

1 **AMHERST PLANNING BOARD**

2 **Wednesday August 15, 2018**

3 In attendance: P. Lyon-Selectman Ex-Officio, A. Rosenblatt, M. Dell Orfano-Chair, C Harris, S. Wilkins,
4 E. Hahn, R. Hart and Community Development Director G. Leedy

5
6 M. Dell Orfano called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

7
8 **NEW BUSINESS**

9 **1. CASE #: PZ10015-061818 – Carlson Manor – GAM Realty Trust (Owners) & Ashwood Development**
10 **Company (Applicant) – 153-159 Hollis Road, PIN #: 001-008-002 – Discussion on proposed**
11 **Condominium Style Elderly Housing Project. Zoned Residential/Rural. Continued from July 16, 2018**
12

13 Chad Brannon, engineer for Fieldstone represented Ashwood Development. He explained the location
14 includes six parcels and described the location of the properties. There are 31.79 acres total. There is
15 frontage on Rocky Hill and Hollis Rd. Residential properties surround the subject properties.

16 The parcels are currently occupied by four residential units and seven accessory structures.

17 All parcels are zoned residential rural. Two wetland fingers cross the area. The auto flea market has
18 been a long time use of the site.

19 There are four existing curb cuts on Hollis Rd and two on Rocky Hill Rd.

20 He is here to discuss a proposal for condominium style elderly housing units for the site. The ordinance
21 leaves density and bonuses up to the discretion of the board.

22 He has worked through some options and combining all of the parcels will be the best option for the
23 project.

24 The plan is for 61 units with a variety of styles of units for elderly residents: single and two-story, various
25 bedroom counts.

26 There will be two access points off Rte. 122 and one access point off Rocky Hill Rd. They want to cluster
27 the development to the center of the property. The intent is there will be a variety of housing styles
28 rather than all being alike.

29 All of the incentive bonuses would be utilized to arrive at the 61 units.

30 It will be designed to be pedestrian friendly with sidewalks by the roads and walking trails through the
31 open space.

32 They are proposing to include a community garden which may be open to the public. They would
33 repurpose one of the buildings on site as a garden shed for storage. There is a triangular .68-acre parcel
34 across the street that is being considered for use: a possible dog park. This and other areas would be
35 open to the public. One farmhouse would be repurposed into the clubhouse and another will house four
36 1-bedroom units.

37 There are two accessory structures that may be utilized for something: possibly a craft center or game
38 room or sauna. They would be restricted to use by residents. There will be 3.5 to 4 acres of open space
39 along the road with some landscaping for natural buffering. They will preserve about 15 acres of land
40 along the back perimeter of the property. This would be non-public improved open space with trails for
41 the residents. It also creates a significant buffer between the development and the abutters.

42 The two existing residential homes on Rocky Hill Rd would be repurposed into two duplex units which
43 adds a variety of housing and keeps more of an open space buffer in that area.

44
45 S. Wilkins asked if there will be any rental units. Yes, some units will be deed restricted to be rentals.

46 Don't know how many or which yet. The goal is to touch on every option of housing.

47 He brought his worksheet for the board if they want to go through it. (They did not)

48

49 M. Dell Orfano stated this is just a discussion and nothing from the discussion is binding from either side.

50

51 R. Hart asked about the two wet areas. One is an intermittent stream. There's not much mature
52 vegetation in those areas. They are thinking of planting some shade trees in those areas. R. Hart
53 wondered if there might need to be 100' buffers around them.

54

55 E. Hahn asked about access to the parcel across the road. There would probably be a separate access to
56 it with some parking. Since it is an existing lot of record a curb cut would be allowed.

57

58 S. Wilkins suggested he check with the Recreation Department to see if the Town would want to
59 own/run the dog park or not. Same with the community garden- who would maintain and operate it?
60 Not sure at this time. She suggested again to be in touch with the Town prior to the proposal to see if
61 they want it or not.

62

63 She cautioned Chad that the board has not had much discussion about "double bonuses". He shouldn't
64 anticipate that all bonuses would be granted. The intent was to provide a variety of options for bonuses
65 since some will work well for certain parcels and some won't. It was never the intent that someone
66 would be able to get all of the bonuses, so the client should be aware of that.

67 Chad said the net tract is about 28 acres. They are not planning on maxing out on all bonuses.

68

69 S. Wilkins is pleased with the variety of home styles being proposed.

70

71 A. Rosenblatt noted this is an early stage. He commented that the client is looking for incentive bonuses,
72 but his opinion is that it's not a formulaic process. Each bonus proposed needs to benefit the Town.
73 Each needs to be demonstrated and still the maximum may not be granted. Second, they need to
74 demonstrate why the project is great for Amherst and why the owners would want to live there. There
75 are great elderly developments he has seen (in other states), but there are not any in Amherst yet.

