

Present: William J. Keller, Jr. (Chairman), Lisa Eggleston,
Christopher Morely (arrived 8:40 p.m.), Michael Hunter, Michael Fee,
Eric Poch (Associate, arrived 8:00 p.m.), J. Kablack (Planner)

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m.

Bill Keller recognized Boy Scout Troop 60 in attendance for their "Citizen in the Community Badge". The Chairman explained the role of the Planning Board and its' responsibilities to the Town.

Frugal Flower – Recommendations to Zoning Board of Appeals

Representing the applicant: Michael Coutu, Sudbury Design Group and owner Craig Wambolt.

Michael Coutu addressed the series of variances his applicant is requesting from the Board of Appeals. Frugal Flower was established in 1997 at which time zoning allowed parking in the rear and on the adjacent side. A 40' front setback was required at the time which has since changed to a minimum of 20' and a maximum of 40'. The lot size is 77,100 square feet in total. It is unique in that it is a split zone; business district and residential (rear of lot) with wetlands to the west and northwest. Constraints make changes which are necessary for economic needs and parking, very difficult. Included in the variance requests:

- Parking in front of the building (18 spaces)
- Reduction in landscape buffer from 20' to 9'
- Locate refuse storage in a residential zone
- Re-location of existing sign

The prior site plan was not well thought out for two main reasons:

- Parking
- Safety issue; one way entrance/exit where customers have to circle the building. It is a very tight area with business interference in the back. It presents a safety issue which they want to rectify.

The proposal maintains the one way egress but additional parking in front will alleviate congestion in the rear. The applicant would like to get up to 45 total spaces with 2 handicapped, for reclassification of business use. The original site plan called for a seasonal display area. Due to current economics, this is no longer necessary or viable. The existing sign will be cut in height. They have been before the Design Review Board and received their support with the inclusion of one suggestion. The majority of businesses on Route 20 have parking in front. The proposal includes street trees and hedges to be visible to drivers along Route 20 and the eastern side of the building. The concept keeps with the character of Sudbury and the bylaw requirements while allowing a successful business operation. This is a difficult location as less than 50% of the property is usable.

Craig Wambolt: Competitors such as Home Depot and Russells have made it very difficult to remain in operation.

Michael Coutu: Home Depot sells at a price the applicant can not compete with; they sell at a price the applicant can not even get at wholesale.

Bill Keller: What are you hoping to attract with this proposal?

Craig Wambolt: There will be a shift of business within the company with an added labor force and a need for tenants/offices upstairs. It will be more labor intense with additional employees.

Bill Keller: You constructed that building for your business? Craig Wambolt: Yes.

Bill Keller: Conceptionally, this proposal is a reasonable request; the business is valuable to the community. Are there any technical issues with the proposal?

Jody Kablack: The applicant still needs plan development, it's fairly conceptional. They will be changing surveyors. The drainage and grading plans will be done after they receive the variances. A pre-application meeting took place at which it was determined the proposal meets variance criteria of the zoning bylaw. The question tonight is whether the Board approves the application, in particular the variance application for parking in front. This property is developed up to the residential zoning line. Parking is an active use not allowed in a residential zone without a variance. In addition there are topography issues.

Bill Keller: How far back are the nearest residencies?

Michael Coutu: The nearest homes would be on Washington Drive, which is a good distance back.

Jody Kablack: The houses are located about 300' + behind the establishment.

Michael Coutu: We are proposing evergreen screening as well.

Mike Fee: Regarding Jody Kablack's memo dated 3/17/03, he concurs one of the Master Plan's points is to be flexible with businesses so they may grow and remain in Sudbury. In addition he agrees that it is an unsafe parking situation. Public safety concerns and the proposed aesthetic design meet variance requirements.

Lisa Eggleston: With regard to the proposed office space, are there any septic issues?

Craig Wambolt: None are currently known, but they will fully address with the Board of Health.

Lisa Eggleston: Going from retail to office space increases septic requirement.

