

**Town of Northwood
Planning Board
November 19, 2014**

Chairman Robert Strobel calls the work session to order at 6:35 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Robert Strobel, Selectman Representative Timothy Jandebeur, Lucy Edwards, Joseph McCaffrey, Rick Wolf, Alternate Victoria Parmele, Planner Matthew Sullivan, and Board Administrator Linda Smith.

VOTING DESIGNATION: Robert Strobel, Timothy Jandebeur, Lucy Edwards, Joseph McCaffrey, Rick Wolf, and Alternate Victoria Parmele.

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Lee Baldwin, Richard Bojko, and Alternate Ken Rick.

MINUTES:

November 13, 2014

Mr. Jandebeur makes a motion, second by Mr. McCaffrey, to approve the November 13, 2014 meeting minutes, as written. Motion passes; 5/0/1.

Ms. Parmele abstains, as she was not at the meeting.

CASE: 14-07: James & Linda Grant-Piper Cove Properties, 258 First NH Turnpike. Map 231; Lot 9. Applicants seek an amendment to an existing site plan to add an Aroma Joe's Drive-Up Window to existing business/retail complex. (*Application accepted 7/24/14*).

Mr. Strobel reads an email request received from Bill Tower requesting to continue the case. **Mr. Jandebeur makes a motion, second by Mr. McCaffrey, to continue the case to December 18, 2014. Motion passes unanimously; 7/0.**

CASE: 14-05: 598 First NH Turnpike, 598 First NH Turnpike. Map 222/Lot 23. Applicant seeks minor subdivision to subdivide one new lot of 2.85 Acres from existing 5.4 acre lot. (*Application accepted 8/28/14*) 65-days will pass prior to next meeting.

Scott Frankiewicz is present representing the applicant. He provides an update relative to the project. He explains that the last item that was outstanding was the sight line distance review, which has been completed by CMA Engineers. Based on those comments the plans have been revised and have been provided. He adds that he has shown the AASHTO requirements, which is 3.5' object height at the driveway.

Mr. Frankiewicz states that he has provided two highway access plans. One plan is the NHDOT plan with 400' and the other is the AASHTO plan showing the bank being cut in front of the house, and removing the trees to the west of the house. He adds that there are some other trees where the driveway cuts in. He adds that the front area of the lot will be cut down and graded, which will

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also improve the sight distance. Mr. Frankiewicz states that he believes that the email from the engineer was a sign-off as they were satisfied as long as the items were noted on the plans. He adds that there will be an easement completed when the property is transferred.

Mr. Frankiewicz explains the revised plans and reviews the grading plan, which will create a new swale. He reviews the notes indicating that all of the trees that interfere with the sight line will be removed, for both lots.

Mr. McCaffrey states that the sight distance has been satisfied for NHDOT and for AASHTO, which is a more stringent standard. Mr. McCaffrey states that an outstanding issue is the snow.

Discussion ensues regarding the sight distance easement language. Ms. Smith states that the applicant should provide proposed easement language. She reads a proposed language recommendation from the town's engineer.

Mr. Frankiewicz refers to lot 23 and states that there is an easement noted on this lot, approximately 5 ft. behind the sight line distance. Mr. McCaffrey asks if the same language should cover the adjoining lot. Mr. Frankiewicz replies that you cannot give yourself an easement. Mr. McCaffrey states that there should be an easement on the other lot as well in order to be consistent. Mr. Frankiewicz suggests adding an additional note to the plan stating that there will be no plantings within 50' of the road for either property.

Mr. Jandebaur reads from a letter from CMA noting details of the sight distance. He states that he does not feel that the minimum requirements have been met. Mr. Strobel reads responses received from an email from Mr. Frankiewicz relative to the proposal for the site.

Further discussion is held regarding the differences between NHDOT and AASHTO. Mr. Wolf mentions that the AASHTO requirements have never been followed before and Ms. Parmele comments that does not mean that it should not be addressed.

Mr. Strobel calls for a recess. Session resumes at 7:30 p.m.

