

Present: William J. Keller, Jr. (Chairman), Lisa Eggleston, Christopher Morely,
Michael Hunter, Michael Fee, Eric Poch (Associate; arrived 7:50 p.m.),
Jody Kablack (Planner)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Shaw's Plaza – Parking Lot Improvements

The Town Planner provided introductory comments on the proposal which includes traffic circulation and landscaping as the major points of the plan. There are not any issues with the plan in meeting thresholds for site plan review. The applicants were asked to come before the Boards on an informal basis, which is not a requirement of site plan, in order for the Boards to formulate one response to the plan with the Town's recommendations.

Jason Hemmock; Landscape Manager

The proposal is for pavement and aesthetic improvements to the site including pedestrian circulation. For costs reasons, the light poles are to remain in place. Vehicular circulation islands from west to east will be installed. The proposal does not change curb cuts. There will be a 6' wide walkway connecting the stores to Raytheon. On the west side the aisle width is currently wider than what is required; the west entrance is approximately 30' - at the most narrow point it is 24'.

The proposal for the east side is a similar situation; add islands which will be more substantial as it is 36' wide on the east side and a vehicular circle with diamond shape plantings. They are proposing a 5' path with an 8' island from Route 20 up to the front of Shaw's. The sidewalk will create a pedestrian friendly area. In addition they are proposing 4' of sidewalk in the front of the building. The proposal involves many aesthetic improvements; islands with plantings, suitable condition trees. Keeping it simple, not a lot of large trees – do not want to block existing light posts or façade with trees. There is an existing septic at the playground facility so they cannot add trees. No changes to the drainage system; only slightly lower impervious surface. There is also discussion of possibly repaving the back access road.

Jody Kablack: What about the front buffer along Route 20?

Jason Hemmock: It is currently narrow; follows Boston Post Road. They would like to make a more perpendicular line with a guard rail along the parking side. Islands would be installed with plantings but due to the large amounts of road salt and sand it will be difficult growing conditions. Street trees would block the façade too much. Gravestar is concerned with visibility.

With regard to Bill Place's memo on traffic concern and the prohibition of left turns out of the easterly entrance, this would be difficult to resolve. They propose an extension of the islands much further into the site, allowing cars to que in without congestion. It would not change the existing 36' wide aisle but would have 3 lanes: left turn, right turn and single egress aisle.

Chris Morely: Is the curb cut 36'?

Jason Hemmock: Yes, the width is greater than 36'. Need to keep truck traffic flow in mind at the westerly entrance. The plan is dependent on their budget and what is most agreeable.

Chris Morely: What about utilizing space at the CVS drive through?

Jody Kablack: There is a 24' separation at the bump-out at CVS; it would eliminate parking there.

Lisa Eggleston: More concerned when coming off Route 20 to turn into the first lane (easterly entrance).

Bill Keller: The cars stop at that point.

Lisa Eggleston: Likes the proposal; thinks it is safer. Will it be netting the same amount of spaces?

Jason Hemmock: Will lose 7 spaces, but they still meet zoning requirements.

Lisa Eggleston: Also concerned with smaller spaces given the size of cars.

Jason Hemmock: Spaces are currently 9' but in actuality due to striping, they are only 8' wide.

Jody Kablack: If striped and built in conformance, there shouldn't be a problem.

Lisa Eggleston: The concrete walkways are a great idea.

Bill Keller: What initiated this proposal?

Jason Hemmock: Basically, the age of the pavement.

Bill Keller thanked the applicant for speaking with the Board. Their cooperation when it is not a requirement is appreciated. Likes the extended island on the easterly entrance; will help traffic flow as it is a tough turn on the west.

Mike Hunter: What about the Route 20 sidewalk (west) being over more?

Jason Hemmock: A lot of people cross at Raytheon; this provides them to be off the parking area.

Mike Hunter: On the easterly side it is dangerous.

Jason Hemmock: There will be a crosswalk there.

Chris Morely: What about moving the crosswalk to the CVS side?

Jody Kablack: More beneficial where it is – more cars head west. This crosswalk gets pedestrians away from traffic que.

Chris Morely: Strongly endorses the 3 lanes at the easterly entrance.

Lisa Eggleston: Could the lanes be stripped to have left and right turn lanes?

Jason Hemmock: It is not wide enough.

Eric Poch: Also likes the idea of 3 lanes but is concerned if it is wide enough for that; if it's not it could make it worse.

Mike Hunter: On the easterly entrance there is always a large pothole right at the street. Could that be addressed?

Jason Hemmock: It would depend; if it is in the right of way, we will address it. If not, it is Mass. Highway jurisdiction.

Lisa Eggleston: Suggests discussing that with Bill Place; he maintains the basins. Wanted to comment since their budget is a concern, is the landscaping & screening behind the playground necessary?

