

Agawam Planning Board – October 21, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark R. Paleologopoulos, Chairman
Charles Elfman
Anthony Russo
Frank DeStefano
Violet E. Baldwin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Taryn Egerton

Chairperson Paleologopoulos called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

1. 6:00 PM – PUBLIC HEARING – Zoning Amendment – Site Plan Review Requirements – Planning Board

Mr. Paleologopoulos explained that this was a technical fix to the zoning code regarding site plan review. The site plan review process was amended previously to reduce the number of copies of plans required to be submitted from ten to four, but Chapter 180 Section 13 C2 was inadvertently not amended to be consistent. This amendment will make the site plan review requirement consistent throughout the Chapter.

Mr. Paleologopoulos then opened the meeting up to the public. There were no comments.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Elfman to close the public hearing.

VOTE 5 – 0

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Ms. Baldwin to send a positive recommendation to the city council for Zoning Amendment – Site Plan Review Requirements – Planning Board

VOTE 5 – 0

2. FORM A – 1157 North Westfield Street – Mercadante

Ms. Egerton explained this is a piece of property on North Westfield Street and the applicant is requesting to split the lot into two. The board received an email from the Building Inspector saying the plans looked fine. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked whether the second proposed parcel is currently developed and what was on it. The plans depicted a gravel parking lot and is the current use of the proposed second parcel. Mr. Paleologopoulos asked what the frontage would be. It was noted on the plans that both proposed lots would have the required frontage. There was no further discussion.

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Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Russo to approve the Form A – 1157 North Westfield Street – Mercadante

VOTE 5 – 0

3. SITE PLAN – 233 & 265 & Lot 6 Main Street – HP Hood

The board received a request from R. Levesque Associates to continue the site plan review until the next schedule meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. Elfman to continue the Site Plan Review– 233 & 265 & Lot 6 Main Street – HP Hood until the November 4th, 2021 meeting.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Russo)

4. SITE PLAN – Tuckahoe Farm – 0 Pine Street – Town of Agawam

Previously continued to November 4th, 2021.

5. BOND SETTING – D’Amato Way – Bretta

The board received a memo dated October 21st, 2021 from the Engineering Department with a bond amount of \$254, 000 (Two Hundred Fifty Four Thousand Dollars) as the cost of remaining work which included a standard list of items to be finished.

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to set the bond amount for D’Amato Way at \$254,000 as recommended by the Engineering Department.

VOTE 5 – 0

6. PUBLIC HEARING CONT. – Definitive Plan – 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates LLC (Public Hearing continued to October 21, 2021, Definitive Plan Application extended to October 21, 2021)

Kirk MacNaughton of Aspenwood Associates LLC was present to give an update on the status of this project. Mr. MacNaughton stated he received comments from the Engineering Department on October 1, 2021 and his answers were submitted in response on October 7th and October 11th. It was noted that the Engineering Department is still reviewing the most recent set of revised plans. Mr. Paleologopoulos questioned whether enough progress was being made with the project. Mr. MacNaughton noted that the plans have needed to be changed three times which has necessitated additional field work and storm water calculations to be completed. A letter was

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then read into record by Mr. Paleologopoulos from Ronald Cabana Jr of 14 Doane Avenue regarding his opposition to Mr. MacNaughton's request for a waiver of the 300' requirement between streets. This letter is on file in the Planning Department for those wishing to read it. Mr. DeStefano stated he feels that the Engineering Department's comments need to come back in the single digits for the board to feel comfortable with the plans, as the Engineering Department has consistently come back with 35-40 comments each time. It was noted by Ms. Egerton that the most recent memo from the Engineering Department is a response to Mr. MacNaughton and not every numbered item is something to be addressed.

Mr. Paleologopoulos then opened up the meeting to the public.

Jim Consolini, 101 Doane Avenue, noted that this has been ongoing for 11 years and questioned whether the current plans show the 15' discrepancy of the 300' requirement. Mr. MacNaughton stated that the original plan was laid out to meet the 300' requirement but the Engineering Department had requested the road be moved for safety purposes. Mr. MacNaughton stated that if the planning board was unwilling to grant a waiver, he would move the road to be in compliance with the 300' requirement. Mr. MacNaughton stated that the Engineering Department requested the road moved so it wouldn't have the intersection of radius and avoid other conflicts on the street.

