

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday September 20, 2017

In attendance: A. Rosenblatt- Chair, S. Wilkins, P. Lyon-Selectman Ex-Officio, M. Peterman, R. Hart and Community Development Director G. Leedy

A. Rosenblatt called the meeting to order at 7:32pm.

Case #: PZ8958-081017– Ducal Development LLC (applicant) & Stickney Family Revocable Trust (Owners) – 137 Hollis Road, PIN #: 001-012, 13-2&1. Request for a Conditional Use Permit to depict a conceptual 32-unit Planned Residential Development and Elderly Housing development. Zoned Residential/Rural. Continued from September 6, 2017

The property (PIN #001-012, 001-013-001, 001-013-002) is located at 137 Hollis Road in the Rural Residential district. The lot is approximately 30.6 acres in three parcels. The property is the site of an existing single- family home, with a detached two-car garage, and a detached barn building.

The applicant has applied for a Conditional Use Permit for a mixed residential development on the property. The proposal is to build 32 units of housing in a mix of elderly, non-age restricted, attached and detached units, and rental and for-sale homes, including reuse of the existing house on the property. This is the first project to be submitted under the IIHO zoning provisions.

After the September 6th meeting, a site walk occurred on the property with the Planning Board.

Ken Clinton from Meridian represented the applicant.

Ken said there were some good comments made at the site walk, but he hasn't made any changes to his proposal at this time. It is up the board to discuss and ask any questions they have.

A. Rosenblatt said they need to determine first, if this satisfies the requirements of the ordinance and then if the applicant is entitled to all, some or none of the bonuses they requested. Everyone agreed with that.

P. Lyon asked if the design of the additional 20 units would be consistent with the first 12. Ken said if they are too consistent, it becomes homogeneous, which somewhat goes against the diversity of the housing approach. However, they can vary in size and architecture.

All of the house styles haven't been worked out yet. There is diversity among the units because some are duplexes that are elderly housing, some are rental properties and PRDs targeted for starter homes. They will be similar in style, enough to be pleasing to the eye, but not too similar or too different architecturally. He clarified the majority of units will be two-bedrooms with some one- bedroom units along with a few 3-bedroom units.

P. Lyon still has concerns about the number of units, though not with the way Ken has calculated his unit count.

Ken said they are requesting up to 32 units, but know that some of those bonuses still have to be proven in the design stage and if he doesn't meet the requirements, not all 32 units will be granted. The bonuses in question are the community space, the open space and walkability.

If none of those requirements are met, that leaves 27 possible total units.

He may not even be able to fit 32 units in that area once he has worked in the septic systems etc.

G. Leedy has concerns about the walkability within the development. The loop road was given as a walking path option, but that may not be appropriate. Additional pedestrian accommodation may be required especially on that entrance road.

M. Peterman said the ordinance for subdivision now states if the project/ land has the ability to use some or all of these incentives for additional units, then the board will take all of them into consideration. Ken has met the criteria where he's asked for the bonuses. She doesn't have any issues with the unit quantities of 28-32.

Regarding walkability, she doesn't have a problem with it. There probably won't be much traffic. She likes the idea of the community area with a playground and/or picnic tables to gather around. If you want this kind of housing in town, and she thinks there's a need, the density is probably necessary in many instances, and she doesn't believe is too dense anyway. She recommended the board give a lot of consideration to what the applicant is asking for.

S. Wilkins said there are 24 units that have been firmly established. There are eight units in question based on if the board believes the criteria for bonuses have been met. She agrees that because of the loop road, people will walk it. The question is, does that loop road deserve a bonus? That road needs to be built anyway for the function of the development. So, does something else need to be put in place to acquire the bonus for walkability? She doesn't think the ordinance specifies that, so it's an interesting topic.

Ken clarified the *community space open to public* is the flat area before the tree line which will become some sort of park/ gathering area.

The *open space improved and open to the public* is the trail space that is open to the public. These trails will be foot trails.

The board won't know for sure if those bonuses will be approved until they see the design. S. Wilkins doesn't want to grant those specific bonuses until she can see the documentation that shows the public access is granted. Ken said the condominium documents will document all of that.

Ken said the categories of walkability, community space and open space tally 5.85 units which he rounds to 6. So, at most, they are discussing the final 6 units of the 32 requested.