Jason Hemmock: Aesthetically it is; the quality of vegetation is bad.

Lisa Eggleston: A small percentage of people see that portion of the area. She believes money would be better spent on the bigger issues. When plazas have parking in the front it is good to have filtered views; shading of tree canopies. Also the sidewalk in front is a good priority.

Jody Kablack: The Planning Board has advocated for years to put a sidewalk in, however, after reviewing this plan with the walkway along the front strip, she feels it is less beneficial. There is very limited space, 8' at the narrowest point. The applicant was willing to design it, but at the pre-application meeting it was opined buffering would be better. Gravestar has done a lot to improve this location; they know the Town's interests and limited funds. A possibility may be to extend the walkway up the second aisle on the east. Other recommendations from the pre-application meeting included:

- Main aisles being no less than 26' wide
- Brick pavers to delineate walkways; particularly at the southeast corner
- Submission of a landscape plan to the Design Review Board
- As built plan after completion
- If the access road to Nobscot Road is paved will need stormwater management
- Street trees along the front buffer
- Extend the playground fence
- Additional trash receptacles
- Left turn sign on the easterly access

This whole plan proposal reduces the traffic on site.

Lisa Eggleston: If the walkway in front of the store is extended, it is important not to let it be filled with seasonal displays and shopping carriages.

Eric Poch: Would not suggest using oaks by the septic area. If there is a walkway easterly from the front, could it be moved and put a walkway down to Nobscot?

Lisa Eggleston: What is the stormwater structure now; are there deep sumps and water quality inlets?

Jason Hemmock: Not certain what is currently there.

Lisa Eggleston: Whenever there is repaving, it's an opportunity to improve the stormwater management.

Jody Kablack: Believes improvements were made before; will check.

The Board thanked the applicant for their time and cooperation.

Ledgewood II – Discussion of Subdivision Completion

Board member Michael Fee wanted it entered into record that he has represented Dick Campana in the past. He does not represent Mr. Campana on the Ledgewood II matter, but feels it would be inappropriate to participate.

Jody Kablack: There is concern with the lack of progress. At its last meeting, the Board asked the Town Engineer to prepare a cost estimate to complete the work. Mr. Campana was asked to attend the meeting tonight.

Bill Keller addressed Mr. Campana to see if he would like to begin with any comments for the Board.

Dick Campana: He is happy to be before the Board tonight to answer any questions. He is very interested in hearing what the residents who are present (3) will have to say. He believes it was last September when the sign height was brought up; he has addressed the matter. Attending the meeting with him is his excavation contractor, John Doucette. John has been doing a lot of work on Mary Catherine Lane as well as lots 39 & 40 on the top of the hill. Utilities have been installed; services are in place. He has started his second house (40% complete) in addition to the 1st house. There have been open houses for potential buyers. He feels the area is being kept attractive and clean. The property abuts Maynard on one side and the Gun Club in the back. He hopes to hydroseed areas on the north side within the next few weeks, weather permitting, to make the area more attractive. He has spoken with the neighbors throughout and thought he had a good rapport with them.

Bill Keller: You are building the two houses?

Dick Campana: Yes, one is completed – landscaped and driveway as well.

Bill Keller: Are the other lots available to other builders?

Dick Campana: Not yet, does have approval for it though.

Lisa Eggleston: What is holding up the Certificate of Occupancy on the first house?

Dick Campana: Haven't applied for it yet, would like to do landscaping first.

Lisa Eggleston: What is the status of the subdivision infrastructure?

Dick Campana: The infrastructure for drainage has been completed. Would like to point out originally (old subdivision) the drainage was approved to be in back of Mary Catherine Road. The Conservation Commission said that was not acceptable.

Lisa Eggleston: Is the infiltration basin complete and functioning?

Dick Campana: Yes.

Lisa Eggleston: Is it being maintained?

Dick Campana: No, there was a piping problem. It wasn't draining and had to be completely redone.

Lisa Eggleston: The infiltration basin is done and vegetated?

Dick Campana: Yes.

Lisa Eggleston: What about curbing and roadway status?

Dick Campana: The curbing is not done. There is a provision for the sidewalk, but it is not done. He will need to have heavy equipment on site for the other lots and doesn't think the curbing should be done before that.

Lisa Eggleston: What are you telling potential buyers for a completion timeframe?

Dick Campana: The subject has not come up.

Bill Keller addressed the neighbors in attendance for their comments.

Robert Schless; 43 Mary Catherine Lane

Mr. Schless presented a letter to the Chairman to read and to submit to file as well as some pictures of the area.

