

Town of Longmeadow
Planning Board
MINUTES
Of Meeting Held
February 8, 2006

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

A meeting was held at the Longmeadow Community House, 735 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA. Walter Gunn opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Gunn introduced Planning Board members and their secretary to everyone in attendance.

MICHAEL McCARTY, LONGMEADOW PARKS & RECREATION, RE: SIGNAGE ON TERRACES & PARKS – Mr. McCarty came before the Planning Board with a proposal from the Park and Rec. Department. They are proposing an “adopt an island” program for groups, schools, and other organizations in town. He submitted a sample sign and literature that explains the program. The sign would be placed on an island or terrace. This would be a year-to-year agreement. There are 56 type islands in town; they would like to get a commitment from at least 15 groups. The park staff would do the installation of the signs and would be responsible for the sign’s maintenance. Park and Rec. would oversee that the groups are maintaining the islands and terraces. During review, it was noted that Town By-law, Article XIII (i) indicating that any permanent sign in a residential district shall not exceed 4 square feet. Mr. McCarty assured Planning Board members that the signs will not exceed the town by-law regulations.

After review, Walter Gunn suggested sending a letter of endorsement approving Longmeadow Park and Recreation’s proposal. The signs will not exceed 4 square feet; one per site/location as per Article XIII (i) of the Town of Longmeadow By-laws. The Board wishes them well; no further action is needed.

DANIEL FINNEGAN, SPRINT PCS WIRELESS, RE: CELL TOWER INSTALLATION AT ST. MARY’S CHURCH, 519 LONGMEADOW STREET – Attorney Daniel Finnegan, representing PCS Wireless, came before the Planning Board submitting plans for his project. They have a lease agreement with the church. They are requesting the installation of a wireless communication facility in the steeple of St. Mary’s Church, 519 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA. They are proposing three-panel antennas in the steeple of the church. Operational equipment is in the coal space in the basement of the church. Attorney Finnegan also submitted documentation from an engineer addressing the noise issue. The noise emitted from the steeple would be similar to a residential dishwasher. Attorney Finnegan indicated that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the project for St Mary’s steeple. It was noted that the ZBA would approve a special permit contingent with Planning Board approval. After review, Bruce Colton made a motion to waive site and design review for the Infinigy Engineering plan for St. Mary’s Church, 519 Longmeadow Street, dated October 12,

2005 to install a cell tower inside the steeple with exterior modifications approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Walter Gunn seconded the motion; it was approved 5-0.

ATTORNEY SIMON BRIGHENTI – T-MOBILE WIRELESS, RE: INSTALLATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AT 260 MEADOW ROAD,

LONGMEADOW – Attorney Simon Brighenti came before the Planning Board. He represents Omni-Point T-Mobile Wireless. He presented a set of site plans and information regarding the need for the site as well as documentation from a balloon test to show the height of the tower. The proposal is to come through the existing gate and gravel road and add a small parking area and construct a standard design cell tower of 100'. The site will include concrete slab, tower and fencing. The equipment for T-mobile is small; there will be space available for future carriers. Arbor vitae hedges will be planted around two sides. There is a 50' set-back to the highway (Route 91) and the tower includes "break-point" design features. There was discussion about requiring a site and design review hearing on this proposal. Walter Gunn indicated that he will ask Town Counsel about the possibility of having a combined ZBA and Planning Board Public Hearing regarding this application. The Planning Board will contact Mr. Brighenti regarding the next steps and processes.