76

77 S. Wilkins gave examples of what she would like to see in a development: something that looks organic-
78 that doesn't look like it's all been built together. Varieties of size, construction materials etc. help that.

79

80 P. Lyon commented the farmhouse on site represents that area well. As well as the cottage across the
81 street. Look at those for inspiration.

82 He also asked what their definition of elderly is for this housing qualification. Chad stated the elderly
83 housing is for 55+. A portion of the units would be 65+. There would be no assisted living services on
84 site. Most units would be two bedrooms with some one-bedroom and three-bedroom units.

85

86 C. Harris suggested they double check what is living in the stream since it is in the dog park area and cuts
87 across the road toward the units. He also suggested they think of possible complaints for noise in that
88 area. Trails were discussed. The preference in Town is to link trails so he would prefer them to be public
89 to keep connection possibilities open. Having a variety of houses is a must: roof lines and size.

90 He cautioned that when units are age-restricted, they need to think about who the next owners are in
91 the years to come. Will there be the same needs when it's time for the second or third owners?

92

93 M. Dell Orfano wondered if this is a plan to be developed by the applicant or sold to a developer. The
94 ratio of rentals vs units for sale should span the style of homes as well. Look at what type of homes are
95 needed now in town. Perhaps some types of units are in demand, but the buyers may not be over 55
96 years old. He will want to know who will maintain the public trails.

97
98 R. Hart mentioned a project called Village at Stone Barn in Peterborough. They included net zero energy
99 condos and a farm to table café. Chad stated he is actually working on that project.

100
101 Chad asked how the evaluation of repurposing/ renovating a structure on site and the bonuses that go
102 along with that work. They are trying to utilize existing structures (the farmhouse and barn for sure) to
103 maintain the character of the neighborhood. The garden shed structure would not be for residential use
104 but would benefit the town. The residential units on Rocky Hill Rd are sizable so they thought to make
105 them duplexes. They could possibly not restrict the age on those units. Utilizing those units also opened
106 up the area for open space and trails. He will take the note back to the client about making trails public.

107
108 M. Dell Orfano suggested that the intent of the bonuses was for income, human and housing varieties.
109 S. Wilkins said the intent of the 400% bonus for utilizing existing structures was for units that exist but
110 are also worth preserving. With this project, you want to utilize multiple existing structures and the
111 board will have to decide if they will give you bonuses for each one. You will have to be persuasive in
112 your argument for those bonuses. There may be revisions coming to the ordinance now that the board
113 has experienced a few applications that included this matter. That won't affect this application, but just
114 know that's where the board's minds are going.

115
116 R. Hart said the community garden in town is well utilized. But it's not always maintained at the end of
117 the season. Maybe the association could hire a manager for this garden.

118
119 **OTHER BUSINESS:**

120 **Eric Hahn- Department of Public Works Information Discussion**

121 E. Hahn stepped down from the board and spoke to them as a staff member. He explained to the board
122 why he circumvented them regarding a tree that had to be taken down. The process he used was to
123 receive approval from three selectman which is an option if time is an issue.

124 On Chestnut Hill there have been intense storms over last few months which created lots of wash outs
125 in the road. Trees are just falling down over there. DPW noticed one tree at 13 Chestnut Hill that
126 couldn't wait to come before the board for approval. It was dead, hollowed out, threatening the road
127 way and power lines.

128 DPW worked with Eversource. They cut it down and the Town removed the wood.

129 S. Wilkins suggested that if/when this happens again, perhaps when the BOS approves it, the Planning
130 Board just gets copied on that approval.

131
132 The board discussed making lists of hazardous trees.

133
134 **2. Minutes**
135 **Minutes: May 2, 2018**

136 No changes

137 **Minutes: June 6, 2018**

138 No changes

139 **Minutes: July 18, 2018**

140 Line 22 condominium documents by Town Counsel.

141 Line 61 He believes it changes nothing

142 Line 63 (add) The motion was not seconded.

143 Line 184 There is also no landscape plan,

144 Line 240 with a wide range of terrain.

145 Line 247 by rehabilitating an old house and an old barn
146 **Minutes: August 1, 2018**
147 Line 53 4. Receipt of Alteration of Terrain permit
148 Line 54 5. Approval of required state and federal permits
149
150 **C. Harris moved to approve the minutes of May 2nd and June 6th as submitted and July 18th and August**
151 **1st as amended. S. Wilkins seconded. All in favor with A. Rosenblatt abstaining.**
152
153 G. Leedy said the board had discussed IIHO revisions. Another option is to adopt regulations pursuant to
154 the IIHO.
155
156 G. Leedy said bonding requirements can be discussed at an upcoming meeting.
157
158 G. Leedy stated the zoning changes need to be addressed soon.
159
160 **C. Harris moved to adjourn at 9:02pm. A. Rosenblatt seconded. All in favor**
161
162 Respectfully submitted,
163 Jessica Marchant