Copies of emails from the town's engineer relative to this case are provided to members for review. Lengthy discussion ensues relative to the engineer's review and e-mails that followed. Ms. Smith states that the first portion of the traffic engineer's review was reviewed by the board and at that time the board asked for the engineer to look again to determine if the 500' of sight distance will be met should the trees be removed.

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Mr. McCaffrey states that an absolute minimum for stopping distance sighted by AASHTO is 490'. He states that there may be some advantage if the two buildings are not there. Mr. Frankiewicz provides an overview of the status of the existing out buildings. He adds that these buildings are both structurally sound.

Ms. Smith states that in fairness to the applicant the board had the original review done and it was discussed at length. The board asked if the 500' could be met and that request was completed by the applicant and reviewed. She adds that the applicant has followed through with everything else that the board has requested. She states that it appears that the board is now setting the bar at a different level.

Ms. Parmele states that this is an important location and there is a safety issue. She states that it is still not clear and she suggests that the engineer come and meet with the board.

Mr. Sullivan states that this board accepted 500' as above the minimum prescribed by the engineer and the engineer is using 500' as well because it is above the 495' minimum sight distance. He refers to an email dated 11/7/14, which refers to 500' of sight distance as a universal sight distance. He adds that this is what the board agreed to.

Ms. Parmele asks what the final recommendations are from the town's engineer based on the changes. Mr. Sullivan replies that the plans were revised by Mr. Frankiewicz and sent to the board, which are the plans being reviewed at this meeting. Ms. Parmele specifically asks if the engineer is satisfied with everything at this time. Mr. Sullivan replies that the engineer has not seen these revised plans. Ms. Parmele states that she would like to hear the engineer talk about this site in the context of Rte. 4, the other driveway access, as well as speed and weather issues. She states that this is a small project; however, it is a tough location. Ms. Smith states that the engineer has stated that issues of snow are not included in the decision making process as it is an aspect for all roads in New England.

Mr. Jandebaur states that the engineer has noted that the proposed grade appears to provide the 500' in the profile. He states that the engineer does not state that he agrees with the 500'; it is simply what is in the profile. Ms. Smith states that the 500' was from the original CMA report, which is what the board was discussing at one of the meetings. Mr. Sullivan states that the board did not agree to 500', per the October 23, 2014 meeting minutes; however, the board suggested that the engineer recalculate the sight distance without the trees and include the grading.

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Further discussion is held regarding intersection sight distance (ISD) and stopping sight distance (SSD). Ms. Smith states that one is for the car that wants to get out onto the road and the other is for the cars that are already in the travelled way.

Mr. Strobel opens the public portion for this case.

Abutter Leigh Hansen states that the abutters have been coming to these meetings regarding this property for over a year. She states that the abutters have been persistent and passionate about the safety. She states that the board must take into consideration all of the risk factors within this area; weather, curve, traffic, the sun and its glare, multiple accidents with one fatality. She states that this is an extremely dangerous curve. She asks how one can enforce the easement. She notes that there are many turnarounds in this driveway. She states that the turnarounds have increased since the recreation fields were created. She expresses concern with the placement of snow.

Ms. Hansen continues to explain that once the grade is completed it will be easier for people to go around a vehicle and pass on the right, affecting the sight distance of the new lot. She states that this is a very dangerous area with unintended consequences. She states that adding more risk to a proven dangerous curve is not logical and not the intention of RSA 671:1(III). She states that her letter has been forwarded to the selectmen. She states that she has spoken to the police chief. She states that there is work being done to get a meeting with NHDOT and she adds that the state is getting involved in this because it is a serious problem. She does not feel that the line of sight is adequate although the stopping distance appears to be. She adds that the 610' recommended by the town's engineer is not there and trying to keep the triangular area clear will not be monitored or policed.

Abutter Chris Quinn states that safety is his main concern, and requests that any precautionary measures are looked at stringently. He states that there is no area for a deceleration lane and this is an issue that should be addressed.

Mr. McCaffrey states that the Quinn's driveway is 20' away from the proposed driveway location. He asks what safety concerns there are regarding his driveway. Mr. Quinn replies with scenarios that are distinctive to his driveway. He explains that a car came around the corner; it stopped, and then got off the road. He states that the car almost hit him at the end of his driveway. He adds that when there are activities at the recreation fields cars are making left turns into the fields and people are coming around them into this small turn off area.

