



**Hillsdale Planning Board Minutes
October 17, 2011**

Present: Hank Henward, Chairman; Patti Rohrlich; Ellen Levy; Richard Freiman; Bud Gardner; Deborah Bowen; Mark Barbato; Vivian deGeorges, Secretary

Also present: CAC members Ruth Dufault and Gretchen Stevens; Jeff Paige, resident

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM by Mr. Henward.

Steve Bluestone Tax Parcel ID 116.-2-36.111 – Spring Brook Lane Extension site plan review
Mr. & Mrs. Bluestone; Bruce Coldham, architect

Mr. Coldham brought a large drawing which reflects the refinements made during a Planning Board on-site visit as well as the turnouts which were added to agree with the new State driveway requirements. Other drawings were submitted for the planting plan, as well as the proposal for thinning and pruning the areas around the house. The area of cutting was lessened, bringing the edge of the tree zone closer to the house. The garage and patio were also brought closer in. The driveway was redirected so that less tree cutting will be needed.

Ms. Stevens said that the basic ideas in the pruning and thinning proposal looked fine, but she had a few suggestions. She said that the description of thinning trees with diameters of 4" or less and unhealthy trees over 4" was sound but that one thing they might want to keep in mind is to allow some trees under 4" to remain in order to allow them to grow over time. She also said that eliminating ailing trees over 4" is okay as long as you are conservative in how you define ailing, as some insects and birds use holes in trees. Ms. Dufault said that their experience of this is that people take any tree that has a little nick or hole and that's too aggressive.

Ms. Rohrlich suggested that maybe the CAC members could tag some trees that will be more important and are more desirable even if they're smaller than 4" because they're something you'd want to have in 20 years. Mr. Bluestone said that there are not that many trees that need to be thinned, maybe 20 or so, once they get rid of weeds and undergrowth.

Ms. Stevens added that pruning about 20% of existing trees of the same type seems reasonable. Another thing that concerns her is the part of the proposal that suggests pruning up to 35% of the mass of a tree. She said that seems like a lot. There was some discussion about the interpretation of this, and that perhaps it meant 35% of the branches, not the mass of the tree. Mr. Coldham said that perhaps someone from the Board could go out with Mr. Bluestone and see what they estimate 25% or so of a tree would look like. Ms. Stevens thought maybe this is a traditional number used by arborists, but that she didn't know.

Mr. Henward said that the Board is not going to be policing the tree cutting, but that it would come to an agreement with the Bluestones and then trust that it will be done correctly. He also said that what he remembers is that they're trying to get more light in

there, to the back of the house. He said that he thought they would go about it differently, drawing a line from the sun through the tree canopy and to the windows of the house and prune whatever is below those lines, rather than pick a number or percentage. Then he asked that other than some of these stone walls, has the building moved?

Mr. Bluestone said that the south east side of the house has been moved out about 2 ft. but nothing else has moved or been changed.

Mr. Coldham then submitted a color palette, as requested at the last meeting, as well as a rendering of the house with the colors in place, and a piece of wood showing the texture and color of the porch material. He showed a sample of the roof, tin painted dark brown, and a piece of the material that will be used for the siding. He also showed a piece of concrete which had been stained to imitate stone with moss. That piece was rough and he showed a smoother piece which might be used for a walk. He said that they may also use trees as supports for the porch and/or garage.

Mr. Henward asked if there were any other comments or questions, and Ms. Dufault suggested that the Bluestones might be on site while the pruning is being done in order to help make the decisions as to which trees are being affected.

Mr. Coldham also said that because they've abandoned the idea of cutting trees in order to have a place to store fill to use later, they don't need to cut any more than they need for the building and then address the other cutting/pruning later.

Mr. Henward said that this looks ready for approval. The deliverables needed to move forward are: the plans, showing the turnouts and final placement of the driveway; a package of material samples; the color scheme, the L1 and L3 maps; the pruning and thinning proposal. The building inspector will then get a copy of everything to have the context from which to approve this.

