

SPECIAL MEETING
PLANNING COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 18, 2004 – 5:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Pritchard, Roper, Sherrard, and Steinford
Staff: Discordia, Goodrich, Murphy

Chairman Sherrard opened with roll call at 5:07 p.m.

Kane arrived at 5:10 p.m. and Chairman Sherrard appointed Kane to vote for Gibson.

II. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. Candy Lane Subdivision, corner of Pamela Avenue and Bonnie Circle (15 lots)

Staff reviewed the subdivision plans and the options for imposing a buffer area along the southern boundary adjacent to the I-96 exist ramp and requiring a 10% set aside for open space. Staff explained the different options for the open space set aside. Each option would allow 8-lots plus the open space area. A draft motion was distributed and general discussion followed.

Pritchard asked if there were any use restrictions on the town owned open space that exists as part of the Boulder Heights subdivision. Staff stated that the deed for the parcel calls it a natural open space but allows it to be used for parks and recreation purposes. Pritchard stated that Option A allows the open space to be divided between two lots so that the tax burden of the additional land is shared.

Steinford noted that the language referencing the relocation of the driveway to 180 Pamela Ave. was in the motion. Staff stated that the Town Attorney had reviewed the language.

General discussion followed regarding the definition of development free area and whether accessory buildings could be allowed.

MOTION: To approve the proposed Candy Lane Subdivision, corner of Pamela Avenue and Bonnie Circle with the following modifications:

- 1) A 100-foot development free area shall be imposed along the southern boundary of the property separating the property and the interstate highway exit ramp as per 4.1 (7) of the Subdivision Regulations, eliminating lots 14, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4 and imposing a no-build area on portions of original lots 15 and 2. Said development free area shall be included, in its entirety, into the area of proposed lot 2 and a note shall be added to the plan that the development free area shall remain in its natural state and development free unless approved by the Town.
- 2) Ten percent of the property shall be dedicated as open space and a walkable path connecting the proposed cul-de-sac through the dedicated open space to the adjoining existing town owned open space shall be constructed.
 - a. Eliminate lots 13 and 15 and the area labeled open space as shown on plan. Create two new lots, building lot 13 adjacent to the eastern boundary of proposed Lot 11 and a new open space

lot not less than 0.61 acres that contains, within its boundary a 25' access at its northern boundary contiguous with the existing town owned open space.

- 3) A maintenance easement for all retaining walls or portions of retaining walls within the control of the applicant that lie outside the town right of way shall be granted to the Town of Groton.
- 4) Technical Items raised by the staff shall be addressed.

The Commission notes that the applicant proposed to relocate the existing driveway for 180 Pamela Avenue at no cost to the owner of 180 Pamela Avenue.

The Commission notes that Section 1.1 (2) of the Town of Groton Subdivision Regulations states that "land to be subdivided shall be of such character that it can be used safely for building purposes without danger to health or peril from fire, flood, or other menace.....", and Section 4.1(7) of the Town of Groton's subdivision regulations allows the Commission to impose a development free area in cases where a subdivision should be protected from an existing, manmade facility such as an interstate highway. The proposed Candy Lane subdivision is immediately adjacent to both I-95 and associated exit ramp. The Commission notes that the alternative proposed by the applicant to reduce adverse impacts to the proposed lots, a 6' stockade fence and plantings, provided minimal noise attenuation based on testimony of the applicant's acoustical engineer. The Commission further notes that, in the absence of other alternatives to protect and provide for public health, safety and welfare of residents of the proposed lots immediately adjacent to the interstate highway ramp, the imposition of the development free area offers the only viable design feature to protect the subdivision, reduce adverse impacts thereto, and provide some attenuation of noise from the interstate highway and access ramp. The Commission notes that the imposition of a 100' development free area will bring the decibel level of the remaining proposed lots more in line with the existing neighborhood.

Motion made by Chairman Sherrard, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously.

2. Zoning Commission Referral for December 1, 2004 Public Hearing

Staff presented the request for a map amendment for a parcel adjacent to Tollgate Estates currently zoned RU-20. The amendment requests including an additional parcel into the RMF-8 zone to allow an additional multi-unit structure to be constructed as part of the Tollgate Estates development. The Commission reviewed the request relative to the Plan of Conservation and Development.

MOTION: The Commission had no comment.

Motion made by Chairman Sherrard, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

3. Plan of Conservation and Development Update Workshop

Staff distributed some materials in regards to the POCD, including a chart depicting the Town's progress on implementing the POCD to date. Staff reviewed the purpose of periodic, incremental reviews of the POCD. Staff stated that this review is focused on the conservation theme of the POCD as recommended in the POCD. Staff asked Commission to look at any inconsistencies or changes that may have occurred in the past few years that may need to be updated in the POCD such as regulated areas,

establishing non-disturbance areas, identifying archeological resources and the adoption of the new property maintenance code. Staff notes that the plan calls for incremental updates up until the time a full-scale revision is needed.

Staff is working with the state and our environmental planner to create an archaeological resources map that may be incorporated in POCD possibly with this revision.

There are conservation theme map refinements to be reviewed. New technology will make the maps parcel based. The existing open space map has changed from the one published in the original POCD. Staff reported that the master trails plan is almost complete and the results should be incorporated into new maps in this theme. Chairman Sherrard asked if there are any changes to definitions. Staff stated not at this time but would take any input from Commission to be reviewed. The sewer service avoidance area is not in the conservation theme at this point and needs to be incorporated because of recent updates. Staff reported that within the next two months we should be able to bring information together from all sources for the conservation theme. Staff stated approximately \$2,000 has been allocated to revising this portion of the POCD which includes printing costs. Staff showed the Commission the economic development maps and pointed out the revisions and development areas that potentially tie into the whole plan, noting the recent inclusion of parcels.

General discussion followed concerning possible time frames for holding a public hearing. Staff and Commission agreed that staff would update the Commission at both the first meetings in January and February and perhaps establish a public hearing date at the February meeting. Chairman Sherrard suggested inviting the Conservation Commission to the first Commission meeting in January, perhaps in a workshop format at 6:30 PM to discuss the update to the POCD. He asked the staff to report on this option at the December Commission meeting.

Roper noted that the Commission has made progress in the implementation of the POCD with regard to access management for Routes 12 and 184 based on site plan reviews.

Pritchard suggested setting a goal for completion of the update of the POCD.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:36 p.m. made by Steinford, seconded by Kane so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Margil Steinford