

AT SAYBROOK JUNCTION-MARKETPLACE
455 BOSTON POST ROAD P.O. BOX 778 OLD SAYBROOK, CT 06475
860/388-3497 Fax: 860/395-1404
crerpa@snef.net www.crerpa.org

January 4, 2011

Mr. Robert McIntyre, Chairman
Old Saybrook Planning Commission
302 Main Street
Old Saybrook, CT 06475

**SUBJECT: Modification to Approved Special Exception for Preliminary Open
Space Subdivision Plan for 226 Total Dwelling Units & Open Space
Applicant: River Sound Development LLC, Owner**

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

The Old Saybrook Planning Commission has submitted the subject request for Special Exception modification of a municipal line subdivision of land to CRERPA for review pursuant to Section 8-26b of the Connecticut General Statutes. Attorney David Royston, agent for the applicant, appeared before the CRERPA board on Monday, December 6, 2010 to present the application and update the board on what has transpired over the past year in this ongoing development effort. Following that meeting, the RPA again discussed the modification at their January 3, 2011 regular meeting. This report is being submitted for the Commission's next meeting on The Preserve, scheduled for Wednesday, January 5, 2011.

Intermunicipal Impacts and Impacts to the Ecosystem of Long Island Sound

At their regularly scheduled meeting held on Monday, January 3, 2011, the RPA found that there *will* be intermunicipal impacts and/or impacts to the ecosystem of Long Island Sound if the proposed development is built out as planned. The concerns regarding overall potential traffic impacts and storm drainage issues have been presented in the past by the CRERPA board.

Comments

In review of the three smaller pockets of development that are the subject of this Special Exception modification, several issues were discussed that may have impact upon the review and decision of the Old Saybrook Planning Commission:

1. Approval of a Subdivision with No Road Frontage/Access

Section 5.3.2 of the Old Saybrook Subdivision Regulations, Connection to Existing Streets, states that “...*all subdivision streets will connect directly to one or more accepted town streets or state highways...*”. Question is raised whether or not the development at the boundary of Old Saybrook and Westbrook will connect to such a road. If approved by the Old Saybrook Planning Commission prior to a required subdivision approval by the Westbrook Planning Commission (Westbrook RPA representatives confirmed that no current subdivision application is before the Westbrook Planning Commission), the Old Saybrook development in that area will be “land-locked” with no guarantee of connection to Route 153 or any other roadway, as shown on plans. Perhaps this is just a question of sequence where a Westbrook subdivision application for a road connecting Route 153 to the proposed development should have preceded the Old Saybrook application. Westbrook RPA representatives also commented about concern regarding traffic in general on Route 153 and the expressed difficulty of emergency workers moving into and out of the emergency clinic on Route 153. There was also expression of concern regarding emergency transportation and the *current* unsafe nature of the corner at Route 153 and Bokum Road in Essex.

2. Bokum Road Development of the Pianta Property

The modification includes a proposal to construct numerous home lots between Bokum Road and the Valley Railroad right-of-way which separates the parcel from the main part of the River Sound Development LLC landholdings. The RPA commented that, given the narrow and curving nature of Bokum Road in that area, even a small amount of increased traffic may have a detrimental impact on that stretch of Bokum Road. Further, the Town of Essex has undertaken a traffic study – at great expense – that will include conclusions and recommendations regarding traffic and road design issues at Bokum Center that will likely include discussion of Bokum Road as it passes into the Town of Old Saybrook. That report is expected to be finished in the Spring of 2011. The RPA concluded that it is premature to make any final decisions on the proposed modification prior to understanding the results of that Town study.

3. Stormwater Drainage at Ingham Hill Road

It is understood that potential traffic impacts on Ingham Hill Road are internal to the Town of Old Saybrook and not an intermunicipal issue. There was discussion, however, regarding the issue of stormwater drainage to Trout Brook where it enters into the Town of Westbrook. As a result, the RPA requests that the Ingham Hill Road portion of the proposed modification be reviewed with intermunicipal stormwater impacts being looked at closely.

Thank you for submitting the subject modification to CRERPA for review and comment. If the Commission has any question regarding this report, please don't hesitate to contact CRERPA staff at (860) 388-3497.

For the Agency,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. H. Torrance Downes', written in a cursive style.

J. H. Torrance Downes
Senior Planner

Copy to:

Mr. Phil Miller, Essex First Selectman
Mr. Alan R. Kerr, Essex RPA Representative
Mr. John Guskoski, Essex Town Planner
Ms. Meg Parulis, Westbrook Town Planner
Attorney David Royston

