

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
October 11, 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ALSO PRESENT

Neal Halloran, Building Inspector
Susan Cleaver, ex officio

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Town of Goshen Environmental Review Board was called to order at 6:05 pm on Wednesday, October 11, 2006.

II. MINUTES

The minutes of the September 13, 2006 meeting will be reviewed at the next meeting..

III. APPLICANTS BEFORE THE PLANNING BOARD

Hamlet At Goshen, 111-1-46 & 15-1-59 272.78 acres, located on Harriman Dr. & Conklingtown Rd in the HM & RU zone, with an AQ6, AQ3, stream & reservoir, and scenic road overlay.

In reviewing the Conservation Analysis maps, the members noted that many of the items they have seen first hand were not located on the map, i.e., ponds, large trees etc. Mr. Halloran stated that there is a vernal pool offsite that will require a 100' buffer, which will affect this property. There was a question regarding the possibility of runoff draining into the reservoir overlay district. This should be discussed in the EIS.

Ms. Cleaver stated that the applicant did not explain why so many items were left off of the Conservation Analysis. None of the really large trees were located on the map. Mr. Halloran, Ms Cleaver and members of both the ERB and PB have visited the site numerous times. The wetlands appear to be much larger on site than the maps show. The applicant should provide a tree inventory. Ms. Cleaver advised that limits of disturbance should be shown as well as a tree inventory. Mr. Halloran noted that where these large trees are located, the applicant could design "pocket parks".

There are springs on the property which suggest animal activity. There are streams and intermittent streams, stone walls etc. that need to be shown. Mr. Swift suggested that the board ask for aerial photos. This is such a large property, that it is difficult to view everything from the ground. Ms. Cleaver proposed that the Town consider hiring an environmental firm to do a nature survey. The members also expressed concern that if this mapping is so inadequate, have others that the board has recently reviewed also been inadequate. The Town should seriously consider hiring experts to verify the applicant's findings. Mr. Swift emphasized that this new consultant should be used for all projects so that all applicants are treated equally. It should also be noted that this individual or firm is being called upon to verify the work of the applicant not necessarily to actually delineate.

Mr. Dropkin stated that a number of the members have walked this site and found from their own experience that there appear to be a number of errors and omissions on the map. Therefore, the ERB proposes that the PB bring this to the developer's attention. The Developer should be advised that they need to do a complete and accurate Conservation Analysis mapping. If it is found that it is not complete and accurate, the PB reserves the right to do their own review and the developer agrees to bear the cost of this professional analysis. The ERB is also concerned that other plans previously submitted may also have material errors or omissions and recommends that the PB hire an environmental firm to do a Conservation Analysis and the developer should bear the cost. Mr. Gawronski suggested that based on these apparent omissions and the possibility of omissions on previous submissions, the Boards should ask for more time to walk the site.

Mr. Gawronski also noted that the Conservation Analysis should be reviewed in connection with the sketch plan to be sure that the applicant is truly complying with the Conservation Analysis. Ms. Laskos asked if an applicant is required to keep the identified trees. Mr. Halloran replied that this is at the PB's discretion.

Ms. Cleaver noted that there are several dump sites on this property. These sites need to be reviewed by experts. Soil samples should be taken. Mr. Gantter suggested that subsoil investigation for contamination be required in the dump sites. One particular dump site on this property contains 55 gallon drums and the health, safety and welfare of the residents could be an issue. This issue needs to be addressed in the Scoping.

Mr. Gantther suggested that the Scoping Document should address the need for subsurface investigation to show location of rock and shale as blasting may be needed and this will also affect recharge. Subsoil investigation for contamination should also be required in the area of the dump sites.

Mr. Halloran requested that the members review the draft scoping outline and present their suggestions back to the PB at the Nov. 8, ERB meeting. On large projects, the applicant must show alternative design plans. Mr. Halloran suggested that the Boards consider asking the applicant to look at an alternate plan, which shows the project designed entirely within the constraints. This plan should respect all wetlands, steep slopes, etc.

Rieger 9-1-8.452 - 79 units proposed.

Ms. Cleaver has walked this site and would like to arrange another site visit with the members. There are some wells on this site that have not been properly capped. It was suggested that any site where wells are being drilled, permits should be required and the proper capping procedures should be followed. Ms. Cleaver also advised the board that there is a cemetery shown on an old map. The developer was asked to locate it on the map. There are also a number of old roads and foundations, as well as stone walls and ponds on the site that are not on the maps.

IV. OTHER

Traffic Study – Mr. Halloran passed out copies of the newly submitted traffic study. Mr. Swift asked if the study considered the possibility of straightening the Craigville/Scotchtown intersection. That possibility is mentioned. The study suggests widening Rte 207 and Craigville to add stacking lanes.

Water Availability

Mr. Gawronski has stated concerns regarding water availability, in particular recharge. He explained that if you tap the water from one area, the potential to recharge diminishes. He questioned the cumulative affect of all the roads being built and the affect that has on the ability of the area to recharge. Under the Hamlet design the area in question is losing its ability to recharge. There would also be an affect on septic systems. It is suggested that if a development cannot recharge enough to support the proposed number of units they need to cut back on the proposed density. He explained the principle of a "cone of depression".

Ms. Cleaver noted that some municipalities require 30-day drawdown well testing rather than the 72 hour currently used in the Town. Mr. Gawronski concurred that given the Town's water history we should consider a 30-day drawdown for the health, safety and welfare of the residents.

Zoning Code Changes

Mr. Halloran advised the members that the TB is considering changes to the Zoning Code and is looking for suggestions from the PB and ERB. After discussion, the members suggested the following possible topics for review.

1. Tree inventory should be provided on large projects.
2. The Town should consider hiring a firm with experts on wetlands and biodiversity and a biologist to review the Conservation Analyses as they are presented for accuracy and completeness. The applicants should be advised that they will be responsible for any cost incurred.
3. When computing density for a project, constraints should not be part of the equation. This is particularly important in regard to Hamlet designs.
4. Consider the use of PDR when computing density in Hamlet zone. If they need more density, the developer should purchase development rights from the RU zone. They should also provide a percentage of affordable housing during this process.
5. Environmental concerns cannot be ignored. Density can be allowed where it is available.
6. Quality of life issues need to be considered as well as preserving the natural features.
7. The Zoning Code should also look at the affect a development has on the capacity for the water in an area to recharge.
8. The TB should look into requiring a 30-day drawdown test rather than the 72 hour testing that we use.
9. Proper well abandonment protocols and UST investigations should be required where there have been old structures.
10. Permitting for well drilling on vacant land should be required. It is important that the location is known so that proper well head protection can be enforced. Notice of abandonment of wells also needs to be required.
11. Stream quality testing should also be implemented to judge the affect of runoff on local streams.

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

David Gawronski, Acting Chairman
Notes prepared by Linda P. Doolittle