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MORRISTOWN/MORRISVILLE
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
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Minutes of October 22 2009

Members Present: Paul Trudell (Acting Chairman), Ron Stancliff, Theresa Breault, Jean Wickart, Brian Irwin (alternate)

Members Absent: Gary Nolan, Karyn Allen, Chris Wiltshire

Recorder: Mark Leonard, Zoning Administrator (ZA)

Acting Chairman Trudell called the public meeting to order at 7:30 PM. On a motion by Theresa, seconded by Ron, minutes of the September 10, 2009 meeting were approved as presented.

WARNED HEARING: LAMOILLE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS (LCC), SITE PLAN APPROVAL, PARKING AREA EXPANSION, 72 HARREL STREET

Paul introduced the application, to be reviewed under sections 450 & 500 of the zoning & subdivision bylaws. Citing his involvement in preparing the applicant's site plan, he recused himself from this application and Theresa assumed the chair. Theresa administered the sworn oath to William 'Butch' Alexander on behalf of the applicant and others present for this hearing.

Butch explained that while there is adequate existing parking space for normal daily use at their facility on Harrel Street, at times there is not enough parking to accommodate staff & visitors. This mostly occurs when they hold meetings with the entire staff or when they host other organizations' meetings. They are seeking to establish a 40-space parking area adjacent to the existing parking row along the west side of the property. He noted their original request was for 24 spaces, but had subsequently revised their plans to 40 based on their anticipated needs. The proposal would increase the total number of parking spaces on the premises from 57 to 97.

Paul Trudell reviewed the site plan. The proposed new parking lot, currently an open grassy area, would be located within 20 feet of adjacent lots along Brooklyn Street. Initially, the lot would have a gravel surface, but LCC plans to pave it in the spring. The lot would not be lighted, with little use anticipated after regular business hours end at 4:30.

Bill Moulton, who lives across the street from LCC, said he's ok with expanding the lot, but is concerned that it signals an expansion of approved services or future growth at the site. With the additional traffic from regular users of the facility plus the additional users cited by the applicant, Bill was also concerned about the lack of safe pedestrian access & persons using motorized wheelchairs with no sidewalk along Harrel Street. He urged the applicant to work with the Select Board to come up with a plan & funding to extend the sidewalk from Brooklyn Street to LCC's driveway. He also mentioned not liking the brightness of LCC's sign by the road.

Butch reiterated that LCC had no plans to expand its services or to otherwise grow at this location. In fact, he said, funding decreases were likely to result in a reduction of staff & services. He agreed safe pedestrian access was a concern and promised to discuss a sidewalk extension with the Select Board.

Tammy Howell, whose property backs up to the LCC property closest to the proposed parking lot, suggested traffic concerns could be alleviated if the exit out of LCC were designated right turn only. She also said the Town should be responsible for the needed sidewalk extension.

The ZA advised that enforcing a 'right turn only' restriction would be problematic, noting the lack of compliance with a similar restriction at the Main Street Union Bank exit. Bill Moulton suggested a stop sign at the end of the LCC driveway might help.

Dale Spaulding, adjoining resident, agreed there was a need for additional parking, but was dismayed to hear that the proposed expansion had increased from 24 to 40 spaces, moving closer to his property. He was also disturbed that LCC had already gone ahead and set up an ad hoc parking lot in the area, with signs directing cars to the site. He wanted to know who else, besides LCC, was using the facility, observing that it was not approved as a public meeting site.

If the parking area were to be approved, Dale wanted to have some sort of fence, curb, or other barrier installed around it to prevent cars just driving onto the grass as they are doing now; he would prefer to see a hedge or trees rather than a fence for this. Paul T pointed out that the lot would be no closer than 20 feet from the adjoining properties.

In addition to his concerns about the proposed parking area expansion, Dale also voiced concerns about both LCC staff & clients walking across his property on Brooklyn Street going to & from LCC. He is concerned about possible property devaluation caused by this trespassing.

Butch agreed that people should not be trespassing on others' property to get to & from LCC, but took exception to the characterization of some LCC clients. He will reiterate to staff & clients not to trespass but short of putting up a fence, he couldn't prevent them from doing so. He stated he's inclined to put up a fence along the west side of the LCC property, next to the adjoining Brooklyn Street properties, both to prevent trespassing and to minimize LCC's liability from others who might be injured while on its premises.

Adjoiner Kurt Barbour said he was fine with some sort of fence around the parking lot, but was not in favor of a fence along his property line. He, too, expressed concern about his property values stemming from having a parking lot nearby.

Bill Moulton suggested the Board approve the original expansion plan for 24 spaces and review the need for additional space at the 1 & 3-year Conditional Use permit reviews.

Ron moved to grant site plan approval for the original 24 parking space plan, with conditions that the area be screened from view of adjoin properties by a hedge or other suitable vegetation and that the applicant work with the Select Board to develop a plan to extend the sidewalk along Harrel Street to the LCC entrance. Jean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

WARNED HEARING: COPLEY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES GROUP (CPSG), CONDITIONAL USE & SITE PLAN APPROVAL, PROFESSIONAL OFFICES, 887 BROOKLYN STREET

Paul introduced the application, to be reviewed under sections 213i, 450, 500, & 632-636 of the zoning & subdivision bylaws. Theresa administered the sworn oath to Kevin Kelley on behalf of the applicant. No other interested parties were present. A letter from adjoiner Catherine Hurchins expressing concerns about possible access issues on her property was submitted for the Board's consideration.

Kevin Kelley, CEO of Community Health Services of Lamoille Valley, described who & what Copley Professional Services Group is and explained its objective of adding community dental services. They are seeking to purchase the retail property at 887 Brooklyn Street (currently Clearwater Pools) and convert the facility into a dental services office. He is aware there is another party seeking to purchase the same property, but wants to get DRB approval for CPSG's plans in case that transaction falls through.

The existing retail facility would not be expanded. Interior configuration of the existing space would be made to accommodate the dental offices. The parking lot would be expanded from 9 to 17 spaces and the single access point onto the property from Brooklyn Street would be widen from 12 to 18 feet. Kevin assured the Board that there would be no use of the adjoining Hutchins property by staff or patients.

Ron moved to grant Conditional Use & Site Plan approval of the project as presented. Jean seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

WARNED HEARING: ROBERTA GODDARD, PRELIMINARY PLAT APPROVAL, 2-LOT SUBDIVISION, 7128 ELMORE MOUNTAIN ROAD

Paul introduced the application, to be reviewed under sections 264, 730, 740, 780, & 810 of the zoning & subdivision bylaws. Theresa administered the sworn oath to Allan Newton, representing the applicant. No other interested parties were present.

Allan Newton described the applicant's proposal to create a new 2.62-acre lot from her existing 8.0-acre parcel (#17-004) on Elmore Mountain Road. The existing developed portion of the property, with a single-family home, garage, & associated water & wastewater systems, would be 5.37-acres. A state water & wastewater disposal system (WW) permit has been issued for a single-family home on the new lot. Each lot would have its own access directly from Elmore Mountain Road.

Brian inquired about road frontage for the new lot. Allan said there would be approximately 300 feet of frontage along Elmore Mountain Road.

Jean moved to grant Preliminary Plat approval of the project as presented. Theresa seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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OTHER BUSINESS:

Paul reviewed and signed the final mylar survey plat for the Matthew Bromsen 2-lot subdivision on Walton Road.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Leonard, Recorder

Minutes approved on: 12/10/09