



BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

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Meeting Minutes January 23, 2014

MEETING LOCATION: ARCAND MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL CENTER

Present at the Meeting

Patricia M. Murphy (PMM), Chairman
Glenn C. Wojcik (GCW), Vice Chairman
Peter C. Pappas (PCP), Secretary
Andrew T. Greene (ATG), Member
Brian T. Salisbury (BTS), Member
Nikyda Resto (NR), Alternate

Other Officials:

Stacey J. Wetstein (SJW), Town Planner
Jean Keyes (JK), Planning Board Coordinator

PMM opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Pine Hollow Estates, off of Countryside Road, Special Residential Use Special Permit and Development Plan Review: Continued Public Hearing; Decision Deadlines: Special Permit: 3/14/14 and Development Plan: 3/14/14.

Present: Alan Nash, Applicant; William Sack, Attorney for the Applicant, Robert Poxon of Guerriere & Halnon, Inc.

Attorney Sack explained the Applicants' reasons that Pine Hollows should be approved: it enhances the safety for three developments; Pine Hollows will now maintain the Bellwood Circle; Pine Hollows will maintain the new connection to Brookside Lane

Attorney Sacks stated that the new connection from Bellwood to Brookside to Thayer will only be used for emergency access even though it will be fully paved. The Applicants believe that there is no legitimate reason to deny this plan as the new egress makes the three existing developments safer and deserves to be approved.

Mr. Poxon explained that the road changes and proposed second egress were made to try to satisfy the Board's request for second egress. The new curve on Bellwood has a slope of 8% which is the highest slope allowed under Town's regulations. In addition the road will be paved, not gated, and will be built to the Town's fire safety and street regulations. Mr. Poxon understands that the proposed plan must go through the peer review process but the Applicants want to resolve the roadway situation before moving forward with all other engineering.

The Board discussed the Bellwood Road connection, slope, and finish as well as the new connection to Brookside Road as the second egress. The Board agreed that both roads must be paved, not gated, and must be maintained properly for safety reasons as they will be maintained privately. All members, especially GCW, PMM, and PCP strongly and repeatedly stated that the new connection to Brookside will be used as a cut-through and will result in a negative impact to that development. The purpose of a second egress is to allow traffic to have a second way out of the development without negatively impacting a neighboring development and for egress in the case of an emergency.

Bellingham Deputy Fire Chief Poirier stated that the road meets the Town's building standards for width and grade; but, he would prefer a lower slope because of maintenance concerns. In addition, if the roads are built with a width of 24' there has to be no on-street parking so that safety apparatus can get through. Deputy Poirier's main concern was the maintenance of the road in all seasons for safety reasons as the street will be maintained privately. He does not believe these roads will be properly maintained and does not agree with this subdivision because of the road issues. Deputy Poirier also stated that the Fire Department must comply with the regulation that any development with "x" amounts of units must have a second egress. Deputy Poirier also requested that road be put in prior to construction as they cannot block in Brook Estates with construction vehicles. The emergency personnel have to be able to rescue construction workers. PMM stated that the road, if approved, could go in before construction but it would not be to final grade/condition.

Police Safety Officer Sergeant Rolls stated that he is very concerned with traffic exiting through Brookside and Thayer Streets. Thayer intersection has no traffic controls and the Brookside/Thayer intersection has no sight line because of a huge white fence. Additionally, the town has tried to have roads in the Town privately maintained twice before and it did not work out. Sergeant Rolls further stated Brook Street is not a true "T" intersection. Because of this, all traffic that exits Brook Street would have to be diverted to the center of town (east) and would add to the chaos in an emergency as the traffic could not exit east.

SJW pointed out that since the connection to Brookside Street is a new proposal, there should be a traffic impact study done to assess the impact that the new connection would have on the Thayer Street neighborhood. Traffic was supposed to be funneled to a main road and not into a small neighborhood. The intent of the subdivision regulations is to not stress another neighborhood. GCW stated that a traffic study will not show the impact to safety in the Brookside/Thayer neighborhood.