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Mr. Strobel asks about the meeting Ms. Hansen mentioned with NHDOT. Ms. Hansen states that after the fatal accident she contacted the chief of police to see if there was anything that could be done. She explains that the chief is trying to schedule a public meeting with NHDOT. Mr. Jandebour states that this was discussed at the selectmen's meeting and many are working to get this meeting scheduled. Mr. Wolf states that the meeting was also discussed at last night's police commission meeting. He explains that the date is an issue at this time.

Ms. Parmele states that there is an incremental issue that must be considered for this property.

A discussion is held regarding the proposed easement language. Ms. Smith states that it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide language to the board for review. Further discussion is held regarding parking areas in the driveways.

Ms. Edwards states that there have been applications that have been presented to the board that have indicated systemic safety problems in this area and along Rte. 4. She states that the board should not be making these problems worse. She states that the bigger job of the planning board is to plan and work on these issues.

Ms. Parmele asks if the traffic engineer should look into the area and communicate his findings to the board. Mr. Strobel states that AASHTO addressed the speed. Mr. Frankiewicz states that a traffic study was previously prepared for the commercial site plan application, one year ago, and was reviewed by the traffic engineers. He adds that this proposal is better than what the site plan would have been. Discussion ensues. Ms. Smith states that the engineer's response does not consider subjective safety issues. They have looked at the general area. She adds that some changes have been made relative to the engineers report to better accommodate the site. She adds that she will forward the plan and ask the engineer if the revised plan meets the recent recommendations.

Mr. Wolf states that the board and abutters have all worked hard on this project.

Ms. Smith states that the board asked about the tree clearing and the sight distance and its effect on the sight distance. More discussion is held relative to the engineer's report and the sight distance. Mr. Sullivan states that with the removal of the trees the sight distance may be achieved according to CMA's recommendations.

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Mr. Strobel reads from section 3.03 of the subdivision regulations. Discussion ensues regarding stopping sight distance and intersection sight distance.

The consensus of the board is that the revised plans will be sent to the town's engineer for additional review and ask if the sight distance has been met, as proposed.

Mr. Frankiewicz states that this proposal is improving the situation; it will be better than it is today. He adds that the proposal is adding a single family driveway not a commercial driveway. He states that this will improve the access and view of Mr. Quinn's driveway to the east and improve the entire site. He adds that the owner is also willing to remove the two out buildings, if determined to be necessary. He adds that the state has approved three driveway permits for this area; all three are driveways in different locations. He states that this proposal is improving many of the existing situations. Mr. Frankiewicz states that accidents cannot be prevented; however, the applicant will do what is necessary to improve the situation.

Mr. McCaffrey states that if the area remains as it exists today, it will be worse.

Additional input is provided from the abutters. Mr. Quinn states that cutting the trees down will improve the sight distance and he would like to make sure that the area is safe. Ms. Hansen states that the grading will have incidental consequences.

Mr. Strobel closes the public portion for this case.

Mr. Wolf states that he appreciates and understands the concerns of the abutters.

Mr. Frankiewicz states that relative to the grading issue, there will be no paving in that area. He explains that the grading proposed is just the grading of the side slopes; there will be no expansion to the existing shoulders for an area for passing.

Mr. Frankiewicz submits a request to continue.

Ms. Edwards makes a motion, second by Mr. McCaffrey, to continue this case to December 18. Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.

OTHER

Master Plan Presentation

Mr. Sullivan states that per the direction of the board he has done an assessment of the materials relative to the town's update of the master plan.

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He reviews and explains what is currently included in the town's Master Plan and mentions what the state requires to be included in master plans. He reviews existing chapters, and suggests how the chapters can be amended and addressed. Mr. Sullivan provides a brief overview of an example that he is currently working on.

SIGNATURE FILES

CASE: 14-17: Paul and Stacey Burgess, 783 First NH Tpke. Map 222; Lot 47. Plans are signed by Mr. Strobel.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Edwards makes a motion to adjourn at 9:50 p.m. Second by Mr. McCaffrey. Motion passes unanimously; 6/0 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary