

Members Present:

Doreen Prouty – Chairperson
Richard Maggi – Vice Chair
Gary Geiger – Acting Clerk
Aldo Mancini - Alternate
Vincenzo Ronghi - Alternate

Chairperson Prouty opened meeting at 6:30 P.M.

1. Public Hearing – Rosewood Way – 586 Mill Street Lot 4 – Case # 1978

Chairperson Prouty opened this public hearing by reading the legal notice, explaining the procedures of the hearing and introducing the members of the Board. Sitting on this case were Chairperson Doreen Prouty, Vice Chair Richard Maggi, and Acting Clerk Gary Geiger. Also, present Joseph Peznola of Creekwood Consultants. Creekwood Consultants have been hired to assist the ZBA in their review of the project through a grant from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

Mr. Peznola explained that in 1969 there was an anti-snob zoning law enacted this names the ZBA as the single board in town to review and grant a Comprehensive permit. Under this law the petitioner can waive certain zoning requirements, parking spaces, lot frontage, etc. A list of requested waivers is contained in the Comprehensive Permit Application. This anti snob zoning law does not allow for waivers of state or federal regulations. Also explained was that under state law Agawam must have 10% affordable housing at present Agawam is 700 units short of affordable housing. Mr. Peznola also explained the Safe Harbor law as it pertains to low income housing in the community.

Also explain to the Board and set forth in Mr. Peznola's letter was an outline of the timetable that the ZBA needs to follow. He explained the denial, approval and appeal process. Also stress was the need for various departmental inputs. The ZBA can also request that the applicant pay for any consultant work that the board feels necessary.

James Linfield, Project Manager, Way Finders, Inc., 120 Maple Street, Springfield, MA. Mr. Linfield outlined the proposal for 586 Mill Street, Lot 4, in Agawam, MA. Mr. Linfield explained that Way Finders is a non-profit organization formally known as HAP. Way Finders have developments in Northampton, East Hampton and Holyoke to name a few. Mr. Linfield explained that this project has been in the works for 34 months and they have meet numerous times with City Councilors, the former Mayor and the present Mayor along with neighbors. On November 15, 2018 the proposal was formally stamped in with the Town Clerks Office. The original public hearing was scheduled for December 10, 2018, Chairperson Prouty requested a 30 day extension until January 14, 2019, which the petitioner agreed too. Chairperson Prouty signed a letter from the petitioner formally requesting that extension.

Douglas Serrill, Landscape Architect, Berkshire Design Croup, Inc., Northampton, MA. Mr. Serrill gave a description of the project. The project is proposed for lot 4 of 586 Mill Street, present zoning is Agricultural and Residence A-2. Lot 4 equals 8.85 acres of land. There is to be 62 units comprised of ten townhouse style, two story residential buildings and one community building. There will be 20 one

bedroom, 29 two bedroom and 13 three bedroom units. The proposal contains 118 parking spaces. Mr. Serrill spoke about storm water, snow storage, runoff, play areas and sidewalks. The project will have 4 fire hydrants. Outside lighting was explained and will cause no light pollution to neighboring areas according to Mr. Serrill.

Stephen Savaria, V.P., Civil/Transportation Engineer, Fuss & O'Neill, Springfield, MA. Mr. Savaria spoke on the traffic input; a complete study was submitted with the application. Traffic study was developed from counts from 2017. Traffic studies were conducted on weekday morning and weekday afternoon peak period traffic hours. Mr. Savaria stated that according to their data there would be no significant impact to traffic on Mill Street. There will be further discussion regarding traffic studies at future meetings.

Marc Sternick, V.P., Senior Project Architect, Dietz & Company Architects, Springfield, MA. Mr. Sternick explained rendering of the project, 2 story townhouses, 1 story community building. The project will contain 1 to 3 bedrooms; handicapped units will be 1 story. The community room will consist of laundry room, kitchen, and maintenance room. The architect tried to keep with the neighborhood feel. Also if funding allows there was discussion of solar panels being installed.

Attorney Felicity Hardee of Felicity Hardee Law Practice, Springfield, MA. Attorney Hardee explained the deadlines. The Board has 180 days from filing, original filing date was November 15, 2018, a 30 day extension was granted to the ZBA by the petitioner. All hearings/meetings need to close no later than July 13, 2019 and a decision must be made by August 22, 2019.

There was some discussion between Chairperson Prouty and the petitioner in regarding's to the 3 other lots, why they were subdivided out and if there were any plans for those 3 lots. Mr. Linfield stated that at this time Way Finders have no plans for those 3 lots.

Chairperson Prouty read the letters to the Board received from Agawam Housing Committee, Conservation Commission and the Board of Health. No other departments have submitted comments at this time.