Jody Kablack: The Board has had concerns with this subdivision for approximately 5 years now. The last covenant extension was November of 1998; it is now operating without an extension from the Planning Board. This is the longest running subdivision the Town has had. There is currently a two year time limit for completion, however, there was no limitation at the time this was approved. The Town tried to impose one but lost in court. It is a circular argument; cannot build the road until the houses are completed. The road would not withstand the work. It has been too long for the neighbors to have to live with these conditions. The Planning Board does not have jurisdiction on individual lots but the entrances are a hardship on the neighbors. If the Board requires the roads be built before the work is done, the roads may not get accepted at Town Meeting.

Lisa Eggleston: If you keep stretching time for completion, building additional houses is not a good idea.

Dick Campana: The former contractor made many mistakes. We have had to re-dig the entire road in order to get acceptance when the road is completed. When they first started building in December of 1997 (clearing roads) the market was good. If the roads were in good shape, could have sold in a good market. Now the market is not good and cannot be predicted. Less expensive houses are moving better and therefore, he anticipates building smaller houses (3,200 s.f.) on Mary Catherine Lane to cut down on space and price.

John Doucette: I am Mr. Campana's excavation contractor. The prior contractor installed everything incorrectly. We did a site mediation in the spring – leveled the site and made it more palatable aesthetically. We moved barriers – loamed and hydroseeded on either side. He believes it would be simple to meet the neighbors' aesthetic concerns. A Cape Cod berm could make it look more finished. The road completion is not the right thing to do at this point.

Hayley Barnes; 42 Mary Catherine Lane

Recalls having this same conversation two years ago (believes it was December of '01) at which time Mr. Campana agreed to seed the area at the corner of her lot which had been bulldozed after his work began. He seeded it in December; there is no irrigation, there is no grass. She approached Mr. Campana a year ago with concerns.

Dick Campana: He is hearing something new. The North Road and Mary Catherine Lane entrances are very attractive. He takes offense to the comments being made. He put in a very nice sign – grass is raked, seeded and mowed. Also puts decorations (greens)

up. The roadway is swept; on North Road there is a gravel walkway with shrubs. He was under the impression the neighbors were happy. He wants to get along with the neighbors.

Mr. Schless: Is sorry Mr. Campana is offended, however, the pictures he submitted show the poor conditions (taken today). There is no grass on Hayley's side; everything is dead.

Chris Morely: Why are there jersey barriers?

Dick Campana: The road is not open officially; it is a question of liability.

Chris Morely: What do the 2 entrances have to do with liability insurance?

Dick Campana: School buses, people were using it as a short-cut. It made the liability costly.

Lisa Eggleston: What happens if the house sells?

Dick Campana: They would use North Road.

Lisa Eggleston: There is only one access to the subdivision?

Dick Campana: The Fire Department was happy with it.

Hayley Barnes: Understands not opening the road but not the sign and lack of aesthetic work.

Dick Campana: The trench way on Mrs. Barnes side was caused by the Gas Company. He has addressed issues she brought to his attention (cable). It has been a cruel spring but he will get work done.

Hayley Barnes: Was under the impression the area in discussion was her property. It was a wooded area, now it is very unattractive. Grass will not grow there without irrigation.

Lisa Eggleston: What is the ultimate plan for embankments?

Dick Campana: There will be small trees in around the sign; the lots come up to the sign.

Lisa Eggleston: Is the intent to build from the top of the hill down?

Dick Campana: Would like to leave the top of the hill for larger houses but intends to finish the two on top of the hill now. Then he will put in the smaller houses.

Chris Morely: You could sell strategic lots to builders for a profit.

Dick Campana: Would prefer to do it himself; has invested a lot of money in this project.

Chris Morely: The Board's only recourse is to take the bond to finish the street. This has been discussed for three years and nothing has happened. What the neighbors want is a small expense in the big scheme. Should just do the area near them coming in from Mary Catherine.

Dick Campana: Outside of curbing and the sidewalk, he feels he has done everything.

Jody Kablack: We could make a recommendation to fix the entrances at the very least.

Work has been done, but not enough. The walkway should be in, the shoulder should be loamed and seeded, grading and berm should be in and street trees along the entrance should be in.

Mike Cannistraro; 578 North Road

Showed photographs to the Board of current conditions. It is not his intent to attack Dick Campana. He discussed trash, curbing and sidewalk issues about 2 years ago with Dick and about 80% of it was resolved. Dick has made some improvements; he spoke with Dick last week and he is willing to do a stone wall to separate his property. Mr. Cannistraro wants to get the entrances finished; the jersey barriers are not attractive. While he understands there are setbacks for Dick, he is still tired of waiting. If what Dick promises is true, he would just like it to be done fast. It would be a great development if it were done. He is willing to spend money on his end to help.

Chris Morely: Why are the jersey barriers on both ends?

Dick Campana: Only on ends of North Road – vandalism has occurred at night. People are getting on ends where the soft shoulders are.

Chris Morely: Can they be moved? Also, there are rules against stone walls in a right of way.

