

PLANNING BOARD August 10, 2010 - Minutes

A meeting of the Orleans Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Nauset Meeting Room at the Orleans Town Hall. **Present: Chairman:** Kenneth McKusick; **Clerk:** John Ostman; John Fallender; and Steve Bornemeier. **Associates:** Chip Bechtold and Paul McNulty. **Planning Department Staff:** John Jannell; **Secretary:** Karen Sharpless. **Also Present:** Board of Selectmen Liaison: Jon Fuller; Attorney Michael Ford, (Town Counsel). **Absent:** Vice-Chairman: Chet Crabtree.

Chairman McKusick brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. as a continuation of the Planning Board meeting public hearing on July 27, 2010. McKusick requested that Paul McNulty vote in the absence of Chet Crabtree who recused himself due to potential conflict of interest.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 27, 2010

MOTION: On a motion by **John Fallender**, seconded by **John Ostman**, the Board voted to approve the minutes of July 27, 2010 as amended.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING (Continued) – MODIFICATION TO A DEFINITIVE PLAN, (VOLLER, SMITH, & GERANIOTIS, 16-23 SAGE'S WAY)

Attorney Michael Ford (Town Counsel) gave an explanation of the Planning Board question regarding the following restriction placed on the subdivision in 1961: "This approval is subject to the condition that: 'Only one single family dwelling with accessory out buildings be erected or maintained on each lot shown hereon'". Attorney Ford stated that he is responding to the following Planning Board question: Is the waiver of this restriction, a type of modification as described in the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 41, Section 81W (the modification section of the subdivision control law) one that "affects the lots" (three lots are shown on the subdivision plan) to the degree that consent from the other lot owners of the original subdivision is necessary for the modification to be approved by the Planning Board? Attorney Ford stated that in the course of analyzing that question, he set forth in his memorandum briefly the following two legal cases that handled similar issues:

- Patelle v. Planning Bd. of Woburn, 20 Mass. App. Ct. 279 (1985).
- Matthews v. Planning Bd. of Brewster, 72 Mass. App. Ct. 456 (2008)

Attorney Ford noted that in the Patelle v. Planning Bd of Woburn case, the Appeals Court wrestled with the question of what does the term "affect" mean. Attorney Ford stated that the changes in that case were very broad in scope as described in the Ford memorandum as follows:

In Patelle v. Planning Bd. of Woburn 20 Mass.App.Ct, 279 (1985), a planning board, acting under G.L. c. 41, §81W, approved three modifications to a subdivision plan: (1) the transformation of a cul-de-sac into a through street; (2) the relocation within the subdivision of an open space area of 6.73 acres; and (3) the creation of four or five house lots out of a portion of what previously had been designated open space.

Attorney Ford stated that the court looked at what the Legislature meant by the word "affect" and the court concluded that all of the changes affect the lots in some way, but they don't legally affect the utility of the remaining lots in the subdivision. Ford stated that as a result of the investigation, it was determined by the court that these were not changes that affected the lots in a so-called statutory sense.

Attorney Ford noted that another case which is factually more similar to the Sage's Way case is the Matthews v. Planning Bd. of Brewster, 72 Mass. App. Ct. 456 (2008) in which the Planning Board denied certain changes because the changes to that particular subdivision by necessity required modifications of an adjoining subdivision. Attorney Ford noted that the adjoining subdivision had restrictions on it with respect to the extension of roadways in that adjoining subdivision. Attorney Ford stated that the court in that case concluded that those particular restrictions and plan notes rose to the level of restrictions that did require consent by the other property owners.

Attorney Ford noted that the *Matthews v. Planning Bd. of Brewster* seems factually more analogous with the Sage's Way subdivision modification request where the 1961 condition placed on this subdivision by the Planning Board appears to be more in the nature of a restriction and appears more analogous to the modifications that were sought in the Matthews case. Attorney Ford stated that as a result, his suggestion to the Planning Board in his memorandum dated August 6, 2010 was that in this case it would appear that consent of the other two lot owners should be obtained prior to a modification of the restriction on Lot 1.

