

Town of Longmeadow  
Planning Board  
**MINUTES**  
Of Public Hearing  
**September 29, 2005**

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

A Public Hearing was held on September 29, 2005 at the Longmeadow Community House, 735 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA. The purpose of the Public Hearing is for a Subdivision and Site and Design Review proposal for Chandler Avenue. The Public Hearing began at 7:08 p.m. Walter Gunn introduced Planning Board members and their secretary to persons in attendance. Mr. Gunn also went over the following ground rules. The applicant will give a presentation, Town officials will give their reports, the Planning Board will have interaction with the petitioner with any questions, and public comments will be allowed. Mr. Gunn went over the purpose of the hearing in regard to the Subdivision and Site and Design Review. He indicated that no decision will be reached tonight; 135 days are allowed for a decision. This is a three-step proposal: subdivision approval, site and design approval, and Select Board approval for improvements to Chandler Avenue. The Select Board has the final authority in this area. The letters from the Board of Health, Fire Department, and Police Department will all be referenced in the public hearing.

The petitioners gave a presentation on their proposal. The names of the principals are: Ronald Eckman, David Costello, 52 Chandler Avenue, LLC. They are represented by Attorney Alfred Geoffrion. Mr. Geoffrion made the first presentation. The petitioners are proposing a new, six home subdivision at the end of Chandler Avenue. They will also rehabilitate the existing portion of Chandler Avenue and the new portion of the street as well. The homes will be "high-end" houses, \$800,000+ range, geared for "empty-nesters". Mr. Gary Weiner, Engineer, from Eco-Tech. Environmental Engineering also made a presentation. The road would extend 650' from a westerly direction on Chandler Avenue; 50' in width. New utilities will be placed underground, a storm water management system will be put in place for the new homes and upgrades will be done for the entire length. There will be a new sanitary sewer; along the southerly side a 4' sidewalk would be installed. New drain structures would also be constructed. A retention basin would be infiltrated for heavy rainstorms. The developer feels that a 15' pavement width is substandard; an 18' travel width would be placed for safety purposes. A sidewalk for the newer section of Chandler Avenue would be on the northerly side. The developers have tried to obtain an easement on the northerly side for sanitary sewer purposes. In regard to the sewer, each owner would have a pump on their property to transport to the sanitary sewer. Also, in order to reconstruct Chandler Avenue, seven trees on the northerly side would have to be removed and some shrubs on the southerly side would have to be removed.

After the petitioner's presentation, Walter Gunn read some letters from various Boards and officials in Town who were not in attendance. Mr. Gunn indicated that these documents will be on a PDF file available on Longmeadow's Town website. There were letters from Beverly Hirschorn, Board of Health, Eric Madison, Chief, Longmeadow Fire Department, and Michael Kirby, Safety Officer, Longmeadow Police Department. There was also a letter from John H. Robbins from the Historical District Commission. Each letter spoke on specific concerns and recommendations on their area of expertise.

Mike Wrabel, DPW Director, spoke about the proposed plans. He stated that at first glance the existing roadway would be improved from a public works standpoint. However, he does have specific concerns from a public works viewpoint. He has issues with the Cape Cod curb by the Spa on the Green— he feels that it does not meet specifications. There is no mention of any "signing" on the plans. For snowplowing issues, Mr. Wrabel would like to have a "snowplowing shelf" on the existing right of way shown on the plan. He mentioned the plantings in one area of the cul-de-sac – who would be responsible. He would prefer either the developer or a home-owner's association to take responsibility for that area. He did not feel the necessity for a sidewalk on both sides of the street, in order not to encroach on the Spa and the two

houses currently on Chandler Avenue. He does have some major concerns on drainage issues. He stated that there is an easement coming from Ely Way. He proposed that the developers should explore the possibility of extending the pipe in the easement and get closer out to Ely Road. The property owner and the Town would be better served; it has been a problem in the past. The cul-de-sac has no catch basin in the drainage system. He would rather have the cul-de-sac higher in the middle; this would make drainage in the cul-de-sac easier to affect. In regard to the sanitary sewer, he suggested that the pumping system is owned and maintained by the property owners. It is suggested that the use of a dual sewage pump for each residence with pumps located on private property. He would also like to see a flushing connection down at the end of the cul-de-sac – that would carry sewage out off main to gravity sewer at the top of the hill.

Mr. James Toth, Regional Engineer, gave a presentation. He was hired to do a technical review. Mr. Toth went over several areas in his report. He went over the subdivision short-comings and concerns. He went over zoning by-law issues and storm water easements. There was some discrepancies on lot values; change of one or two square feet. There was no lot ownership in all areas of the plan. The parking area for the commercial property was not shown in significant detail. Existing business and traffic signing is omitted. Historic district information was omitted. There was no soil or lighting plan. The proposed new length for Chandler Avenue is 1,050', which exceeds the 500' limit for a dead-end street. The subsurface storm water disposal as proposed may adversely affect existing slope instability of abutter's property to the west. Mr. Toth also mentioned concerns regarding the storm water drainage report in the areas of site overview, storm water drainage design (several mathematical errors), the storm water management form, 12% grade causes concern for DPW staff, review of NPDES standards and DEP groundwater injection standards will be reviewed as soon as possible. Mr. Weiner indicated that they have just recently received Mr. Toth's report and will go over each item in order to satisfy the recommendations and comments.

