

**Sturbridge Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 24, 2022
Center Office Building**

Present:

Charlie Blanchard
Wally Hersee
Dane LaBonte
Sue Waters
Christopher Bouchard
Jeff Adams
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant
Jean Bubon, Town Planner

Absent:

Michael Chisholm

Also Present:

Peter Engle, McClure Engineering
John Stelmok, Blueberry Hills Estates
Justin Stelmok, Blueberry Hills Estates
John Shevlin, PARE
Thomas Robbins, 45 Main Street
Shirley Robbins, 45 Main Street
Carol Goodwin, 19 Orchard Road
Tara Balumis, 6 Ridge Hill Road
Bob Barnes, 42 Fiske Hill Road
Lynn Barnes, 42 Fiske Hill Road

C. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and read the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

May 10, 2022

Motion: To approve the minutes of May 10, 2022 as written.

By: C. Bouchard

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: 5-0-1 (J. Adams abstained)

ANR - Hillside Drive Cul-de-Sac Street Acceptance - Town of Sturbridge

J. Bubon stated that the Street Acceptance for the Hillside Drive cul-de-sac came before the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting last year, but the documents were



not recorded at the registry in a timely manner, so the process needs to be redone. The two parcels at the end of the cul-de-sac were sold, both parties have signed a waiver of appraisal and damages. She stated that she recommends the Board endorse the plan submitted.

Motion: To endorse the plan as submitted.

By: S. Waters

2nd: C. Bouchard

Vote: All in Favor (6-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *A Plan titled "Town Street Acceptance Plan of Hillside Drive" Prepared by Levesque Geomatics, Inc (43 Glendale Road, Sturbridge, MA 01518), dated 3/17/22, Revised dates: 4/14/22 & 4/22/22, Job No. STUR-004;*
- *Town of Sturbridge Order of Layout Hillside Drive (a portion), dated May 16, 2022 signed by the BOS and filed with the Town Clerk on May 17, 2022.*

Town Planner Update

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Annual Town Meeting - June 6, 2022
- Next meetings -
 - June 14th
 - AutoZone has filed for a sign special permit
 - June 28th - Nothing yet
 - July 12th - Continuation of Blueberry Hills Estates public hearing

Continuation of Public Hearing - Site Plan & Special Permit - Blueberry Hills Estate

J. Bubon gave a recap of the project status, stating that the proposed 55+ development will be 71 units manufactured housing community that will be constructed on lot 3 Berry Farms Road which is a small cul-de-sac that is being built off of Main Street/ Route 131. J. Bubon discussed the comments from the Health Agent, Conservation Agent, Fire Inspector, and Building Inspector and initial peer review comments from John Shevlin or Pare Corporation. There are still items that need to be addressed and the project is still under peer review so J. Bubon stated that she would recommend that the Board allow the applicant to make their presentation, have questions from the Board and the Public and then continue the public hearing to July 14th.

The applicants Justin and John Stelmock and the Engineer from McCulure Engineering, Peter Engle, came before the Board and presented their project. They discussed the following: layout of the community, clubhouse, possible pickleball court and community gardens, open space, financial logistics, trash removal, sanding/plowing, roadway maintenance, rain gardens, stormwater management, lot size and where they are with Conservation Commission approval.

P. Engle presented in more detail in regards to the stormwater management, water, and sewer, which will tie into Main Street as well as Fiske Hill with water. He also discussed the

emergency access road from Southbridge that would be gravel and reinforced turf and they would need a driveway permit through Southbridge.

The applicant discussed the sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, stating that the roadway will be 20 feet wide per the manufactured housing regulations; they have proposed a 4-foot wide concrete sidewalk on one side of the roadway with no grass strip. They discussed fire hydrants and streetlights per the subdivision rules and regs and are proposing street trees and rain gardens, which will provide increased landscaping on the roadway. The applicant discussed the manufactured homes in regards to layout.

J. Shelvin, Pare Corp, went over his initial peer review report and stated that so far he has not seen anything that cannot be addressed. He stated that he had some questions in regards to the subdivision regulations and the manufactured housing regulations. J. Shelvin discussed subsurface test pit locations, cul-de-sac size, water main questions that would need to be addressed by Veolia, curb radius, and stormwater.

J. Bubon discussed the Departmental memos from the Health Agent, stating that the applicant will need a permit to operate the manufactured home, attention should be given to trash and pest management, and special consideration should be given to providing an emergency shelter for the residents of the park. J. Bubon stated that the Building Inspector said he had no objections, Conservation permitting is currently in process, and the Fire Inspector had some questions on maneuvering of the apparatus through the access roads.

C. Blanchard asked if anyone from the public had any questions or comments.

Carol Goodwin, 19 Orchard Road, asked why the number of units went from 51 to 71?

The applicant stated that their initial number of 51 units was just a concept plan and now they have updated the infrastructure plan and were able to add more units.