PMM opened the meeting to questions and comments from the public:

Bob LaForest of 19 Brookside Road stated that there are many kids in the neighborhood and funneling traffic from Bellwood Road will create safety issues. In addition, he is concerned that his property value will decrease because they will no longer have a cul-de-sac but instead will have a cut-through street. If the Applicant has to create the road, he would like to see it as a one-way street going into Bellwood. The Board responded by stating that making the road one-way would defeat the purpose of a second egress.

Brian Sutherland of 57 Yvonne Road stated that he was not on the Planning Board when the 81P was approved to create this lot, but the Applicant knew there were issues at that time. Furthermore, he stated that existing roads are not wide enough in Brook Estates to accommodate extra traffic or emergency apparatus. The Applicants proposal for 24' street widths is not optimal for safety. He suggested that the Applicant pursue exiting out to Brook Street and to check with Natural Heritage again. Mr. Sutherland stated that this is the 5th or 6th plan that has come before the Board and questioned why this plan is still here.

Sheila Vicini of 4 Edgehill Lane stated that her father owned all of the land previously. She does not agree with traffic going through Thayer as there are 15-20 small kids waiting for the bus at the corner of Thayer and the cars cannot get out onto Route 140 heading west.

Leigh Clark of 8 Edgehill Lane stated that this is a safety concern of the Town and several other entities in town that have similar situation. Ms. Clark does not want Thayer interfered with and believes that the center of town is encroaching onto her neighborhood. She has 2 school-aged children and they will not be able to walk through the neighborhood. Already drivers go much too fast, (40-50 mph) and it is a huge concern. The traffic is a nightmare in the morning and making a connection to Bellwood Road just doesn't make sense.

Steve Damelio of 4 Brookside Road questioned who made the assumption that no one will use the connecting road to Brookside. He stated that the safety of the new development is the responsibility of the applicant and it should not impact Brookside.

Christine Eldridge of 19 Edgehill Lane was very concerned about the additional cars coming through Thayer/Brookside and the Town would have to move bus stop.

Joe Melvin of 24 Edgehill Lane stated that the second access road should not dump into another development. He also questioned if a gated road solved the egress problem. PMM stated that they are asking the developer to put in a fully accessible access road that is not gated and she is also concerned with snow plows dumping snow in front of the gate.

Shawn and Dana Tubman of 12 Woodside Lane could not be present at the meeting but sent the Planning Board a letter expressing their complete opposition to the Pine Hollow Estates Special Residential Use Special Permit. All members of the Board read the letter.

BTS did not agree with the snowplowing issue as he believes the people paying for plowing are responsible for making sure the access is maintained to a gated second access road. Sergeant Rolls stated that gates are left open in a storm so plows can go through. BTS believes that this is not a legitimate reason to say that a plan does not work as there are other reasons why this second egress does not work including the impacts to the Thayer development.

Alan Nash stated that exiting through Brook Estates is not a viable option as it does not have any other access.

PMM stated that the Board wants a full access and that is required by the Fire Department. The Applicant must fulfill our regulations and if they cannot then they cannot build the development.

PCP: Motion to continue Pine Hollow Estates, off of Countryside Road, Special Residential Use Special Permit and Development Plan Review, to March 13, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

ATG: Second.

Discussion: None.

Vote: 5-0. Motion Carried. (PMM, GCW, BTS, PCP, ATG)

General Business:

Old Business:

GCW: Motion to sign the January 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes.

BTS: Second.

Discussion: None.

Vote: 5-0. Motion Carried. (PMM, GCW, BTS, PCP, ATG)

GCW: Motion to sign the Vouchers/Payroll.

BTS: Second.

Discussion: SJW explained the vouchers.

Vote: 5-0. Motion Carried. (PMM, GCW, BTS, PCP, ATG)

GCW: Motion to sign the Bellingham Police Station Development Plan Decision.

PCP: Second.

Discussion: None.

Vote: 5-0. Motion Carried. (PMM, GCW, BTS, PCP, ATG)

New Business (81-P)

GCW: Motion to adjourn.

PCP: Second.

Discussion: None.

Vote: 5-0. Motion Carried. (PMM, GCW, BTS, PCP, ATG)

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes Accepted on:

2/27/14
(Date)

Jean Keyes
(Prepared by: Jean Keyes)

Patricia M. Murphy

Glenn C. Wojcik
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Peter C. Pappas

Andrew T. Greene
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Brian T. Salisbury
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