McKusick questioned the impact if the Planning Board does not make a decision on the modification request and what would be the resulting action of the applicant. Attorney Ford responded that if the Planning Board denied the application, the applicant has the ability to avail itself of Chapter 41 § 81BB which allows subdivision appeals through the Superior Court or the Land Court. Attorney Ford stated belief that the relief that they seek goes directly to the issue that there are already two houses on this lot (one is a cottage accessory dwelling structure as a part of the original estate and a newer house built around the year 1985). Attorney Ford stated that if the Planning Board chooses not to grant the relief, then the applicant has the right to appeal.

McNulty referred to the portion of the memorandum from Brian Harrison (Building Commissioner) dated June 11, 2010 that states "This raises the question as to whether there is sufficient evidence to support a legal claim that the second dwelling in violation of the planning board restriction as to the number of dwelling [sic] on this lot has met the six year statute of limitations under M.G.L. 40A §7. I render no opinion at this time. I do note that if it is found that the use is determined to have met the six year statute of limitation [sic] under M.G.L. 40A §7, it does not give the use any legally preexisting nonconforming status and in my opinion it is simply a protected use that may need zoning board of appeals relief in order to expand or alter this use." and questioned if this affects only one lot, or all of the lots in the subdivision, precluding second houses on the other lots.

Attorney Ford responded that the reference in the Building Commissioner's letter to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40A §7 which states as follows:

CHAPTER 40A. ZONING

Chapter 40A: Section 7. Enforcement of zoning regulations; violations; penalties; jurisdiction of superior court

Section 7. The inspector of buildings, building commissioner or local inspector, or if there are none, in a town, the board of selectmen, or person or board designated by local ordinance or by-law, shall be charged with the enforcement of the zoning ordinance or by-law and shall withhold a permit for the construction, alteration or moving of any building or structure if the building or structure as constructed, altered or moved would be in violation of any zoning ordinance or by-law; and no permit or license shall be granted for a new use of a building, structure or land which use would be in violation of any zoning ordinance or by-law. If the officer or board charged with enforcement of zoning ordinances or by-laws is requested in writing to enforce such ordinances or by-laws against any person allegedly in violation of the same and such officer or board declines to act, he shall notify, in writing, the party requesting such enforcement of any action or refusal to act, and the reasons therefor, within fourteen days of receipt of such request.

No local zoning law shall provide penalty of more than three hundred dollars per violation; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit such laws from providing that each day such violation continues shall constitute a separate offense. No action, suit or proceeding shall be maintained in any court, nor any administrative or other action taken to recover a fine or damages or to compel the removal, alteration, or relocation of any structure or part of a structure or alteration of a structure by reason of any violation of any zoning by-law or ordinance except in accordance with the provisions of this section, section eight and section seventeen; provided, further, that if real property has been improved and used in accordance with the terms of the original building permit issued by a person duly authorized to issue such permits, no action, criminal or civil, the effect or purpose of which is to compel the abandonment, limitation or modification of the use allowed by said permit or the removal, alteration or relocation of any structure erected in reliance upon said permit by reason of any alleged violation of the provisions of this chapter, or of any ordinance or by-law adopted thereunder, shall be maintained, unless such action, suit or proceeding is commenced and notice thereof recorded in the registry of deeds for each county or district in which the land lies within six years next after the commencement of the alleged violation of law; and provided, further that no action, criminal or civil, the effect or purpose of which is to compel the removal, alteration, or relocation of any structure by reason of any alleged violation of the provisions of this chapter, or any ordinance or by-law adopted thereunder, or the conditions of any variance or special permit, shall be maintained, unless such action, suit or proceeding is commenced and notice thereof recorded in the registry of deeds for each county or district in which the land lies within ten years next after the commencement of the alleged violation. Such notice shall include names of one or more of the owners of record, the name of the person initiating the action, and adequate identification of the structure and the alleged violation.

The superior court and the land court shall have the jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of this chapter, and any ordinances or by-laws adopted thereunder, and may restrain by injunction violations thereof.