Jody Kablack: Bob Leupold did attend the pre-application meeting.

Michael Coutu: There are design issues with septic tanks that will need to be upgraded after variances are obtained. Does not make sense to proceed until the variances are granted.

Bill Keller: The septic issues being addressed will be another benefit to the community.

Lisa Eggleston: Will traffic flow be directional?

Michael Coutu: Yes, we will maintain one way in/one way out.

Lisa Eggleston: Will the proposed hedges interfere with sight distance?

Michael Coutu: No, Bill Place will look at it more closely, but it should not be an issue.

Lisa Eggleston: It is important to address. We do not want aesthetics interfering with sight distance.

Jody Kablack: What are the tree species the Design Review Board recommended?

Michael Coutu: They are bay shaped which makes them better to prune relative to the power lines.

Jody Kablack: During Site Plan review it was noted the front buffer will only be 9' when typically it is 20'. They will need to be cautious where the poles are. The most significant part of this application is the parking variance; typically zoning does not allow street side parking.

The Chairman addressed the Boy Scouts to see if they had any questions or comments on the application.

Ben Cutting: 381 Maynard Road

With the wetlands behind the store, they do not have much choice other than to put parking in the front. Thought the hedge screening was a good idea.

Michael Ravesi: 122 Morse Road

Agreed the plan was a good one in lieu of the wetlands in back.

Matt Schwalm: 22 Codman Drive

Will you be taking out everything in the front? Michael Coutu: Yes.

Will you still have entrance and exit signs? Michael Coutu: Yes.

Ethan Leuppert: 19 Old Forge Lane

Thinks it would be good to have a drive-thru. Also agrees it is a good plan especially with the wetlands in back.

Board member Michael Hunter: Did the Design Review Board discuss secondary signage i.e. awnings?

Michael Coutu: No.

Lisa Eggleston: Will the additional space all be Frugal Flower?

Craig Wambolt: No, some will be leasable space.

Lisa Eggleston: With that, you may need to have additional signage.

Ethan Leuppert: You could have pictures of your product as you go through the drive-thru; like a McDonalds.

Matt Schwalm: What is the overall cost?

Craig Wambolt: That has not been determined yet, but it will be high.

Matt Schwalm: Do you have an icon/logo? Could do a certain flower type in neon.

Michael Coutu: What you see currently on the trucks and sign is the logo.

Craig Wambolt told the Board another purpose for the application is to facilitate traffic. The walk-in trade has diminished over the years with the use of the internet and phone orders. This is not an easily, accessible building and with the proposal before the Boards,

he hopes to restore walk-in business. They have struggled since opening in 1997 and want to improve sales and the business.

Michael Coutu: His business is near Frugal Flower and on a personal note he opined there is nothing visibly pleasing the way it currently appears.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To recommend the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the Frugal Flower project and to instruct the Planner to draft a memo from the Planning Board.

Willis Hill II – VOTE DECISION

The Board reviewed the decision prepared by the Town Planner.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To endorse the Definitive Subdivision Decision and Flexible Development Special Permit for Willis Hill II.

Lawhorn Definitive Subdivision – Endorse Plan

Jody Kablack: The note on the plan is slightly different than what was requested by the Planning Board. It is the same intent the Board was looking for.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To endorse the Lawhorn Subdivision Plan of Land and hold in escrow until the 20 day appeal period is over.

Cutting Land Purchase Proposal – Executive Session

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To go into Executive Session to discuss the Cutting Land Purchase Proposal.

It was a roll call vote.

2003 Annual Town Meeting – Presentations & Speakers

The Town Planner discussed the presentation drafts. John Fraize, (Historic Commission) will give the presentation on Scenic Roads. Planning Board presenters were assigned.

Miscellaneous:

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To elect Michael Fee as Planning Board representative to the Community Housing Committee for a one year term.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the Minutes of 1/22/03, 2/5/03 and 2/12/03.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.