APPROVAL OF 52 CHANDLER AVENUE, LLC – The Planning Board began their discussion of the requested waivers by 52 Chandler Avenue, LLC. Under Article XI, Section D 1 (f), requires the inclusion of the "*location of all present and proposed public and private ways, parking area, driveways...*", and (m) a traffic study. Planning Board members felt that the location of driveways was not a major problem. Planning Board members also felt that a traffic study could be waived. Walter Gunn went over other issues of concerns. Bruce Colton suggested referencing the criteria under the By-laws in order for the Planning Board to make a decision. Mr. Colton referenced the following sections under the by-laws. **SECTION F. REVIEW CRITERIA/DESIGN GUIDELINES – (c) Protection of abutting properties from detrimental site characteristics.** The project creates problems of snow removal, inadequate buffer zone for snow removal, storm water management issues, and abutting properties. There would be an over-intensification of the narrow lane of Chandler Avenue. **(d) Preservation of character of the neighborhood and community.** Under **SECTION F. REVIEW CRITERIA/DESIGN GUIDELINES, 2. ENVIRONMENTAL – items (d) and (h), "Adequacy of proposed drainage system... and protection from flood hazards..."** Under general criteria, Planning Board concerns included the length of the street, tree removal, and increasing the radius at the intersection; it would have an impact on abutting properties.

After discussion, Walter Gunn made a motion to approve site and design review for 52 Chandler Avenue, LLC and suggested that each voting member state reasons for their decision, if they so choose. Richard Curran seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-0 against approving site and design review. Walter Gunn stated that he will query members of the Board for the basis of their decisions.

Roy Johansen – Mr. Johansen voted against the proposal based on several areas: safety issues due to the length of cul-de-sac, protection of town amenities, preservation of surrounding neighborhood’s characteristics, environmental, drainage, and SECTION H, “*protection from flood hazards..*”, and the 12% grade.

Louis Kornet – Under site and design, issues concerning Mr. Kornet were: safety, impact on neighbors, and the 12% slope. Mr. Kornet stated that the DPW director indicated that he could not guarantee maintaining safe access for emergency vehicles on that type of slope during adverse weather conditions.

Richard Curran – Mr. Curran cited SECTION F 1 (c), “*Protection of abutting properties from detrimental site characteristics*”, i.e., the Cummings’ home is 9’ from the existing street, 8’ from the widened street, and 4’ from the sidewalk (which actually runs underneath the Cummings’ front steps), snow plowing issues, lack of an adequate buffer zone, drainage issues, and the widening of Chandler Avenue would be detrimental to existing homeowners. By removing trees and widening the road at the entrance of Chandler Avenue, it would have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the historic district.

Walter Gunn – Mr. Gunn’s concerns included the changes to the existing Chandler Avenue, as well as the stability of Mr. Cumming’s home. Mr. Cumming’s home is a very fragile, historical structure. Storm water issues on Chandler Avenue and abutting properties are of concern. Mr. Gunn concurs with the other Planning Board members’ comments.

Bruce Colton – He is bothered by the cumulative length of the street. He cited public safety issues; sprinkler systems in the proposed homes do not address inaccessibility by ambulances or police cruisers. Adding a modern 6-lot subdivision would be detrimental to the existing street. Snow removal issues and where to “store” snow poses access problems. Erosion and storm drainage issues have not been adequately addressed. He also had concerns about the 12% grade issue.

There will be a public hearing on February 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community House to consider the rescission of the alleged constructive approval of the Definitive Subdivision Plan of Chandler Avenue, proposed by Chandler Avenue, LLC. The applicant requested an extension of time to the following week. Planning Board members denied the request.

OTHER

1. Minutes of the November 17, 2005 Public Hearing – After review, Walter Gunn made a motion to approve the public hearing minutes of November 17, 2005 with revisions. Bruce Colton seconded the motion; it was approved 5-0.
2. There will be a community development meeting on Monday, February 27, with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to talk about the 40B application and

Smart Growth issues. Walter Gunn will e-mail Board members the details of the meeting.

3. Weekly mailings for the Planning Board will be handled and delivered by the Building Department.
4. Ellen Freyman has put together an e-mail on ZBA zoning by-law amendments.
5. Review of the January 4, 2006 meeting minutes will be tabled until the February 13th meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:25 p.m., Mr. Gunn made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation against the Town of Longmeadow and to adjourn following the Executive Session. Roy Johansen seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-0 for the motion. Following a brief discussion in Executive Session, the Board adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Downie, Secretary
Long meadow Planning Board