Dick Campana: The stone wall would be on their property.

Jody Kablack: There is a 50' strip there – it is the right of way. If the wall were completely on Mike Cannistraro's property and he maintained it, then it would be allowed.

Lisa Eggleston: How many lots have been approved and built within the last 3 years?

Jody Kablack: Approximately 40-50 lots.

Lisa Eggleston: All of which are substantially complete and selling. People need to see these lots would be complete in order for them to sell.

Chris Morely: Out of 16 lots, you could sell 4 to other developers.

Mr. Schless: Two years ago he said he was going to sell, however, now he is an "empty nester" and intends on pursuing selling. He cannot sell with the conditions of Mr. Campana's lots and would appreciate any help the Board can provide.

Bill Keller: Chris Morely had a great point of strategically picking lots to sell to developers to get the project jump started.

Chris Morely: What about moving the jersey barriers up 2 lots; out of the neighbors' immediate view.

Dick Campana: Yes, we could do that.

John Doucette: Has a crew of 6 people, schedule has been augmented. They are scheduled to go back to loam and hydroseed as instructed previously by Mr. Campana.

Chris Morely: Can they work on the entrances?

John Doucette: Yes.

Lisa Eggleston: Suggests readdressing at the next meeting on 5-28 with a site visit prior to that to see what gets done. Then the Board can make any decision at the 5-28 meeting.

Jody Kablack: Curbing does not need to be done now, but a Cape Cod berm, grading, seeding and loam as well as a sidewalk up to the first lot should all be completed. Fine grade restoration of shoulder on Mary Catherine end should be defined and maintained. Also push the barriers out of the sight of the neighbors' houses.

John Doucette: Knows what is expected and can do it.

The Board schedule a site visit for 6:30 p.m. on 5-28-03.

Mrs. Haley asked the Board about her property boundaries; the cul-de-sac is an easement on her property. Who is responsible for that?

Bill Keller advised her to have her property professionally identified. She has property rights and should obtain legal advice as well as a surveyor. The Board is not in the position to discuss that with her.

The discussion on the Ledgewood II Subdivision was concluded.

Sign Bylaw – Preparation for Town Meeting

Jody Kablack: Sent emails to the business community but only received a couple of responses. Anticipates a large attendance at Town Meeting for Article 54.

Lisa Eggleston: It should be clarified why the sign article is on; a history including the shortcomings of the existing sign bylaw. In addition it should be stressed that this article increases flexibility; types of uses.

Mike Fee: Feels a historical background would be most effective for reconsideration point. Explain committee study, formation and efforts; where we were and the process that got us to where we are today. Explain what the bylaw does versus focus on a particular point.

Mike Hunter: Should also point out there would be more control with this article.

Lisa Eggleston: Safety issues as well as the neon issue were condemning – need to clear up the confusion of what would be allowed versus what is allowed.

Tom Phelps: Doesn't think stressing that it's from businesses' input would be beneficial.

Mike Fee: Under the present regimen, the bylaw is subject to greater analysis by the Board of Appeals. This article clarifies it and restricts it more than what is in place.

Mike Hunter: May want to list applicants who went before the ZBA.

Jody Kablack: When we get through reconsideration, we will need a motion on the article – amendments.

Lisa Eggleston: We should go back to the Master Plan – vital for business community.

Tom Phelps: If this doesn't pass, the Zoning Board will continue to give variances. We should get the Zoning Board's support.

Northwood – Request for Bond Reduction

Jody Kablack: There has been good progress, although they are selling slowly. The bond is at \$61,000. She suggests granting a reduction, but adding about \$5,600 for as built plans to Bill Place's estimate.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To reduce the Bond for Northwood to \$42,000.00

Miscellaneous:

Green Companies

Jody Kablack updated the Board. All that is needed is the final as built plans. She recommends giving the Final Occupancy Permit.
The Board instructed the Planner to proceed.

Cutting Property:

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To go into Executive Session to discuss the Cutting Property.
It was a roll call vote.

Goodnow Road – Stonewall

The Town Planner investigated the changes to the stonewall on Goodnow Road; no-one knows who is responsible. There has been some clearing, however, the moss has not been disturbed. The Planner advised Northland not to do anything to the stonewall without proper consent.

Walkways

The Town Planner and the Town Engineer have been doing considerable work on the walkways. Nobscot has been prepared up to the shoulder of Route 20. Peakham Road and the top of Raymond Road are next in line. Both of these roads required easements.

ANRs

Applicant: Maynard Road Realty Trust -10 Butler Road; to change lot size and shape
The Planner recommends approval – the plan attempts to make lot lines for Willis Hill ANR more uniformed.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To endorse the ANR plan of Land for Maynard Road Realty Trust.

The Planning Board will meet at 7:00 p.m. on May 21 prior to Town Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.