Vladimir Kozlov, 657 Silver St, states that Doane Ave is the only street for kids to play on and if this project gets built with the increased traffic and narrowness of Doane Ave, he questions how safe it would be for the children. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted that the Engineering Department has requested a sign be put on the connection of Doane Ave and Aspenwood so that the traffic would not go down Doane.

Nadia Schneider, 85 Doane Ave, stated that everyone on Doane Ave knows each other and knows it's safe, quiet, and the residents drive slow. She noted that the residents of Aspenwood Ln may drive fast.

Dan Greebly, 111 Doane Ave, stated the plans are incomplete and a Do Not Enter sign will not work. He also stated that not having sidewalks on Doane Ave and having sidewalks on Aspenwood Ln would be unsafe. Mr. Greebly also questioned if Eversource has been contacted to do a survey to see if it pays for them to install a gas line service to the proposed development. Mr. MacNaughton stated he had been in contact with them and they would be happy to put gas service in. Mr. Greebly asked if there would be bus stops on Aspenwood Ln and further questioned what the feasibility of getting sidewalks on Doane Ave was. It was noted that Silver St does have sidewalks. He questioned why the plans have been taking so long. Mr. MacNaughton stated that this is a process and the plans have changed, but they've been submitting updated information every month. Mr. Paleologopoulos explained that Engineering Department comments may require a project to make major changes, and this particular project has also gone for zone changes and different waivers. Mr. Greebly questioned why the distance between Doane Ave and Aspenwood Ln are not shown on the plans.

Bob Allen, 55 Doane Ave, stated he was a 15 year resident of Doane Ave and that the planning board needs to make a decision about the project. He stated the engineering comments from

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October 1st, 2021 show concern about turning due to the vegetation and an existing fence and questions why the plans do not address the current situation. Mr. Allen states it is already hard to see even when the area is cleared.

Debbie Griffin, 94 Doane Ave, questions whether trucks would be able to go from Aspenwood Ln to Doane Ave and whether Doane Ave can handle that. Ms. Griffin also states that she has been in contact with Eversource and they stated they will not be doing gas in this area due to not having enough product and the demand being too high.

Jim Consolini, 101 Doane Ave, noted that Sunshine Village residents often walk down Doane Ave and trucks could make that dangerous.

Karen Gay, 20 Doane Ave, states she cannot go down the sidewalk on Silver St because the overgrowth is terrible the area is never plowed in front of the proposed project's property and it effects public safety. Ms. Gay questions who would take care of this if the area were to be developed. She noted that there has been many continuance. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted the Planning Board must rely on the town and the Engineering Department to make a decision.

Ruth Cosimini, 102 Doane Ave, asked who owns all the parcels of land in the development. Mr. MacNaughton stated there are three co-applicants.

Jim Consolini, 101 Doane Ave, stated that he believes all the abutters are against the waivers.

Lisa Kibbe-Patnode, 40 Doane Ave, noted that the Engineering Department did not suggest, but required, the Aspenwood Ln be moved due to necessary turning radius to accommodate the three industrial lots in the proposed development. She noted the project area has wetlands, protected species, and going through the Conservation Commission. Ms Kibbe-Patnode stated that the connection between Doane Ave and Aspenwood Ln would be used as a cut through. She added that there are already 7 cut-ins on Silver St and adding Aspenwood Ln would make 8. Ms. Kibbe-Patnode clarified that the overgrowth mentioned earlier in the meeting by Ms Gay is on this property. She also stated that the board should not grant the waiver for the 300' between streets requirement because it is a town bylaw. Ms. Kibbe-Patnode stated five years ago the town adopted the Complete Streets Program to try to create walkable, vibrant streets. She noted the waiver request for sidewalks cited redundancy and hardship for the industrial lot owners to maintain. Ms. Kibbe-Patnode stated she felt that public safety should come before hardship to businesses. It was noted that Mr. MacNaughton turned down the opportunity to have the proposed project land be bought and conserved.

