

**MINUTES
CHARLESTOWN PLANNING BOARD
JUNE 20, 2017**

Members Present: Sharon Francis (Vice-Chair); John Bruno, Richard Lincourt, Doug Neill, Rose Smith-Hull, Thomas Cobb (Ex-Officio)

Alternates Present: There were no Alternate Members present.

Staff Present: David Edkins – Planning & Zoning Administrator

CALL TO ORDER & SEATING OF ALTERNATES: Due to the absence of Mr. Frizzell, Chair, Mrs. Francis, Vice-Chair, called this meeting to order at 7:02 PM. There are no Alternate members present at this meeting. Mrs. Francis advised that meetings are recorded and asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 16, 2017:

Mr. Lincourt moved to approve the Minutes of the May 16, 2017, Planning Board meeting, as written. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With five members in favor, the minutes were approved. Mr. Bruno abstained as he was not present at this meeting.

SPRINGFIELD MEDICAL CARE SYSTEMS, INC. – Landscaping Update – 250 CEDA Road – Map 105, Lot 29 – Zone F1 (Industrial Business): Mr. Scott Wunderle from Terrigenous Architecture in Chester, VT and Mr. Neill Massucco were present. Mr. Wunderle has been working with Mr. Mark Blanchard on other projects. When Mr. Blanchard got the letter from the PB to come back with a landscaping plan by July 18, 2017, he contacted Mr. Wunderle. They felt it would be beneficial to come to this meeting to have a conversation with the PB members. He brought a series of slides to show what condition the property was in a month ago and talk about what direction the project is going. He is trying to find a balance between the limitations the site has now and opportunities it has in the future for both residents and the PB. They cannot go back to do anything about the trees that were removed but can try to work with the limited budget the new building has. These aerial photos were taken by a drone.

The first picture was from the east looking back to the River and Mt. Ascutney. This was about a month ago so it is a little different now. In the left hand corner there is a note that 1,250 square feet was in the drawing they used. The highlighted area was logged in addition to the approved space. Mr. Wunderle felt it best to come back and see what the PB wanted to achieve and over what period of time.

Mr. Albert Nadeau, an abutter on Lovers Lane Road, said “this land was butchered rather than clear cut”. He is very concerned with what happened to this property.

The second picture was about a month ago, coming out of winter it was pretty much bare ground, and there was a photo of what it looks like now. This is on the north side of the property. There

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are different seeds they can use but he recommended waiting to see what the PB would like to have done. This north side looks complete. There was no disturbance in the ravine. They are trying to come up with the best ideas and what to do next.

Mrs. Francis asked for comments from the PB members. Mrs. Smith-Hull made a visit to the site and was amazed as you could see a few houses. Some re-growth is occurring. Mr. Edkins suggested they allow Mr. Wunderle to complete his presentation.

Mr. Wunderle had a picture taken a few days ago. There is some re-growth but it will take a long time to come back to what it was. There were images of the neighbor's houses. Mr. Nadeau is not happy at all. Last winter three trees fell down because they cut way too many of the larger trees. Mr. Wunderle was concerned about some remaining trees because they do not have the support of the surrounding forest. Mr. Cobb noted a lot of the trees are dead trees so they will never do anything but fall down. There is a lot of stumpage taken out that was not on the plan. A lot of trees were taken down on the State land that was an over-cut. What are the plans on the north side? What is going in there to replace all of this? These residents were assured that the right-of-way would not open up but now the trees were taken down. He understands they had to take down some dangerous trees.

Mr. Blanchard clarified that he put 5.07 acres on the Intent to Cut filing. If he had seen the change on the plans, made by someone else, he would have changed the number. Mr. Bruno said a lot of time was spent discussing the screening and natural vegetated buffers. Unfortunately they will still have to take down dangerous trees. Mr. Bruno said Mr. Wunderle heard their concerns and now has to come back with a plan that achieves a screening plan as well as maintaining the vegetated buffer; there will be supplemental plantings.