R. Hart said the possibility of the open space that will be open to the public is exciting. Up to this point, Amherst hasn't had an open space area open to the public south of 101A which will be a great addition. In the gully that has a stream that the road will have to cross, he would like to see plantings there that shade and slow the flow of the water.

Ken said slowing the water is not something they will do. It will affect the temperature and other aspects. They will entertain some landscaping, but not replacing the trees that were cut.

R. Hart continued, saying the soils seem to be porous, is that true? Yes, they believe that's true. Test pits are one of the first tasks to complete if successful tonight.

A. Rosenblatt remains concerned about the bonuses. His interpretation is the board needs to go through each bonus to confirm if it is deserved. He addressed each of the following:
Demographics- how is this enforced? There will be deed restrictions.

Attached: proposing 5 duplexes for a total of 10 attached units 1750-2200 sq. ft. each. They are the same size as the detached units, just attached.

Single floor unit: why are we giving a bonus for that? And why is there a separate bonus for handicap accessible which is also single-floor? S. Wilkins said there's a desire for single-floor living with a certain demographic - typically older folks. Handicap accessible units have additional requirements such as: counter and drawer heights, door widths etc.

Walkability: it will be a hard sell for him to say people can walk on a road and gain the bonus.

A. Rosenblatt stated the site walk was helpful. To him, open space is what you can see driving down the road and this open space is way in the back.

Regarding the existing structure: should he get the bonus just because there is an existing structure that is being converted? The ordinance should be reviewed regarding that item. We have to look at what the existing structure is and what type and quality of units would be made out of it.

The board further discussed how the language of the ordinance may need to be tweaked because specifics about that item weren't included.

A. Rosenblatt said because of that vagueness, we need to apply our best judgement. What we need to decide is, does it satisfy the criteria for bonuses and what are the approved minimum and up-to unit numbers.

M. Peterman clarified all of the units are condos under an association. Even the rental units will be owned, though they will be deed restricted to be rented.

Ken said a design review is the next step.

Public comment

John Harvey- 127 Mack Hill Rd

He is on the ACC, but is here speaking as a citizen. He wondered what the legal aspect and guarantees are for the public space and the access to it. S. Wilkins re-capped her position that there would have to be a legally filed document for the board to approve it as worthy of bonuses.

John also recommended that the trails that go onto that property aren't steeper than 12% grade. The board stated the land topography won't allow for that.

He wondered who would manage the trails: a condo association/ ACC/ trail stewards? The board stated that hasn't been decided yet, but they discussed having a trail agreement with the ACC. John mentioned this property would become the only public open space area in that part of town. Whether it falls in the back of the housing development area or not, it will be appreciated by all the animals that use that area since it is connected to other open space there. The possibility of connecting to other trails through that land is also a great benefit.

S. Wilkins moved to approve up to 32 units under the IIHO, conditionally, upon approval of various amenities and restrictions and upon satisfactory completion of engineering plans. M. Peterman seconded.

A minimum number of units was discussed and derived at.

143 **S. Wilkins amended her motion for minimum units of 26 and maximum units of 32. M. Peterman**
144 **seconded.**

145 **Vote: 4 in favor- none opposed.**

146
147 OTHER BUSINESS

148 Subdivision Regulations

149
150 G. Leedy pointed out a page titled Insurance Requirements is a new section for the roadway and utility
151 standards. This was brought up by Bruce Berry when he noticed it was missing and should be included.
152 The language came from the driveway standards with one new line which is in parenthesis.

153 G. Leedy would like this document to be posted for public hearing at the same time the subdivision
154 regulations are posted.

155
156 G. Leedy said these subdivision regulations are a revised set of regulations. The highlighted areas are the
157 changes from the old set. Most of the changes came from S. Wilkins and some from R. Hart. He
158 highlighted the changes and S. Wilkins confirmed her notes were all addressed.

159
160 S. Wilkins had some notes for section 202.1 which will be addressed.

161
162 The board discussed the term 'place of worship'.

163
164 R. Hart highlighted the changes to the document that he had recommended.

165
166 **M. Peterman moved to adjourn at 9:06pm. S. Wilkins seconded. All in favor**

167
168 Respectfully submitted,
169 Jessica Marchant