

Town of Longmeadow
Planning Board
MINUTES
Of Regular Meeting
November 3, 2004

PRESENT: Chairman Bruce Colton, Richard Curran, Roy Johansen,
Louis Kornet, and Walter Gunn

The Regular meeting of the Longmeadow Planning Board was held at the Longmeadow Police Department Conference Room, Williams Street, Longmeadow, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Bruce Colton.

CONTINUATION OF BAY PATH COLLEGE PARKING PLAN SITE & DESIGN

REVIEW – Attorney Jeffrey Roberts and other Bay Path representatives were present at the meeting. Attorney Roberts presented the latest revisions of Bay Path’s plans. He stated that all the parking in Lots B, C, D, and E are the same. Any new parking near structure has been moved 10’. The Lot A retaining wall goes along the Bay Path property line and off 10’. Parking itself is next to the wall. There are now a total of 506 parking spaces. Mr. Roberts stated that Bay Path has compromised and feels that this is a good plan.

Bruce Colton reported that he has spent considerable time with Town Counsel on this issue and reported the following findings: The front of lot is Longmeadow Street (other boundaries are Wheelmeadow Drive and Lane (south), Ely Road (west), and backs of houses on Emerson Drive. Lot A is behind the secondary setback line (using Deepwoods Hall as primary structure). Therefore, structures need to be 5’ in from lot lines. Under the parking by-law, parking spaces must be 10’ from the lot lines. Mr. Colton felt the retaining wall and parking lot should be considered one structure. Mr. Colton felt that under the Dover amendment even if retaining wall and parking lot were considered separate structures, the 10’ set back between them would probably be unenforceable. He also stated that at present, Bay Path is not under any legal obligation to have any specific number of parking spaces.

Richard Curran spoke on several points regarding Bay Path’s plans. He indicated that the Planning Board’s responsibility is to make a fair, balanced, and informed decision while considering the rights of petitioners, abutters, and any concerned citizens. He indicated that he feels that the revised plan by the college regarding the upper lots satisfied the Planning Board’s concerns. Mr. Curran indicated that one of his main concerns is where parking is placed on site and how additional parking impacts the quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods. He stated that the burden of finding the right place for parking requirements should be the college’s responsibility. Any proposed

plan should not be done to adversely affect the abutters. Mr. Curran stated that Bay Path could reconsider the concept of a parking garage or parking lot in front of the college. Placing a parking lot in the area between Longmeadow Street and Deepwoods Hall and providing access from the cul-de-sac would be easy and cost-effective. He stated that he would be in favor to allow the school to proceed with the construction of the upper lots.

Mr. Kornet stated that he values Mr. Curran's opinion on the Board and as an architect but questioned the moving of one problem spot to another. He questioned how might another neighborhood feel about moving parking to the front of the school or cul-de-sac.

Mr. Johansen feels that the Planning Board should follow the zoning by-laws, as they exist today. He is very opposed to paving over lot lines of residential properties. He indicated that he would like 10', at least, from every residential lot line.

After discussion from Planning Board and Bay Path representatives, Attorney Roberts proposed removing Lot A from the proposal and keep the proposal submitted tonight as presented.

The Planning Board opened the meeting for public comment:

Dr. Knaus: He feels that the plan is a piecemeal approach and which does not deal with a long-range plan. He also cited case law regarding approval of the plans.

Mrs. Knaus: Regarding Lot A – she is opposed to the piecemeal approach. It is cheapening their (residents') property. They (Bay Path) have no long-range plan.

There were no other comments from the public.

After much discussion, Walter Gunn made a motion that the Planning Board approve the revised parking plan dated November 1, 2004 as submitted November 3, 2004 with the exception of the retaining wall and Lot A revision, which is withdrawn by the petitioner. This proposal includes 55 spaces in the south end of campus. Richard Curran seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The vote was 4 approve; 1 against. Bruce Colton indicated that the vote is endorsed by the Longmeadow Planning Board. Twenty days is the time period for an appeal process.

STEVEN WALKER, LONGMEADOW SHOPS – STOREFRONT RENOVATION AT SITE OF RUGGED BEAR SHOP – Steven Walker, Manager of the Longmeadow Shops came before the Planning Board. Mr. Walker reported that the Longmeadow Shops did not renew Rugged Bear's lease; they did not do enough business to warrant staying in the Longmeadow Shops. GMAC Real Estate is being relocated to the Rugged Bear site. Mr. Walker indicated that he had come before the Planning Board previously (within the last two years, he did not know the specific date) with a request to change the entrances using the same materials as *Caren and Company* and *Burlington*. The Board's secretary will research the exact date of the referenced decision.

After discussion, Bruce Colton made a motion to approve plans for Rugged Bear storefront for 688 Bliss Road that was previously approved by the Planning Board on December 11, 2002 (see attached minutes). Louis Kornet seconded the motion. It was approved 4-0. Roy Johansen was not on the Board at that time.

Mr. Walker also asked for approval for the renovation of space now occupied by GMAC Real Estate. The space is 4,700 square feet; a lease is being negotiated for a new tenant. The same materials as Caren and Company and Burlington will be used. Walter Gunn made a motion to approve the new storefront at 718 Bliss Road, per plans as submitted October 12, 2004. Bruce Colton seconded the motion; and the motion was approved 5-0.

DONALD GRAHAM, MEMBER OF DIAMOND CLUB, LONGMEADOW HIGH SCHOOL, RE: LANDSCAPING WORK BEHIND LONGMEADOW HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY BASEBALL FIELD

-- Donald Graham, a member of the Diamond Club at Longmeadow High School, came before the Planning Board with a proposal. If approval were granted, work would be completed next spring before the start of baseball season. The work will be paid for by donations made to the Diamond Club. The proposal is as follows: construction of a seating area behind varsity baseball field on the slope up 20-24' with a length approximately 120' by 48-60', 20-24' slope up behind varsity baseball field first base line from home plate to dug out. Also proposed is removal of underbrush that will be cut and four small trees to be cut down for visibility. A ramp will be made from excavated materials to allow for access to new seating area above. The area will be re-graded and hydro-seeded. During construction, access from the area will be from Longmeadow Shops parking lot, roll back chain link fence and secure each night, when leaving area driving along the edge of woods to prevent lawn damage. There is no construction of a structure, just an area so patrons can bring a lawn chair and watch a ball game.

Richard Curran indicated that he would like to view the site before a decision is made. All Planning Board members agreed. Bruce Colton asked if the landscape contractor could give the Planning Board a drawing or sketch of the proposal. Mr. Graham will get that information for Planning Board members; and he will come back to the next Planning Board meeting for further discussions.

Planning Board members decided that they would review the minutes of previous meetings next month. The next meeting of the Planning Board will be held on November 9, 2004 for further discussion on the proposed site plan and subdivision plan at 154 Williams Street, Longmeadow, MA. There being no further business, Bruce Colton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Walter Gunn seconded the motion; and it was approved 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Downie, Secretary
Longmeadow Planning Board