Other topics were snow removal, which will be done by a private contractor, and 6 areas around the site for snow storage.

Richard Maggi and Gary Geiger discussed the ingress and egress into the project and on to Mill Street. There is concern that there is only a single roadway in and out. Discussion over fire safety with a single roadway and increased traffic on to Mill Street.

The petitioner discussed that in their traffic study they did not find any history of traffic/safety problems in that area, and did not feel this project would add to any, and that fire safety would be left to review by the emergency responders.

Member Vincenzo Ronghi discussed his concerns over the available parking spaces for the proposed development, also concerns regarding community room and traffic studies.

Member Mancini also expressed concerns over available parking spaces which will led to on street parking and could hinder getting large equipment in the development.

Faith Williams, Senior V.P. of Property & Asses Management, Way Finders that they have not experienced any problems with on street parking in their other developments.

Chairperson Prouty opened the hearing to the public.

Raymond Cammisa – 18 Giffin Place – Against development, concerned over water problems when the development begins. Also traffic concerns and why other lots where not begin used to egress and access.

Pam Murphy – 132 Cooper Street, property owner of 70 Giffin Place – retired firefighter. Express concerns over ingress/egress, parking on both sides of the street which will greatly impact large fire equipment getting into the development. Inquiring whether or not there will be a proposal for a buffer between development and Giffin Place.

Ange Fusick – 554-558 Mill Street. Numerous concerns regarding proposed development, soil removal within 20 feet of abutting property, storm water run-off and snow removal. Parking spaces, bus stop safety. Will Agawam residents get preference on rental units? What would be the impact to abutting properties from sound and lights from the development? Also questioned why the other 3 lots have been split off from the development.

Chairperson Prouty stated the ZBA has no authority over these 3 lots as long as the 3 lots conform to zoning requirements.

Attorney Hardee, lawyer for the petitioner, informed the Board that the soil removal was listed under the waivers the petitioner was seeking and that this topic would be discussed at a future meeting.

Paul Cavallo, 16 Castle Hill - Mr. Cavallo told the Board that as a Town Councilor for the Town of Agawam he would like to see meetings scheduled so that other town boards could attend. Mr. Cavallo would also like to see each meeting explaining what the meeting would be about, i.e. development, traffic, safety etc.

Greg Henson, Civil Engineer, Berkshire Design Group, spoke briefly regarding storm water run-off. This site has well drained soil. Due to the soil type on this property and the three depression areas, in the pre-development conditions, there is no storm water runoff from the site in any storm as modelled in HydroCAD . With the design features no storm water runoff from the site in any storm in the post-development conditions.

Kathy Hamel – 568 Mill Street – Expressed concerns that the low point of this development was located by her property, she would like to see fencing around development for sound and light control.

Will Clark – 26 High Meadow Road – Mr. Clark explained that he was speaking on behalf of Anthony Provost 595 Mill Street who had concerns over protecting his property from the lighting on this development.

Donna Jago – 1028 River Road – Concerns about safety with only one driveway in and out, asked why there was not another driveway by the Lamplighters Apartments. Also concerned about the number of parking spaces, traffic, whether or not there were basements and what would be done for sound protection.

Theresa Beaudry – 108 Kensington Street – Concerns over the driveway location and wants a fence around project for noise and lighting.

Corinne Wingard – 193 Elm Street – Member of Agawam Housing Committee. Agawam needs affordable and senior housing. Agawam residences voted back in 2010 to keep 40B. Ms. Wingard said that she is happy to have Way Finders in the community.

Resident – 152 Juniper Ridge – Does business with Way Finders, good company will do a great job.

Sarah Plantanitis – 670 Mill Street – Encouraged Way Finders to have more meetings and to invite more people to the meetings.

Susan Grossman – 131 Moore Street – opposed to development.

Kathy Arnold – 50 Brookline Avenue – opposed to development.

Kathy Hamel – 568 Mill Street – opposed to development.

The Board discussed with their consultant Joseph Peznola about getting an independent traffic study done on the project. The board will also send another notice to fire, police, engineering and the DPW requesting input for their February 25th meeting.

Chairperson Prouty stated that this hearing would be continued to February 25, 2019 at 6:30PM.

Approval of Minutes – November 13, 2018

Chairperson Prouty made some changes to the minutes of November 13, 2018, made a motion to accept the minutes with changes. Second by Member Maggi.

VOTE 3-0

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chair and Clerk

Motion made and seconded to keep Doreen Prouty as Chairperson, Richard Maggi as Vice-Chair and Gary Geiger as clerk.

All in Favor – Vote 3-0

Motion made by Chairperson Prouty to adjourn, second by Member Maggi.

All in favor – Vote 3 – 0

Adjourned at 8:50 PM

Submitted by Susan Conlon