Signs, however have been there and other *No Thruway* signs have gone missing.

Mr. Sprague directed Ms. Kelling to go directly to the Police Chief regarding trucks and signage. Mr. Crossman asked Mr. Bannon to replace existing smaller signs and he agreed.

Linda Kalenaidwicz of 47 North Road approached the Planning Commission and asked who will own and maintain the retention pond.

Mr. Crossman and Mr. Sprague concurred that the town will maintain the retention pond and drainage because it is a town road.

As there were no other comments from the public Mr. Crossman entertained a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was made by Mr. Bouchard and seconded by Mr. Mason. Motion passed.

Mr. Osenkowski requested that applicant consider that parcels that have drainage basins be landscaped with something like Fir or Spruce to place a buffer for existing abutters along old North Road.

The applicant said they will include the recommendation in the landscape plan. Mr. Osenkowski asked about the waiver for the length of the cul de sac. The applicant and attorney indicated that they will recommend a waiver for the cul de sac and the length in the plan.

Mr. Osenkowski asked which plan the planning Department prefers. Mr. Sprague indicated Plan A and he is confident that the plan sufficiently manages surface and storm water runoff.

As there was no further discussion Mr. Crossman read the Planning Department's recommendation.

The Planning Department recommends that the Planning Commission grant Master Plan approval subject to the conditions hereinafter set forth,

The proposed nineteen (19) lot Major Residential Subdivision is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Community Plan. It is depicted as Medium Density Residential

(MDR) in the future Land Use Element of the Plan.<sup>1</sup> Typically, density in a MDR district ranges from 1DU/.05 Ac-1DU/2 Ac. Higher densities are allowed where public utilities & facilities and where the residential uses are located in close proximity to public open space, arterial roadways and schools. The subject lots are larger than most of the surrounding parcels in the area, the project will be serviced with public water & sewers, it is in close proximity to Tiogue School and Tiogue Avenue which is a major arterial roadway.

The lots meet the minimum dimensional requirements of the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed project should have no significant negative impact to the environment. Installation of sewers will mitigate any groundwater contamination which is of particular importance due to the project's close proximity to Tiogue Lake.

Each of the lots has permanent and adequate access to a public street.

At the Preliminary Plan stage the applicant will need to submit approvals from the Coventry Fire District (Anthony Fire Department); RIPDES permit from RIDEM; KCWA approval and approval from the Town's Sewer Subcommittee to connect to the public sewer system.

The applicant should submit topographic plans inasmuch as the land slopes severely from west to east. In addition, it should submit a Stormwater Drainage plan with calculations prior to the Preliminary Plan stage of approval.

Consideration should be given to requiring that the developer provide a snow disposal area in the vicinity of the Lot #11.

Consideration should be given to eliminating "New Road B" and that the Commission endorse the revised "Conceptual Major Subdivision -A" which provides a straight access connection to the westerly adjacent lot.

It is suggested that the applicant submit a Storm Water Runoff Report and appropriate calculations. In addition, all dwellings should have drainage roof-runoff systems.

The DPW Director has expressed concerns as to the proposed new roads "A" and "B" being able to capture and treat all storm water inasmuch as off-site facilities will be unable to treat any additional storm waters. He further expressed concerns as to the ability of the project to treat all stormwater runoff; requested that Lot #16 driveway should be accessed from "New Road A" to more effectively winter conditions; and that the island in the cul-de-sac be eliminated.

### **End recommendation**

Any remaining confusion regarding the two plans and Lot 16 was discussed and clarified.

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Community Plan; D.1-1B

Ms. Fagan asked that it was clear that the requirement for underground utilities had been met. Absolutely!

Mr. Flynn made a motion to approve the Master Plan such as:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

**Master Plan: "Green Farm Estates"**

***Proposed 19-Lot Major Subdivision with Street Creation***

**AP 24 Lots 26 & 31; Zone R20**

**Old North Road**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Consistency with Comprehensive Community Plan.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The proposed 19 Lot Major Residential Subdivision is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Community Plan.</p> <p>The property is depicted as Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the Land Use Map of the future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Such a designation recommends one dwelling house/.5-2 acre (1DU/.05-1DU/2ac).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The proposed lots range in area from 20,026 SF-31,204. This is consistent with the area lots in the surrounding neighborhood some of which are much smaller than then proposed development.</li></ul> <p>The Comprehensive Plan allows for higher densities where public utilities, open space, schools and facilities are located in close proximity to the residential project. The proposed development will be serviced with public waters &amp; sewers; provides for 4.4-4.5 acres of open space; and is in close proximity to Tiogue Elementary School and Route 3.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Significant Negative Environmental Impacts</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The proposed development will not have a significant negative impact on the environment.</p> <p>The development will be serviced with public sewers which will mitigate any groundwater runoff and contamination to Tiogue Lake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Zoning</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Each of the lots meets the minimum requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.</p>

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL/DENIAL**

The Planning Commission grants Master Plan Approval subject the following conditions:

- Approval of plans from Coventry Fire District prior to application for Preliminary Plan approval;
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- RIPDES Permit from RIDEM;
- KCWA Approval
- Approval to connect to sewers from Town of Coventry Sewer Subcommittee;
- Submission of topographic plans prior to submission for Preliminary Plan approval;
- Submission of plans for installation of sewers and pump station;
- Submission of Stormwater Drainage plans and calculations prior to submission of application for Preliminary Plan approval;
- Provide on Preliminary Plans a snow disposal area;
- Traffic Study;
- An access way from property immediately west of project (AP 32 Lot 150) to new road
- Conceptual Major Subdivision "A"

I would like to incorporate the Planning Report, a 50 ft. right of way waiver, page 5 of the Traffic Report, a waiver for the length of the cul de sac as well as a waiver for the cul de sac.

Mr. Bouchard seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Mr. Osenkowski asked if there would be an additional traffic study and should we include part regarding underground utilities and signage issues that came up in public comment.

There would be no additional traffic study but plan will include page 5.

The motion was amended to add traffic volume safety measures, roof runoff systems and underground utilities. Mr. Flynn agreed to amend the motion with Mr. Osenkowski suggestions.

Motion was made and seconded, amended and seconded.

Motion was passed unanimously and motion carries.

Planning Commission Issues of Interest

None

Public Works Director

None

Planning Director Report

None

Public Comment

Ms. Fagan asked if at the last Town Council meeting was there made mention of another tower or transmitter going up in the Central Coventry Park. No, but there was mention of a transmission tower for new radio station going in Providence Place. Transmitter is going on existing Tower. She questioned if it is being added, does it have to go before planning. The present company was not informed on this issue.

*A motion was then made by Mr. Bouchard to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Flynn seconded. All members in favor. Motion passed.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Minutes prepared by Kathy Gray