C. Goodwin asked why the only emergency access road was coming from Southbridge and stated that she has concerns if an accident was to take place at the beginning of the road and asked if Sturbridge emergency vehicles were expected to go through Southbridge to get to the neighborhood. And also stated the need for some sort of cellars or emergency shelter since the manufactured homes don't have cellars.

The applicant discussed the strict speed limits they will put in place around the community to reduce the possibility of a major accident, but emergency vehicles could come in on the Sturbridge side but if they weren't able to for some reason they would go in through Southbridge. The applicant also stated that they will work with the Board of Health in regards to making a plan in regards to emergency shelters.

C. Goodwin stated that the two access roads do not seem like enough to her. She asked about the rain gardens and if they are concerned about hitting ledge.

P. Engle stated that the raingardens that are close to bedrock or in groundwater, can be lined with a poly-barrier so that water won't be going into the ground, all the water that goes through the barrier will be treated, detained and then sent out through an outlet downhill.

P. Engle explained how drainage would work on the property.

C. Goodwin asked if the applicant was planning on writing into the deed the area that will stay open space so that it can't be developed on in the future.

The applicant stated that no more development could be done on the site because of the layout.

C. Goodwin brought up the need for affordable housing. The applicant and Board discussed the process of affordable housing.

C. Goodwin stated that there are traffic problems since all the roads feed into Rt. 131 or Rt. 20.

The applicant stated that there was a traffic study done as part of the approval for the subdivision and the manufactured home community was used for the study.

The applicant discussed rain gardens in more detail.

Tara Balumis, 6 Ridge Hill Road, stated that she experiences high water levels on her property and is worried more run off from the new development will flow into her property.

P. Engle stated that the groundwater management system they will have in place will contain the runoff but it may have a hard time holding on to water from larger rainfall events, ie 10/25 year storms but it will run into the nearby wetlands. No stormwater is going to be discharged off site higher than Ridge Hill Road. The applicant discussed their current permit filing with Conservation.

T. Balumis asked about the Traffic Study results. P. Engle stated that MassDOT approved the traffic study and the applicant discussed the results of the study including turn traffic improvement.

Thomas Robbins, 45 Main Street, stated that his property is at the bottom of Fiske Hill and a new sidewalk has been put in and their mailboxes have been taken out and put at the bottom of the access point and it is very dangerous now to get their mail.

J. Bubon stated that the USPS moved the mailboxes. P. Engle stated that the subdivision developers have tried reaching out to the USPS to fix the situation but have not had any success. J. Bubon stated that she will reach out to the USPS and DPW to raise the concern.

C. Blanchard asked if anyone from the Board had comments or questions.

D. LaBonte asked if the applicant could reconsider the 3 foot strip of grass near the sidewalks. The applicant stated that it has a lot to do with the raingardens and how the water would get through the grass strip.

D. LaBonte discussed the turn radius for the road with the applicant and the Board. J. Bubon discussed conservation restrictions.

D. LaBonte asked about trash removal for the proposed clubhouse.

The applicant stated that there would be a community manager, who would be on call 24/7 and would be in charge of pest control and trash removal for all the common areas.

Motion: To continue the Public Hearing for Blueberry Hills Estate to July 12, 2022 at 6:35 PM.

By: C. Bouchard

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (5-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Special Permit Application;*
- *Blueberry Hills Estate Stormwater Management System Operation and Maintenance Plan;*
- *A letter to the Planning Board titled: "Re: Special Permit & Site Plan – Blueberry Hills Estate, a 55+ Manufactured Housing Community";*

- A letter to the Planning Board titled: "Re: Special Permit & Site Plan – Blueberry Hills Estate, a 55+ Manufactured Housing Community – Proposed Bond";
- Proposed Timeline of Sturbridge Project Build Out;
- A plan titled: "Special Permit and Site Plan "Senior Housing Community" Lot 3 Berry Farms Road Sturbridge, MA 01566" Prepared for Justin Stelmok, 557 Southweset Cutoff Worcester, MA 01607, Sheet C18 or 26 (Phasing Plan), prepared by McClure Engineering, Inc. (119 Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507) dated: 2/23/22;
- Stormwater Management Report – "55+ Manufactured Housing Community" Lot 3 Berry Farms Road Sturbridge, MA 01566. Prepared by McClure Engineering (119 Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507);
- A plan set titled: "Special Permit and Site Plan "Blueberry Hill Estates" 55+ Manufactured Housing Community Lot 3 Berry Farms Road Sturbridge, Massachusetts" Prepared by McClure Engineering, Inc. (117 Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507) Sheets C1- C30, Dated: 4/1/22;
- Development Impact Statement;
- Legal Notice;
- Abutters List;
- Email From Justin Stelmok to Jean Bubon – Open Space Acreage Calculations;
- Town Planner Report;
- Department Head Memos;
- Blueberry Hill Estates presentation hand out.

Old/New Business

None

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

By: S. Waters

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (6-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy