

**Planning Board
Board Room, Municipal Building 7:30 pm
February 6, 2007**

In Attendance:

Members: Nancy Collier, Michael Mayor, Kate Connolly, Jim Hornig, Judith Esmay, Bill Dietrich, Charles Faulkner

Alternates: Joan Garipay

Selectmen Alternate: Bill Baschnagel

Staff: Vicki Smith

Others: See attached sheet

1. Postponement of case 07-01 Dunfey/Keating minor lot line adjustment.

Ms. Smith stated she sent out notices to all the abutters that this case will be postponed until next week.

2. 07-02 Submission of application and public hearing on request by Byron Haynes, agent for Sigma Nu Trustees, for site plan review for construction of a four-story addition to the existing fraternity house, new walkway and porch, Map 33, Lot 30, 12 Webster Avenue, in the "I" zoning district.

CONNOLLY stepped down. BASCHNAGEL joined the Board.

Byron Haynes stated the building is owned by Sigma Nu and not the College. The existing building has only one fire stair, which does not meet current code and presently necessitates a corridor longer than 20 feet on the second floor. The addition of a required second means of egress will add about 980 square feet. The applicant is concerned about safety and attractiveness of the property. There will be a gravel walkway. Aware of the potential of ice and snow sliding off the slate roof, Sigma Nu plans to install snow dogs. Emergency egress lighting will be attached to the outside of the building and recessed lighting will be provided on the porch; no other lighting will be added. Construction will be staged in the rear of the building in a parking lot and driveway shared with an abutter and will take place during the summer.

BASCHNAGEL noted there are currently five parking spaces but he has observed eleven cars parked on the lot. He encouraged the fraternity to review the parking situation; Mr. Haynes said he would bring this to Sigma Nu's attention.

COLLIER reviewed the waiver requests.

DIETRICH moved to approve the application complete with the waivers; ESMAY seconded, and all members voted in favor.

ESMAY moved to approve the site plan, DIETRICH seconded, and all members voted in favor.

BASCHNAGEL stepped down. CONNOLLY rejoined the Board.

3. 06-26 Submission of application for modification of approved site plan by National Grid Company, agent for Dresden School District, to remove a fence and replace trees along

Hovey Lane in order to accommodate power lines, at Hanover High School, Map 34, Lot 68, in the "I" zoning district.

Jim Hurst of National Grid, accompanied by Jonathan Brush, Mel Emerson and Guy Shepherd, said National Grid is rebuilding a portion of the 6L3 distribution circuit along Hovey Lane, a circuit that serves about 2000 Hanover customers, including all three of the schools, the fire and police departments, water and sewer treatment facilities, Kendall, CRREL, and Dartmouth Printing. Reconstruction of the overhead portion of this circuit will run along Hovey Lane on the southern side of the high school's soccer field and will necessitate removal of a line of box elder trees, which would be replaced with a row of Eastern Arborvitae. The Town tree warden, said Mr. Hurst, has determined that the box elder trees are in deplorable shape and that the substitute is an excellent choice. Because high school construction is presently under an open site plan, National Grid's proposal to replace the trees must come before the Planning Board for site modification plan.

Board members questioned the use of overhead lines as substitute for the existing, and preferable, underground installation; they asked whether school administrators had expressed an opinion on the proposal. Jonathan Brush represented that the school superintendent's position is that the school wishes to cooperate with National Grid.

Neighbors expressed opposition to removal of the ash trees, which presently provide both shade and screening, and to installation of overhead lines.

Mr. Hurst said that, without Planning Board approval of the requested site plan modification, National Grid would have to review the feasibility of rebuilding the subject section of the circuit. Since it could take considerable time to reengineer the project, nothing might be done for the foreseeable future.

HORNIG suggested that, in the light of objections about the trees and about the overhead wires, National Grid might rethink both of those and return to the Board with a plan that addresses those problems. Board members concurred.

MAYOR moved to approve the application as complete with 11 waivers, CONNOLLY seconded, and all members voted in favor.

MAYOR expressed concern that, given doubts about viability of this portion of the power line, the Board's refusal to approve National Grid's proposal could adversely affect a significant number of consumers of electricity. Ms. Smith said that the Board had been placed in a difficult position because it had to weigh the impact of the proposed plan on the immediate neighborhood. Mr. Hurst stated additional time would be preferable to a rejection. CONNOLLY stated since the Board had approved the application as complete, it had 60 days in which to act. Ms. Smith observed that the applicant could request and the Board could grant an extension of that period.