After the presentation, Planning Board members had a few questions and comments. Walter Gunn had a question on the permitting process. He stated that decision-making might be a shared responsibility with the Select Board. Louis Kornet asked, what is the turn-around time for comments to the proposed plan? Mr. Weiner stated that approximately one week or under to respond to most questions; other comments stated tonight might take more time. Mr. Gunn also stated that he has many concerns on the water retention basin and tying into the existing water system. Mr. Curran posed a question about the snow storage area on the new portion of Chandler Avenue.

There being no further comments or presentations, Walter Gunn opened the public hearing up to public comments.

1. Bill Wagner, 878 Longmeadow Street – He showed a video from Stan Cummings, 19 Chandler Avenue. Mr. Cummings is out of town and wanted his video shown tonight. He voiced major, negative effects of the proposal.
2. Attorney Geoffrion indicated, after the video was shown, that the front porch is encroaching into the public right of way.
3. Joseph O'Shaughnessy, 70 Ely Way – Mr. O'Shaughnessy commented on many items that are not accounted for in the plan. He feels that the Planning Board is here to serve the best interests of Town residents; he should have been noticed sooner. He commented that the grade of Chandler Avenue is extremely steep. He has many problems with the water on his property; the grade and flow of water is a major problem.
4. Walter Gunn and Louis Kornet responded to comments on the Planning Board. Mr. Kornet stated that he has many questions, but felt that this was a public forum.
5. Michael Caronna, 24 Chandler Avenue – He stated that he has a lot of questions and problems with this project. The plan is incomplete; a historical part of Longmeadow is being destroyed. Neighbors and delivery trucks have had problems with a 6% grade, nevertheless 12%. He is also concerned about safety and traffic issues at the head of the road. He stated that he is amazed that this project is being proposed; "they are destroying our street."

6. Bill Cunningham, 131 Ely Way – Mr. Cunningham asked about the dead-end streets and water retention. He also asked if the water line is going to be looped. The response was, yes, at the dead end of Chandler Avenue.
7. Dave Ratner, 120 Ely Way – Mr. Ratner posed the following questions: Does setting a precedent (500' for a dead-end street) affect the entire Town? What are you going to do if the sewage plan does not work? How will you compensate upper Chandler for loss of property?
8. Mark Jackowitz, 36 Fairhill Drive – Dr. Jackowitz had a question about the slope and grade of the proposed property. He asked about the current statute of steep grade of properties.

Mr. Curran stated that slope and grade of property is being researched by Town Counsel.

9. Dr. William Knaus, 113 Arlington Road – Dr. Knaus commented with three points: would this project alter the character and nature of the neighborhood? In regard to the taking of land in front of the Cumming's home – a moral, legal, and ethical issue. He equated this project on Chandler Avenue with expanding the neck of a bottle.
10. Melinda Cropsey, 862 Longmeadow Street – Mrs. Cropsey stated that pedestrian safety has been a big issue in this area. She is concerned about children in the area and the Spa on the Green parking. She urged that a parking and pedestrian study be done.
11. Susan Hall, Longmeadow Historical Commission – She indicated that she was at the public hearing in an unofficial capacity. She stated that the Longmeadow Historical District area is the very best protected historical area from Canada to Long Island Sound. She stated that the "rehabilitation" of Chandler Avenue seems like something is wrong! We owe it to our children and grandchildren to preserve this area!
12. Larry Paquette, 60 Ely Way – Mr. Paquette spoke on various issues regarding the proposal.
13. Linda Fisher, 780 Longmeadow Street – She stated that she is new to Longmeadow. She was concerned about the additional cars, trucks, and children that will populate the area.
14. Bill Togneri, 870 Longmeadow Street – Mr. Togneri asked if the public will have the opportunity to look at the additional and final documentation. Mr. Gunn replied, yes, and it will be posted on the Town of Longmeadow's website. Mr. Gunn also stated that November will probably be the time line period for a decision by the Planning Board.
15. Betsy Port – Ms. Port indicated that she is a new member of the Historical Commission. Ms. Port stated that there are many historical properties at this site. Number 19 Chandler could be put on the Board of National Historic Registry. Number 52 Chandler has historical parts as well. The Spa and other corner properties have historic significance. It is a historic lane untouched for many years.
16. Bill Wagner, 878 Longmeadow Street – Mr. Wagner stated that Historic Commission approval is contingent on Planning Board approval. The Conservation Commission will be contacted for a request for a report.

Louis Kornet made a request that the Police Department and Fire Department have a representative to attend the next Public Hearing date. Mr. Gunn stated that Town Counsel will be asked about the Planning Board voting on an incomplete plan. Planning Board members asked Jim Toth if the proposed plan seemed complete. Mr. Toth's opinion was that he felt it to be more of a preliminary plan rather than a definitive plan. Gary Weiner stated that he does not feel that it is just a preliminary plan. He acknowledged that some information is missing but some information has just recently been discovered and will be included in the plan.

Mr. Curran stated that he feels that the plan is a very deficient, incomplete plan. He feels that the petitioner has a lot of responding to do on the issues raised. Mr. Eckman stated that he and his partner are trying to work with the program to resolve issues.

Due to the late hour, a continuation of the public hearing, as well as a regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting will be held on October 6, 2005 at the Longmeadow Community House at 7:30 p.m.

Walter Gunn made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing. Roy Johansen seconded the motion; the motion was approved 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Downie, Secretary  
Longmeadow Planning Board