Dan Greebly, 111 Doane Ave, asked if the plans depict the exact location of where the industrial lot's driveways will be. Mr. MacNaughton stated that particular plan is a representation of what could potentially be built on the lot, but that the driveway could be anywhere in the lot. Mr. MacNaughton noted that it meets the town's design standards for industrial roads.

Bob Allen, 55 Doane Ave, questioned who owned the area from Silver St to the first house and who would maintain the entry.

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Mr. MacNaughton noted that the property would be owned by Lot 1 with an easement that the Homeowners Association would maintain.

Stu Kibbe, 40 Doane Ave, noted he believes the road design does fit the parameters for an industrial use. Mr. Kibbe noted that a previous plan depicted a 326 distance between Aspenwood and Doane Ave, but that the Doane Ave center line looked skewed. He also noted that the current plan now does not depict the center line. Mr. Kibbe brought maps and a print-out of an intersection sight distance calculator that are on file in the town Planning Department for those wishing to view them. The GIS map depicts Doane Ave, Silver St, and the proposed Aspenwood Ln showing the curvature of the road. Mr. Kibbe stated there are currently 7 curb cuts which lead to conflicts. He stated that MassDOT has charts for the number of conflicts. Mr. Kibbe noted the sight line distance review for Doane Ave done previously shows a visual of how Doane Ave comes in at an angle. Mr. Kibbe used a sight line review calculator to see what a safe distance someone should have when looking to the left trying to pull out of Doane Ave. He took a passenger car, going 40 mph, at a skew angle of 60 degrees (taken from 2011 Aspenwood Plans), it was shown that a left turn sight distance should be 445 ft. Mr. Kibbe noted that the curvature of the road reduces the line of sight for the residents of Doane Ave and having an 8th conflict would be a safety hazard. He then noted that engineering comment #12b(ii) talks about requiring a sight distance easement. Mr. Kibbe stated that when the Aspenwood plans required an increase in the turning radius it shouldn't be compromising another bylaw to get it accomplished. He also noted that it is unsure what will be put in the industrial lots. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted it would be limited to industrial uses only. Mr. Kibbe stated that granting a sidewalk waiver goes against the town's own policy and compromising a policy that someone worked hard to establish. Mr. MacNaughton noted the water main has been increased from 8" to 12" pipe in the industrial portion of the proposed project.

Lisa Kibbe-Patnode, 40 Doane Ave, said that the community present is asking the Planning Board not to grant the waivers requested for this project.

Mr. DeStefano stated he wants comments from the Engineering Department before making a decision on the plans. Ms. Baldwin noted that the Planning Board are volunteers who rely on the town departments for information. It was noted that continuances and extensions are a tool for the Planning Board. Ms. Egerton added that each application before the Planning Board has a certain amount of time that the application must be acted on by the Board, and in some instances a failure to act would result in the automatic approval of a plan based on Massachusetts General Law. Mr. Paleologopoulos noted that there is an appeal period and that the developer and abutters have a right to do so.

Mr. MacNaughton requested an extension of the Definitive Plan – 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates LLC for 45 days and a continuance of the public hearing until the November 4th, 2021 meeting.

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Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Russo to continue the Public Hearing Definitive Plan – 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates LLC to November 4th, 2021.

VOTE 5 – 0

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to extend the Definitive Plan Application– 673 Silver Street – Aspenwood Estates – Aspenwood Associates LLC 45 days.

VOTE 5 – 0

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES October 7, 2021

It was noted that the October 7th, 2021 minutes as completed by Ms. Goff of the Planning Department were written exceptionally.

Motion was made by Ms. Baldwin and seconded by Mr. Russo to approve of the minutes of October 7th, 2021 as written.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Baldwin)

Mr. Elfman left the meeting at 8:13pm.

8. Correspondences—None.

Motion was made by Mr. Russo and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE 4 – 0

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.