Attorney Ford noted that the language of Chapter 40A §7 has specific language contained therein that says that when property is used and improved in accordance with the terms of the original building permit, then no civil or criminal action can be brought by the town or by any person which would cause either the relocation or removal or cessation of the use of that particular property or structure that was authorized thereunder. Attorney Ford stated that this is protection afforded the structure and the use by that statute which has no bearing on the question before the Planning Board to waive or modify a condition of the subdivision. Attorney Ford state that the applicant may well have rights under that particular provision. Attorney Ford stated that the Building Commissioner's letters states that he had not

asked nor made a decision as to whether the property or either of the structures had the benefit of that provision, but it was just a reference. Attorney Ford stated that the applicant may have rights under that provision. Attorney Ford noted that the Building Commissioner had not come to any conclusion and only affects that lot and the structures contained on that lot, not the rest of the subdivision.

Bornemeier questioned the result if the Planning Board approves the modification request which requires abutting landowners to approve and give their consent, and they turn it down.

Attorney Ford responded that if the Planning Board decides that the waiver of this particular condition falls more squarely under the holding in the Matthews case, and as a result requires the consent of the other lot owners as set for in Chapter 41, Section 81W and votes one of the motions and the abutters refuse to consent, then the vote would be of no force and effect, because those votes are contingent upon that consent and the result is that the requested relief would not have been granted because the conditions (the consents) leading to that grant had not occurred. Attorney Ford stated that the result would be as if the Planning Board had voted for a denial of the modification request, but it would give the applicant an opportunity to see if they could obtain that consent from the abutting landowners. Attorney Ford stated that it is up to the Planning Board to decide if they are going to require consent from the other landowners. John Ostman questioned whether a letter of consent from the mortgage holders in effect may not be required if Planning Board goes for consent. Attorney Ford responded that the statute speaks to the ability to obtain consent from mortgagees. John Ostman questioned whether it would be advisable to obtain full consent as opposed to partial consent for the abutting properties from the owners as well as the mortgagees.

Public Comments:

Attorney Landreth compared the two legal cases referred to earlier in the meeting and noted that the Patelle case clearly deals with marketability whereas Landreth agreed that the Matthews case has some application to this particular case. Landreth stated that given these two cases, one could make the distinction that Patelle case stands for the proposition that the mortgagees need not consent since the marketability of the lots is not being affected as a result of this waiver of a condition/restriction. Landreth stated his opinion that the Matthews case dealt with a broader affect than marketability.

Attorney Ford stated that this case does not pass the bright line test and it is up to the Planning Board on how to vote on the facts of the case. Attorney Ford agreed with Attorney Landreth that the Matthews case is factually more analogous to the Sage's Way case. Attorney Ford admitted that the Matthews case seems to erode the decision in the Patelle case. Attorney Ford noted that given the nature of the restriction in this case and the fact that it was in the record title, and all of the landowners had notice of it, it is one that rises to the level of those kinds of things that the court in the Matthews case said need consent. Attorney Ford reiterated his earlier statement that it is his opinion and advice to the Planning Board that this case is closer factually to the Matthews case, and the issue of consent needs to be determined by the Planning Board.

Jeffrey Karlson (Sage's Way) questioned whether a denial requires consent of the neighbors. Attorney Ford responded that no consent would be required from the neighbors for a Modification Subdivision plan denial.

Correspondence:

John Jannell noted the following correspondence and information for this public hearing:

- 1. Planning Department Memorandum, dated August 6, 2010
- 2. Statement of Conditions of Planning Board Approval, dated 1961
- 3. Subdivision Plan of Land in Orleans for lots 1, 2 & 3 from 1961

- 4. Building Department Letter to Thomas LaTanzi, dated June 11, 2010
- 5. Mortgage Inspection Plan for 16 & 18 Sages Way, dated June 7, 2010
- 6. Board of Health memorandum, dated July 19, 2010
- 7. General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 41, Section 81W
- 8. Orleans Conservation Trust letter, dated June 28, 2010
- 9. Fire Department memorandum, dated June 21, 2010
- 10. Memorandum from Attorney Michael Ford, dated August 6, 2010
- 11. E-Mail from Van and Connie Geraniotis, dated August 2, 2010
- 12. E-mail from Doug Smith/Charles Smith & Priscilla Smith, dated August 2, 2010
- 13. Position Paper from Thomas Crowley, Jeff Karlson and Jerome Karter, dated August 10, 2010

Jannell gave a summary of the correspondence listed above. Jannell noted that the Fire Department memorandum issue raised in the second paragraph regarding the fire hydrant has been addressed, but the road width issue is still a concern. McKusick questioned the pending sale of Lot 1 and was informed by Attorney Landreth that the sale of Lot 1 to Richard Dupont was completed on July 27, 2010. Attorney Landreth stated that the structure on the 1961 plan is a shed, not a cottage and according to town Assessor's cards, the cottage was built in 1969 with a subsequent foundation installed in 1981.

