

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
3/12/2020

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; Kevin Sahr, Select Board Representative; Vicki Smith, Member David Van Wie, Alternate; Rich Brown, Alternate; David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Eric Furstenberg, Member;

Members of the Public Present: Phil Harrison, Rod Finley.

John suggested to the Board that they take Crossroads first as the applicant for the Lot Line Adjustment was unable to attend. The Board agreed.

Item 1: Steep Slopes Review - Crossroads Academy.

John designated Rich Brown to sit as a regular member for Mr. Furstenberg for this review.

Phil and Rod gave the Board an overview of the proposed intrusions into the Steep Slope Conservation District. Crossroads is moving ahead with plans to build a new middle school. They intend to open a new entrance to the north of the existing entrance. The State had not approved the new entrance in 2004 when it had been constructed because they wanted a turn lane and Crossroads did not have the funding to construct it. Rod stated that two new traffic studies have shown that the turn lane is not necessary and the state has approved the new entrance. The school has proposed to add a walkway from the existing parking area to the proposed middle school. The walkway intrudes into both Steep Slopes and Wetlands Conservation Districts. Rod stated that the walk way will allow pedestrians to access the school campus from the parking area without having to walk on the driveway. The drive is currently bordered by guardrails making it unsafe for pedestrians. Rod noted that the slope of the walkway will be about 8% and the path would be lighted but not have any handrails. The current plan called for the path to be made with a crushed stone material and not paved.

Vicki noted that the proposed crossing of the driveway near the middle school building was unsafe. She recommended a new route that would be safer. Rod agreed that it would be a better crossing.

In addition to the walkway a new driveway will be created to access the middle school. In order to maintain the proper curves for the driveway it will be necessary to cut back the slope of a rock outcropping that lies between the school and RT. 10, just to the south of the existing school entrance. The driveway would be cut into the slope and ditched to catch any runoff. The slope would be cut back. Rod believed that the proposed slope on

the plans may not be met as much of the hill is ledge. The intent will be to cut the slope back as much as possible and leave bare rock when encountered.

Vicki asked if the school had considered moving the proposed middle school building to the west in order to eliminate the intrusions into the Steep Slopes. Phil noted that this would not eliminate the need for the pedestrian walkway intrusion and that the existing plan for the overall layout for the campus was to keep as much vehicle traffic on the east side of the campus while leaving as much open space on the west. The proposed middle school building had been designed to fit into the natural landscape as much as possible. To re-design it in a new location to the west would be costly, may cause a greater intrusion into the wetland and would decrease the open space of the campus.

John moved to send the following comments to the Zoning Board of Adjustment:

The Planning Board feels that the current proposal will have a low impact. The impact area for the driveway should not contribute to increased erosion. The visual impact will be on the school side of the slope and not visible to the general public. The Board notes that if the proposed middle school is moved to the west the impact to the steep slopes along the driveway would be less.

Safety of pedestrians makes the impacts of the walking path worthwhile. The Board notes that where the path crosses the driveway should be rerouted to minimize pedestrian travel along the driveway.

Tim seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 2: Lot Line Adjustment. David and Barbara Roby.

Due to concerns over Corvid-19 Mr. Roby asked the Board to consider his application without him present. John asked the Board if they had any issues moving forward without the applicant. The Board had no issues as Vicki noted that if any questions arose that could not be answered, the hearing may need to be continued.

John designated David Van Wie to sit as a regular member for Mr. Furstenberg for this hearing.

Vicki worked through the checklist to ensure the application was complete. During this review the Board noted the following:

The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that the 2.11 acres was being taken from lot 34, not 35 as shown on the plan.

Complete boundaries were not shown on the plat. The Board decided to waive this requirement as it would not provide any additional information the Board would need to make a decision.

The Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that the deed to lot 30 has reference to a proposed conservation easement. The tax map shows the easement but the plan does not. He was unable to find any other reference to the easement. The Board decided to add a condition if the LLA is approved that the applicant will need to research the existence of the easement and show it on the plan if needed.

The Board noted that the remaining area of lot 34 will no longer qualify for what is commonly known as the “Freebee lot” (Note: Please refer to the definition of lot in the Zoning Ordinance)

The following errors were noted and will need to be corrected on the final plat:

Lot 35 is incorrectly referenced as the lot where the 2.11 acres is being annexed from. Lot 34 is the correct lot. This needs to be corrected in multiple locations.

On the plan the Roth lot is incorrectly identified as lot 31. It should be 29.

On the plan Map 410 lot 5 the name should be “Roby II” not “Roby JR.”

On the plan Map 410 lot 9.1, the lot is actually 26 but is merged with 9.1. The lot should be referenced as “Lot 26 AKA Lot 9.1”

On the plan, in the inset, two references to lot 36 are incorrect. They should be 35.

Vicki moved to accept the application with the discussed waivers.

John seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

John asked if there was any discussion.

Vicki was concerned that the 2.11 acre annexation was across the road from lot 30 and that in the future it could be split off and developed as a separate lot. She would prefer that the area that is annexed to lot 30 be five acres or greater so that it could become a standalone lot.

David Van Wie felt that the risk was low.

Tim moved to approve the Lot Line Adjustment with the condition that the applicant will need to research the existence of the easement and show it on the plan if needed and noting that the “freebee lot” was no longer available.

John seconded the motion and called for a vote.
The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3: Acceptance of minutes from 2/27/2020.

Kevin moved to approve the minutes.
John asked if there was any discussion.

Both John and Rich had amendments.

John moved to approve the minutes as amended.
Tim seconded the motion
John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously with Vicki abstaining as she did not attend the meeting.

Item 4: New Business

Plans for 2020.

John stated that he would like to continue work on the senior housing amendment. In addition to the Lyme Common zoning district, he would like to look at Lyme Center and the Commercial district.

To this end he would like to conduct the same type of build out analysis as was conducted for the Lyme Common. The Board noted that because most of the Commercial District on the west side of Rt 10 was already developed they felt that they should concentrate most of their efforts on the east side.

Rich Brown stated that he would like to work on a housing chapter of the master plan.

There was a short discussion concerning the use of consultants. The consensus of the Board was to not use one at this time.

Vicki noted that article 22 had passed at Town Meeting and that the Board should consider working with the Energy Committee to update the Energy Chapter of the Master Plan to support article 22.

John asked Kevin about Board meetings in the coming months in reference to COVID-19 and whether the Board would need to consider canceling meetings.

Kevin believed it was too early to make that determination, but things were changing very rapidly and meeting cancelations may be part of the overall plan in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
David A. Robbins
Lyme Planning and Zoning Administrator.