

Minutes subject to correction by the Essex Junction Planning Commission. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the Minutes of the next meeting of the Planning Commission.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
July 17, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Thibeault (Chairman); Dan Kerin, Andrew Boutin, Diane Clemens, Liza Kilcoyne.

ADMINISTRATION: Jeff Arango, Developer Director.

1. CALL TO ORDER and AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

Chairman Mark Thibeault called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were no comments from the audience at this time.

2. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

None.

3. MINUTES

June 26, 2008

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to approve the 6/26/08 minutes with the following clarification:

Page 3, Public Comment, 1st paragraph, 1st sentence – insert “and town” after the word “village” and add at the end of the sentence: “(It was noted the Village has no limitations relative to slope.)”

VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.

The Planning Commission received a copy of the minutes from the joint meeting with the Board of Trustees. It was mentioned there should be a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees quarterly throughout the year.

4. PUBLIC MEETING

Mark Thibeault explained the procedure to be followed with applications before the Planning Commission and swore in those individuals to give testimony.

Conceptual Plan for a 30-unit multifamily building with underground parking and to include the demolition of the existing single family dwelling at 62 Lincoln Street in the FM-MU2 District by Bernard Chenette, PE, agent for Diane and Gabe Handy, owners

Gabe and Diane Handy appeared on behalf of the application.

APPLICANT COMMENTS

Gabe Handy explained he purchased the property at 62 Lincoln Street five years ago and requested a change in zoning to increase the density on the lot. The Village approved zoning changes which resulted in an increase in density in the zone. The proposed multifamily building (condominiums) is 174' long unless a fourth story can be added in which case the building length will be decreased to 132'. There will be 36 parking spaces under the building and 12 spaces in the parking lot with 10 spaces on the street (on-street parking) to provide a village-like appearance. There has been discussion of keeping the street private or making it a public street. There will be 12 one-bedroom units (800 s.f. in size) and 18 two-bedroom units (1,085 s.f. in size) in the building ranging in price from \$170,000 to \$200,000. If the building is four stories, the parking will be underground and above ground. The storm water detention pond on the site was designed to accommodate run off from a 50 year storm for the building and the front parcel when it is developed (approximately two years in the future). The existing house and trailer will be removed and eight units built on the parcel. The condominium units will not be marketed until the house and trailer are removed.

Jeff Arango agreed it is good to involve the plans for front parcels in the current proposal. Parking for the front parcels may be needed on the condominium site. If the development is a PUD, the project can be phased. Gabe Handy offered to return with a revised plan showing the vision for the entire corner. Liza Kilcoyne requested information on how the two properties will work together in terms of access, parking, shared entry, architecture, shared utilities, and a vision for the street. Mr. Handy stated two curb cuts on Route 2A will be closed. The access to all the parcels will be from one curb cut. The units at the front of the property will have one-car garages under each unit. Mark Thibeault mentioned considering changing the location of the storm water pond, moving the condominium building closer to the street, and creating more street parking (diagonal parking). Mr. Handy said the road will be 22' wide with a green belt between the road and sidewalk. The units on the first floor of the condominium building will each have their own entry with a porch. There will be small but functional decks/porches for the units on the upper floors. The building will not be flat and long, but rather will have the units set back or forward (undulated). Mark Thibeault said he preferred a longer building with treatments on the façade and multi-entrances to having a fourth floor added to the building and the length of the building being truncated.

Andrew Boutin mentioned concern for cemetery privacy with the condominiums being nearby. Mr. Handy showed a hand-drawn rendering of the wishes of Holy Family Parish relative to the cemetery property (new curbs for the entrance to the cemetery and a green belt). Mr. Handy said the church submitted a list of 13 items they would like addressed. The items will be addressed.

STAFF REPORT

Jeff Arango stated the tax map shows the property line in a different location than the applicant's plan. The map shows the road being the property of the church. The tax map also indicates the parcel is 1.83 acres and per the allowance of 15 units per acre, the applicant can build 27 units, not 30 units. The tax maps are not always accurate so a survey is recommended. There was an old survey that showed the 22' wide strip of land (roadway) with the applicant's parcel. The previous owners of the land had been in talks with the church regarding the right-of-way (road) and at one point in time deeded the land to someone else and then back to themselves the next day to clear the title. The quit claim applied only to a portion of the land, not the front parcel. If the street is to be a public street then the area cannot be counted in the density calculation. If the street is to be a private street, the development should be reviewed as a PUD, recommended Mr. Arango. The building elevation and mass is a concern so it is suggested the mass be minimized with undulations in the building façade or other treatments. Regarding future development on adjacent parcels it would be good to have a complete plan to see how all the parcels fit together. Traffic numbers for the proposal are based on the applicant's experience. Traffic numbers based on the ITE Manual should be submitted. Also, the sidewalk on Lincoln Street (Route 2A) should be extended to the driveway access of the proposed development to allow pedestrian access and connection to sidewalk in the village. It is recommended to have a green belt between the sidewalk and parking.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chuck Lloyd, 51 Lincoln Street, spoke about the volume of traffic through the intersection of North Street and Route 2A which makes getting out of the driveway challenging. Mr. Lloyd asked about a traffic light at the intersection. Mark Thibeault said state warrants for a traffic light must be met before a light can be installed. The applicant will provide more information on traffic generated by the proposal and the Village Engineer will review the data as well. Mr. Lloyd also strongly recommended doing a land survey because based on personal experience the town records have inaccuracies.

Sandra Dahl, 49 Grove Street, urged the Planning Commission to review on-site parking carefully. People are parking on Lincoln Street and parallel to the entrance of the existing condominium units on Lincoln Street which could prohibit access by emergency vehicles. Also, there may be multiple cars in one family living in a condominium unit.

There were no further comments.

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to close the public portion of the application by the Gabe Handy for 30 condominium units at 62 Lincoln Street. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.

DELIBERATION/DECISION

Conceptual Plan, 30 Units, 62 Lincoln Street, Handy

There was discussion of the need to calm the speed of traffic entering the village on Route 2A. Suggestions included having on-street parking to slow cars. It was also suggested the intersection with North Street and the entrance to the proposed development could be better aligned.

MOTION by Dan Kerin, SECOND by Liza Kilcoyne, to table the application for 30 units at 62 Lincoln Street by Gabe Handy pending further information from the applicant including but not limited to information on access, on-street parking/diagonal parking, shared entry from Lincoln Street, vision for all the parcels working together, architecture of building(s), moving the retention pond, moving the building closer to the road, having functional decks/porches, issues with the cemetery, ownership of the road right-of-way, traffic numbers, whether the road will be a public or private street. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.

5. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Announcements

Jeff Arango mentioned this is his last Planning Commission meeting. The new Development Director, Robin Pierce, will begin work next week. Best wishes were extended to Mr. Arango in his move to the State of Washington.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Liza Kilcoyne, SECOND by Dan Kerin, to adjourn the meeting. VOTING: 5 ayes; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

RScty: M.E.Riordan