Public Comments:

During a Planning Board discussion of the road width, McKusick stated that Sage's Way appears to be in good condition, although is it clear that no opposing vehicles can pass each other. Jannell responded that the road width is approximately 10-12'. Jerome Karter read the entire contents of a position paper explaining the history of Sage's Way and the installation of an 8" water main at the request of the Fire Department.

Attorney Landreth stated that there are no building permits or certificates of occupancy on file in the Building Department for the work done in 1981, but there are applications on file which would seem to indicate they may have followed the proper channels. Attorney Landreth stated that this modification application was filed to try to resolve the situation as simply as possible. Attorney Landreth stated that the proposed conditions will improve the present situation and more importantly from their point of view rationalize it. Attorney Landreth stated that the applicant would like for the modification to only apply to the one lot as a matter of equity since the situation has occurred for 29 years and it is a situation that the town knows it can tolerate based on public safety since it has been a condition. Attorney Landreth stated that if the Planning Board sees fit to release it with regard to Lot 1, they would request that they be obligated as a condition to obtain the consent of lot owners for Lots 2 and 3. Regarding obtaining consent from mortgage holders, Attorney Landreth stated that there are mortgages on each of the lots, and Attorney Landreth stated his preference that they not have to obtain the consent of the Mortgage holders. Attorney Landreth announced that they would make every good faith effort to obtain consents from the mortgage holders, if it is required by the Planning Board. Attorney Landreth requested that the Planning Board grant relief in these circumstances.

Ostman questioned what would happen if the other property owners refuse to sign the consent. Attorney Landreth responded that in an effort at neighborly goodwill, they are prepared to obtain the consents on a consensual basis. McKusick requested clarification from Town Counsel regarding obtaining consent from mortgagees. Attorney Ford responded that anyone who does not sign the consent, is not bound by it and they would not be bound by the waiver of the restriction which creates an unclear situation. Attorney Ford stated his advice to the Planning Board that they require the applicant to make sure they get the consent of the lot owners as well as make a good faith effort to get consent of the mortgage holders.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING:

MOTION: On a motion by **John Fallender**, seconded by **John Ostman**, the Board voted to close the public portion of the public hearing for a Modification to a Definitive Subdivision Plan for Voller, Smith, Geraniotis, 16-23 Sage's Way.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION TO READ FINDINGS OF FACT:

MOTION: On a motion by **John Fallender**, seconded by **Paul McNulty**, the Board voted to read the following Findings of Fact into the record:

FINDINGS OF FACT:

- The statement of Conditions of Planning Board Approval, dated February, 1961 states that: This approval is subject to the condition that: "Only one single family dwelling with accessory outbuildings be erected or maintained on each lot shown hereon."
- The Zoning Bylaw in effect in 1961 did not define what an accessory outbuilding was.
- In 1981, an application to build a 3 bedroom house on Lot 1 was filed with the Building Department. Records do not contain an official building permit or a certificate of occupancy for the structure. Records do contain a septic permit and a certificate of compliance for the septic system.
- In 1981, an application to put a foundation under the existing cottage on Lot 1 was filed with the Building Department. Records do not contain an official building permit or a certificate of occupancy for the structure. Records do contain a septic permit and a certificate of compliance for the septic system.
- The Building Commissioner has stated in his memo dated 6/11/2010 that the Planning Board condition of 1961 has not been met on Lot 1. He has stated that the cottage on Lot 1 is a dwelling unit and not an accessory out building.
- Town Counsel has provided the Planning Board with an opinion that states any modification of the 1961 plan condition (either to 1 lot or all 3 lots) will require consent of the owners. (Please see memo dated 8/6/2010).
- It would appear that all lots in the subdivision are large enough (i.e. 80,000 sq ft of buildable upland) to support a 2nd dwelling unit if the 1961 condition were removed.
- Sage's Way appears in good condition, but is narrow and does not permit opposing vehicles to pass. Under the Subdivision Regulations, a subdivision road serving 5-10 homes today is required to have an 18-foot road surface. The Planning Office does not have a copy of the Subdivisions Regulations in effect in 1961, but a check of the 1966 regulations revealed that a similar 18-ft. surface would have been required. Minutes of the January 3, 1961 Planning Board meeting indicate that the applicant had been requested to "obtain additional land...to make a 40' way." There appears to