Mr. Edkins pointed out that Mr. Blanchard had filed a Notice of Intent to Cut but the Notice does not necessarily match with the Site Plan. The Selectboard approves Intents to Cut therefore the PB does not see them.

Mrs. Francis said what the abutters experienced is important. She was thinking about a forest restoration plan; restore the natural woodland that is not there. Mr. Blanchard noted if they plant some trees but in five years they want to do something else will he have to come back again if the trees are dying of infestation or bugs or cut firewood. Mr. Bruno stated when an applicant gets a Site Plan Review approval for what is going to be done that is what the applicant has to do. If changes are needed the applicant has to come back before the PB. Mr. Blanchard violated his permit.

Mr. Nadeau asked Mr. Blanchard if there are plans for expansion of this building. Mr. Blanchard replied not right now but the property could possibly take on additional buildings. Mr. Nadeau said there was a lot of opposition to this project. He would like to buy that extra property to stop expansion. If not, he offered to take care of it. He can see the sign on the north side of this property. Mrs. Francis advised buying the land is between Mr. Nadeau and the medical facility; the PB cannot get involved in that.

Mr. Bruno asked what is happening with the State right-of-way. Mr. Blanchard replied the building is where it was approved on the plan. The State contacted him; they consulted the State forester but he has not heard anything else. Mr. Edkins clarified this is land owned by the State in fee; it is not a right-of-way.

Mrs. Francis mentioned the PB did not approve a budget for this project but approved the plans developed by the applicant. If 5-to-10 years from now the applicant would want to modify those plans they would have to come back in to a PB meeting. She does not see cost as being a factor; there needs to be a good landscaping plan. It also affects the Tall Pines development and the State highway. Mr. Lincourt said it is not up to this PB to tell the applicant how to do this; it is up to the applicant to tell the PB how they will accomplish this.

There was continued discussion about possible plantings, screening for the neighborhood and recovery. Mr. Nadeau suggested a meeting between the PB members, all the abutters and the hospital. There was a consensus to schedule this for the July 18th meeting. This will not be a Public Hearing but Mr. Edkins will mail out notices by regular mail to invite the abutters to attend this meeting. Mr. Edkins will request the owners of Tall Pines to notify their tenants of this meeting and see if there is an appropriate place to post a notice.

Mr. Nadeau asked about the snowmobile trail. Mr. Blanchard said it will be right where it was. Mr. Wunderle will add that to the plan.

Relative to the Tall Pines development, Mrs. Francis asked about the screening. Mr. Wunderle said they could do some plantings but in the future are they going to have to get to the trees. He thinks most of the dead trees are on the Tall Pines property. Mr. Bruno noted the plan should show if there are trees in that area that need to come down and identify them. Mr. Blanchard said there is a foot path through there and he would like to maintain that for people who like to walk there but he would like to clean up that area of land.

Access toward Lovers Lane; Mrs. Francis talked about the access toward Lovers Lane and wanted to be sure there are plantings.

The “Big” area; Mr. Cobb felt cleaning up the slash; stumpage and walking path should be done. Follow the guidelines set in the ordinance for screening.

Mr. Lincourt summarized the discussion:

- Screening for the abutters;
- Clean up the areas with slash and stumpage;
- Let Nature take its course;
- Plantings along the right-of-way.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE:

Route 12 Project: Mr. Edkins mentioned the DOT informational meeting on the Route 12 Project in South Charlestown. It will be held next Wednesday, June 28th at 7:00 PM at the North Walpole School. Doors will open at 6:30 PM to allow time to look at the displays but the meeting will not start until 7:00 PM.

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Next PB Meeting: Due to the July 4th holiday being on a Tuesday, the next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 18th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Bruno moved to adjourn this meeting. Mrs. Smith-Hull seconded the motion. With six members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary

Minutes Filed: 07-05-17

(Note: These are unapproved Minutes. Any corrections will be found in the Minutes of the July 18, 2017, Planning Board meeting.)