Mr. Henward asked for a motion to approve this application. Ms. Rohrlich made the motion and Ms. Levy seconded. The vote was all ayes.

Bill Stratton 4-lot subdivision Tax ID 106-01-09 - Route 7D 89.3 acres to be subdivided to keep the west side of the road as one parcel and divide the east side of the road into two large lots, roughly 18 acres each. Represented by Dan Russell, Surveyor; Frank Roche, Attorney

Mr. Russell handed out maps of the parcel to be divided. Mr. Henward asked Mr. Stratton if he would be restoring the house which is located on the part of the parcel which is on the west side of 7D, or just clean it out. Mr. Stratton said he would just be cleaning it out.

Mr. Roche read the definition of subdivision and the fact that it's divided by a road seemed to mean it was already two parcels. Mr. Henward said that it was one parcel because it has

one tax parcel number. Also, the main discussion is the two new lots because they are above the ridgeline of 1100', because if any part of a parcel is above 1100', the Board will look at it. However, if nothing is happening above 1100', then it can get an exception.

Mr. Roche said that the proposed building envelopes and their locations need to be discussed. Mr. Russell said that where the envelopes are placed, there are not any trees of any substantial width – it's basically an overgrown field. Ms. Dufault said that there's a sluice that goes under the road. Mr. Russell said that there is a culvert under the road in both proposed driveway locations. He also said that the driveway may be able to follow an old farm road that's barely visible on the map.

Mr. Henward asked what the slope is and Mr. Russell answered that it's 10-15% but it looks flatter when you're onsite so they'll take the measurements next time they go there. Mr. Henward said that the building inspector needs to see the formal driveway layout with widths, etc., and that the location of septic also needs to be shown.

Some discussion about what may happen down the line with a new buyer of parcel 1.

Mr. Henward said that the following are needed: perc tests; perhaps smaller envelopes; perhaps moving the house on lot 2 to an area with a little less vegetation; driveway locations; septic locations. He asked Mr. Stratton if there are any thoughts of conservation and Mr. Stratton said that we can talk about it.

Ms. Stevens said that she thinks there's a little stream which shows on the map and is near the building envelope on lot 3 and that the envelope would then have to be moved away from the stream. She also said that the closer the building envelopes are to the road, the more likely it would be that the land around the buildings could be used for farming some day as where the building envelopes are currently located, they break up the farming area.

Mr. Russell said that by next month they'd have the survey and the perc tests, which they're already working on. Mr. Henward said that once the items asked for are received, the Board could approve the application at the November meeting and that in December, there could be a public hearing on this subdivision.

Other discussions:

Mr. Henward complimented Ms. Dufault on working with Jamie Purinton on the Pinto matter of fixing the riprap and doing plantings. He said that the next thing to work on is the Kimelman matter, getting money from the Kimelmans and getting a recommendation from the CAC. Ms. Stevens said that she and Ms. Dufault had been up to the site and that things are looking good with evidence of seedlings, saplings, existing sprouts coming out of the wall, shrubs including blueberries, azalea and witch hazel and good groundcover of grasses and sedges. There was no evidence of erosion. Things look great, despite a couple of difficult years with this shallow soil and steep slopes. Things have withstood the storms

pretty well. Ms. Dufault said that there's still a very old farm up there on the ridge in a spot that was cleared in the 1800's and in that area blueberries and other things have grown. There's a root structure with low bushy shrubs that just covers the mountainside as well as forest that has come back in. Ms. Stevens said that the recommendation would be to leave it like it is. Bringing in large equipment to plant large trees would do more damage than good. The thing is not to make this a precedent so that people could say, "why can't we do what they did since it grew back?" So it seems there should be something that the Kimelmans should be required to do. Planting is not necessary, but the Planning Board should get a real restoration specialist out there and look at it and evaluate it. There was further discussion about how to best approach the Kimelmans.

Mr. Henward then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gardner made the motion and Mr. Freiman seconded it. Mr. Henward declared the meeting adjourned at 9:07PM.

The next Planning Board meeting will be on Monday, November 14th.