have been some rationale in the Planning Board's 1961 decision to approve the subdivision with a condition.

• Under the current application, the Planning Board should consider the General Provisions of the Orleans Subdivision Rules and Regulations and whether the application is consistent with the purposes of subdivision control.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously.

At the request of Chairman McKusick the following is copied from The General Laws of Massachusetts for the record:

Chapter 41: Section 81W. Modification, amendment or rescission of approval of plan; conditions

Section 81W. A planning board, on its own motion or on the petition of any person interested, shall have power to modify, amend or rescind its approval of a plan of a subdivision, or to require a change in a plan as a condition of its retaining the status of an approved plan. All of the provisions of the subdivision control law relating to the submission and approval of a plan of a subdivision shall, so far as apt, be applicable to the approval of the modification, amendment or rescission of such approval and to a plan which has been changed under this section.

No modification, amendment or rescission of the approval of a plan of a subdivision or changes in such plan shall affect the lots in such subdivision which have been sold or mortgaged in good faith and for a valuable consideration subsequent to the approval of the plan, or any rights appurtenant thereto, without the consent of the owner of such lots, and of the holder of the mortgage or mortgages, if any, thereon; provided, however, that nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit such modification, amendment or rescission when there has been a sale to a single grantee of either the entire parcel of land shown on the subdivision plan or of all the lots not previously released by the planning board.

So far as unregistered land is affected, no modification, amendment or rescission of the approval of a plan nor change in a plan under this section shall take effect until (1) the plan as originally approved, or a copy thereof, and a certified copy of the vote of the planning board making such modification, amendment, rescission or change, and any additional plan referred to in such vote, have been recorded, (2) an endorsement has been made on the plan originally approved as recorded referring to such vote and where it is recorded, and (3) such vote is indexed in the grantor index under the names of the owners of record of the land affected. So far as registered land is affected, no modification, amendment or rescission of the approval of a plan nor change in a plan under this section shall take effect, until such modification, amendment or change has been verified by the land court pursuant to chapter one hundred and eighty-five, and in case of rescission, or modification, amendment or change not so verified, until ordered by the court pursuant to section one hundred and fourteen of said chapter one hundred and eighty-five.

Planning Board Discussion:

Ostman described the dilemma of the request to grant a waiver for Lot 1 and ask for consent of the other two property owners to allow what has existed for 29 years to continue and to essentially make it legal. Ostman noted that the troubling part of the situation is that the Planning Board has sort of imposed a statute of limitations on rules, in that you make a rule and because someone violated it but nobody did anything about it, if you wait long enough it becomes okay. John Ostman stated that if the Planning Board were to undo the finding and the restriction in 1961 by the Planning Board to relieve this completely essentially allowing more traffic to occur on Sage's Way, which would result in a public safety issue, which is not acceptable. Ostman stated his belief that the restriction was put in place for access. John Ostman stated his continuing concern with the inference that there is a statute of limitations on rules, but noted his position is to allow the waiver for Lot 1 only and require that the applicant obtain

consent from the other property owners. John Ostman declared that he does not want to completely undo the findings and restriction placed on the subdivision by the Planning Board in 1961. John Ostman noted that the current Planning Board has a history of upholding the rulings of previous Planning Boards because of the deliberations and reasoning used by those previous Planning Boards in making decisions which include issues such as access and safety.