ESMAY moved to continue this hearing until March 6, 2007, CONNOLLY seconded, and all members voted in favor.

4. 06-21 Continuation of submission of application for design review by Dartmouth College for a planned residential development with 123 units to be served by new roads at the corner of Grasse and Trescott Roads, Map 4, Lots 9 and 10, in the "GR-3" zoning district. This review will focus on access: vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian; sidewalks and trails and off-site traffic impacts; and site layout.

Tim McNamara stated Dartmouth College was prepared to continue discussion of the preliminary submissions on Grasse Road III, particularly density, bike and pedestrian connectivity, and public transportation.

Winifred Stearns stated her concern about the lack of minutes for the Planning Board meetings of January 2, 9, and 16 due to tape recorder malfunction and ascertained that the recorder was in working order. COLLIER stated the Board had heard all the details of this application at those meetings and did not feel there was a need to start from the beginning. COLLIER also stated there would be an opportunity for the public to ask any questions since there were no minutes for the public to read.

Mr. McNamara spoke of density and stated this was a PRD rather than an open space subdivision. The project site, exclusive of the land that will be given to the Town of Hanover for a recreation site, is 75 acres. He stated the current proposal is for 125 units, which works out to 1.64 units per acre. The density shown on the plans for Grasse Road III is effectively lower than that at Grasse Road I or II. Density will be simply clustered over a smaller area rather than spread out on half acre lots, which accounts for more open space. The common open space is presently planned at 60%; since 45% open space is required in the "GR-3" zone, the College is about one third over the required minimum.

Mr. McNamara reviewed slides of internal and external pedestrian and bike connectivity. Neighborhoods would be connected by an internal loop, about one half mile long with quarter-mile spurs. The abandoned logging road adds another quarter of a mile, making a total of one mile of paths--a gravel surfaced trail system usable by walkers, bikers, joggers, and kids on mountain bikes. The trail would be seasonal and not be maintained in the winter, but could be used in winter for skiing and snowshoeing. The internal trail would connect to an external trail system, and another section of trail would link Grasse Road III to Grasse Road I and II and Reservoir Road. The trail system is an alternative to a sidewalk up East Wheelock Street. With the paving of a 600 foot section of sidewalk on Reservoir Road, there would be a continuous hard surfaced pedestrian connection between Grasse Road III and Lyme Road Center. CONNOLLY observed that paving a Reservoir Road sidewalk is not in the Town budget and that in the past costs of such work has been divided, with the Town supplying the labor and the developer supplying the materials.

Rod Finley stated the current grade of East Wheelock Street is 13%, steeper than the Town standard of 10% and not allowable under current standards for a road with its present level of use.

COLLIER asked if there would be connection to Advanced Transit. Mr. McNamara reported discussions with Van Chestnut of Advanced Transit, citing a letter from Mr. Chestnut. Advanced Transit has five primary routes, four of which go through Hanover, but none of which approaches Grasse Road or outlying areas. Mr. McNamara stated the cost to maintain a route serving Grasse Road and providing basic bus service would be about \$72 an hour or \$75,000 a year for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. The only way to ensure permanent funding for the bus service would be to create an endowment of 3.2 million dollars that could generate that amount, plus an allowance for fuel and labor. An additional \$30,000 would have to be added to the price of each house to create this endowment, a substantial amount for the benefit gained by the people who would use the bus service daily. Van Chestnut does not believe that it is feasible to combine AT service to Grasse Road and Rivercrest.

Mike Horvath stated that in the traffic analysis consideration was given to the additional cost of maintaining East Wheelock Street because of additional traffic, as there would not be other transportation provided. Mr. McNamara stated most of the population in the development will have school age children and will be taking them to school before going to work, most likely along Grasse to Reservoir and out to Lyme.

Lynn Swett Miller spoke very highly of the Advanced Transit and stated she uses it everyday. She stated it didn't make sense to create housing developments that couldn't be connected to it because it is such a great system. She also spoke of promoting the kids using the new trail to get to school rather than having the parents drive them.

Mr. McNamara spoke of the main entrance and a secondary emergency access road that would be 12 feet wide paved with a 12% grade. He said Mr. Kulbacki, Roger Bradley, and Jerry Frankenfield were all in agreement with this alignment. Mr. McNamara stated this route would do a lot less damage to the surrounding area.

DIETRICH asked about vehicle congestion at peak hours since there will be 123 houses and only one access road. Mr. McNamara stated there would be a stop sign, but not a traffic light, which is not required for that level of traffic.

