

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
September 13, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Gawronski, Acting Chairman
Wallace Gantter
Carol Laskos
Norman Stein, MD
John Swift

ALSO PRESENT

Neal Halloran, Building Inspector

ABSENT

Susan Cleaver, ex officio
Phil Dropkin

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Town of Goshen Environmental Review Board was called to order at 6:35 pm on Wednesday, September 13, 2006.

II. MINUTES

The minutes of the August 9, 2006 meeting were approved as submitted upon motion made by Dr. Stein, seconded by Ms. Laskos.

III. APPLICANTS BEFORE THE PLANNING BOARD

AMELIA ACRES

Ms. Laskos currently occupies the horse farm on this property. She showed the members the location of the existing buildings on the property and noted that the maps from the applicant are missing many of the large barns. Mr. Halloran pointed out the area that connects to Winthrop Manor. It is at the end of the cul de sac in Winthrop Manor. The existing pastures serve the existing barns. The upper pasture is currently used for hay. Mr. Halloran noted that the applicant plans to move the road so that the horses on the existing farm can access the upper pasture. Ms. Laskos noted that she would have to use their main road for her horses and tractors, which seems to be unworkable.

There is also a densely thick wooded area and there are very steep slopes in this area. There is also a stream that goes through the property, which does not appear to be shown on the maps. Ms. Laskos also noted some sections where there is a great deal of wet vegetation. They are not wetlands in her opinion, but there are some other wetland areas. She also feels that, realistically, the horses and the barn cannot be that close to the road. There are also some very steep slopes in the area.

Mr. Gawronski noted that three of the lot locations are very steep and wet. One of the access roads is mostly under water and the main road is cutting the farm in half. Mr. Halloran asked Ms. Laskos how they could design it better to keep the working farm. It is agreed that they should not come down to 17A for the main access as it would destroy the farm. Mr. Swift asked if some of the homes could be shifted over. Ms. Laskos didn't think this would work as it is very steep and wet.

Ms. Laskos noted that they are keeping the large hay field, which is beneficial and the lower area is being kept, which is where her riding ring is located. She is considering suggesting having an indoor ring, which would change the entire operation. The areas that are being developed in this plan are currently being used as open pasture and she would not be able to use these for turning out her current horses. Her barns are presently full. The existing farm is being cut in half. Mr. Gawronski suggested removing the unit on lot #4, which would give better access up to the field. Ms. Laskos noted that the two houses that have been built are working out fine now, but there were problems in the beginning and that would happen again with this new project. Mr. Halloran noted that in the past they have posted the property to warn people, especially children to stay away from the animals.

Ms. Laskos noted that normally when this type of project is planned, the development portion would be on an entirely separate area of the farm. This one is in the middle of the farm. She also noted that the access has to be thru Winthrop Manor as the area along 17A is very dangerous and has many accidents. The access roadway as shown is the real problem. Mr. Gawronski suggested that they cut back on the size of the one lot and keep the farm road where it is. Mr. Halloran explained that this property would eventually connect all the way to Spruce Hill if all the projects in the area come to fruition.

A&L Acres was reviewed again in relation to the Amelia Acres project and the rest of the projects coming into the area. It is agreed that the lower portion of the farm can operate on its own, but the building in the upper area (which has 40 horses in it) will not work as it is too close to the road. The current trail system goes to the reservoir and around. If they do eventually want to work the other properties trails into a large trail system, it would be very good. Ms. Laskos feels it is just a matter of making this new road fit into the farm operation. Other projects of this type have the farm operation in one portion and the housing portion in the opposite area. That works with a wide piece of property, but this is not the case here. She asked why one portion in the rear is not developed. It is in the area where everything begins to flow to the reservoir. There are also many steep slopes. Mr. Halloran noted that the PB members will make a site visit next week.

ORLEANS/MAKUEN Route 17A

Mr. Halloran pointed out the location of the project. Westgate is just below the property. Goshen Christian School is across 17A. There is an approved DOT access. The area is zoned CO, which allows the applicant to apply for a PAC. They are showing possible access in a piece in the Village which would then allow connection to Police Dr. There is also a proposed r.o.w. thru the JPH subdivision and then to the Dickerson subdivision, which would allow connection to Gibson Rd. Eventually, there could be a road off Gibson thru JPH, which would allow for a second access for the Makuen project. Once you are above the high point, you cannot see any of the proposed project. You can see it from Sorrento Dr. There are wetlands in the center.

They are proposing small lots, with small ranch houses of about 2000-2500 sq. ft. There will be a community center. The PB has discussed placing it in the center rather than at the entrance to encourage the residents to walk to it. Dr. Stein where the residents would be able to shop as there is no grocery store. He feels seniors would not buy in the area unless they could get groceries easily. Mr. Gawronski asked how we can be sure it will remain an adult community. Mr. Halloran stated that it could be deed restricted and it is part of our zoning code that a PAC must be at least one person over age 55 and no one under 19 can live there full time. However, he is not sure how that would be enforced. The PB has expressed concern that, while there is a market for seniors now, there may not be in 20 years. Values could then drop and the residents may start to ask to sell to others. Mr. Gawronski noted that a deed restriction is at the County level and therefore the Town cannot enforce this. Mr. Halloran noted that if there is a site plan or special use approval, he enforces that. Also, anyone within the PAC could enforce it. It is also likely that there will be a HOA and they could also enforce it.

Mr. Gantter noted that Orleans has a similar project in Wallkill. The buyers do not own the land, just the house. The association owns the land and the amenities. He also noted that the homes have 2-car garages. Mr. Halloran noted that they are just beginning construction on that project and the developer has stated that the project in Goshen will be more upscale. Mr. Gawronski requested that the PB be made aware that there have been instances where the Town does not wish to be in the business of enforcing deeds, which is a matter of concern. The members concur that this is a good location and the fact that it cannot be seen from most areas offsite is a plus. There are trees in the area, but most of the units are in areas where there are no trees. Some trees will be lost, but most of the tree lines can be kept. Mr. Gantter also noted that they stripped the entire area in the Wallkill project. The PB should keep this in mind.

Mr. Gawronski expressed concern over the density. Mr. Halloran responded that when the zoning code was last created, the administration felt we could use some adult housing; therefore it was made possible in the CO zones. It was also thought that there would be less of an impact on traffic and schools. The TB is now expressing some concern that the few CO zones we had are all going PAC and not Commercial. The thinking is that they will still have taxable ratables and with no children in the schools. Mr. Gawronski asked if they would be restricted by how much water they can draw. Mr. Halloran explained that they will have to meet the water protocols and show that they have enough water for their plans without negatively impacting the other properties. Mr. Swift asked if they could request to tap into the Village since they are so close to the line. Mr. Halloran feels they are hoping to tap into the Village sewer, but so far the Village has not allowed anyone to tap into water supply.

Mr. Gawronski asked if there is any unique biological situation in the area. A site visit can be scheduled. Mr. Swift asked if they can just go out to the properties on their own. Mr. Halloran suggested that they call him first so he can notify the landowner.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:30pm upon motion made by Ms. Laskos, seconded by Mr. Swift.

David Gawronski
Acting Chairman

Notes prepared by Linda P. Doolittle