Bornemeier questioned the number of bedrooms which would be allowed on each of the lots and John Jannell responded that there would be limitations through the Board of Health regulations. John Jannell explained that all three lots were subjected to the planning conditions that they only contain the following: "Only one single family dwelling with accessory outbuildings be erected or maintained on each lot shown hereon". John Jannell noted that all three lots today are subject to the same set of zoning bylaws as the rest of the town which says they can build up to 4,000 square feet, by right, if they meet the setbacks. John Jannell said if they want to build over 4,000 square feet and they meet the setbacks and dimensional regulations, they can do so with the Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. John Jannell stated that the bedroom governing regulation is not a zoning regulation, but falls under the Board of Health. John Jannell stated that zoning regulations cover lot coverage, setbacks and dimensional regulations. All of the lots have to exist with the same set of land use controls. John Jannell noted that only Lot 1 is in violation of the 1961 restriction, not lots 2 and 3.

MOTION TO APPROVE MODIFICATION:

MOTION: On a motion by John Fallender, seconded by John Ostman, the Board voted to approve the Modification to the Definitive Subdivision Plan prepared by Arthur L. Sparrow Co., Engineers, dated February 1961, and recorded as Land Court Plan #16642B, to remove the original condition which stated: "This approval is subject to the condition that: "Only one single family dwelling with accessory out buildings be erected or maintained on each lot shown hereon.", such modification being subject to the following new conditions:

- 1. Only one single family dwelling with accessory out buildings be erected or maintained on Lot 2 and Lot 3 shown hereon.
- 2. The applicant shall be required to obtain the consent by the owners of Lot 1, Lot 2 and Lot 3 shown on Land Court Plan #16642B
- 3. All Board of Health conditions be met, based on the July 19, 2010 memorandum for Lot 1.
- 4. The cottage on Lot 1 shall remain at the existing location, and shall be limited to a maximum of 1,200 square feet of living area, and the footprint of the cottage and the deck shall not be increased.
- 5. No lots shall be further subdivided or divided.
- 6. The two residential structures on Lot 1 may not be placed in separate ownership by creating a condominium or otherwise and the two structures shall not be rented at any one time to separate persons.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously.

VILLAGE CENTER ECONOMIC STUDY

Planning Board members discussed the multiple ongoing Village Center Surveys. Jannell noted that 1,400 surveys were sent out to a random selection of taxpayers and property owners as well as visitor surveys and business owner surveys. Jannell stated that Peg Barringer will present findings to the Planning Board at the September 21, 2010 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On a motion by John Ostman, seconded by Steve Bornemeier, the Board voted to adjourn at 8:38 p.m.

VOTE: 5-0-0 The motion passed unanimously.

SIGNED

(John Ostman, Clerk)

LIST OF HANDOUTS FOR AUGUST 10, 2010 PLANNING BOARD MEETING:

<u>Modification To A Definitive Plan (Mary Louise Voller Trust, Charles M. & Priscilla Smith, Van & Constance Geraniotis, 16-23 Sage's Way)</u>

- 14. Planning Department Memorandum, dated August 6, 2010
- 15. Application for Approval of a Modification of a Definitive Subdivision Plan
- 16. Statement of Conditions of Planning Board Approval, dated 1961
- 17. Subdivision Plan of Land in Orleans for lots 1, 2 & 3 from 1961
- 18. Building Department Letter to Thomas LaTanzi, dated June 11, 2010
- 19. Mortgage Inspection Plan for 16 & 18 Sages Way, dated June 7, 2010
- 20. Board of Health memorandum, dated July 19, 2010
- 21. General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 41, Section 81W
- 22. Orleans Conservation Trust letter, dated June 28, 2010
- 23. Fire Department memorandum, dated June 21, 2010
- 24. Memorandum from Attorney Michael Ford, dated August 6, 2010
- 25. E-Mail from Van and Connie Geraniotis, dated August 2, 2010
- 26. E-mail from Doug Smith/Charles Smith & Priscilla Smith, dated August 2, 2010
- 27. Position Paper from Thomas Crowley, Jeff Karlson and Jerome Karter, dated August 10, 2010

Planning Board Minutes

1. Planning Board Minutes from June 22, 2010