BASCHNAGEL asked if the College was still going to realign the Grasse Road/Trescott Road intersection to provide better sight distances. Mr. McNamara said the College proposed to move the Grasse Road intersection to the east to optimize the sight lines. Mr. McNamara stated Mr. Kulbacki has also asked that a three-way stop be considered at the intersection to slow vehicles down before they get to the top of the hill. Lynn Swett Miller asked if the College had considered roundabouts; Mr. McNamara said they had not.

COLLIER stated that the Board is obliged, in the design review, to consider whether the project fits and whether the density is right. She said the College had done well with connecting trails, coming up with new ideas, and having Mr. Kulbacki on board for paving the trail. She noted the potential for increased traffic; the improvements to Reservoir Road will not yield a higher capacity road. COLLIER stated any project that will add 123 units to the existing 55 houses on Grasse Road should be located on an Advance Transit route. COLLIER stated she wanted to make sure the infrastructure planning comports with land use planning. There was discussion on this and what the capacity of the reconstructed Reservoir Road would be.

COLLIER said design review also includes assessment of natural resources on the property and abutting properties and how the project would affect these resources. She stated the soils map shows severe or moderate limitations for development of roads and said that the College has also acknowledged it is not a good Low Impact Design Site. COLLIER stated this suggests this is not the kind of property that should be developed. Pointing to the Master Plan, COLLIER observed that the development is the polar opposite of what Hanover wants. MAYOR stated he agreed with most of COLLIER's points, but at the same time this project would be developed over a period of 20 years, during which the impacts would become apparent and the College would have opportunity to moderate that impact. MAYOR also stated that unless the Town could find a way to contain growth completely, he would have to say this is not an entirely unfortunate place to have it accommodated over a 20-year span of adjustment. FAULKNER stated he agreed with the 20-year time span. There was discussion on all this, the four primary infrastructure phases, and transportation needs.

Michael Horvath asked if the Planning Board was going to consider the impact of the increased quantity of flow into Camp Brook that the environmental assessment has shown is likely to occur. He stated that Storrs Pond, which is not on an abutting property, would be impacted. COLLIER stated this project is unusual in that it has already gone to the Zoning Board for wetland review. COLLIER stated the process has since been changed; in the future those specific reviews will not happen until after the Planning Board has completed site plan review.

Judy Colla stated in some ways she thinks this project has presented some nice plans for a very contained community with some connection to the schools and with paths, but the applicant has done very little to support the infrastructure that is going to be necessary to support this if it is approved. She stated the College has a responsibility to cover the infrastructure if this project is approved.

Winifred Stearns stated her concern that the Town is in danger of being smothered by growth. MAYOR stated he takes strong exception; he said Hanover is a vital community that will attract people whether

this project is built or not. MAYOR also stated that what is overlooked is the traffic flow created by those who drive to Hanover to work and shop, but cannot live in Town because there is insufficient housing. He stated the change that will occur because people can actually live and work in Hanover is an issue that has received too little attention and emphasis.

COLLIER stated the Planning Board hoped the applicant could connect the project to Town and the campus by transit and perhaps blend it in with TDM program. She cited concerns regarding the rate of water flow into Camp Brook, the impact on Storrs Pond, the possibility of zero net drainage flow, and an off-site traffic impact analysis by an expert that goes beyond just traffic calming. HORNIG questioned whether the project should be only half as big or if it just doesn't belong there. He asked that the College look ahead 10 or 20 years and see if Grasse I, II, and III couldn't present a really innovative housing solution. FAULKNER and HORNIG both observed that transportation was the biggest single issue and stated the Board should challenge the applicant to start thinking innovatively about a way to deal with the issue other than simply by single occupancy vehicles.

COLLIER stated the Board planned to hear this again on March 13 to discuss hydrology, wetlands, Camp Brook, and Storrs Pond. She asked Mr. McNamara if this still made sense. Mr. McNamara observed that the whole density issue should be worked out first because a lot of time and effort can go into studying hydrologic issues that might change significantly depending on density.

MAYOR asked for the College's forecast on who would live in these houses. Mr. McNamara stated he could not give a ratio, but stated it would be a combination of both existing employees and new employees. He also stated he couldn't predict the College's hiring over the next 20 years.

MAYOR moved to continue this hearing to March 13, 2007; ESMAY seconded; and all members voted in favor.

5. Minutes January 2, 2007

Mayor moved to approve with amendments, HORNIG seconded, and all members voted in favor.

6. Other Business: none

7. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erin Hammond, Recording Secretary
Judith Esmay, Planning Board Clerk