



## Hillsdale Planning Board Minutes April 8, 2013

**Present:** Hank Henward, Chairman; Ellen Levy; Patti Rohrlich; Mark Barbato; Richard Freiman; Deborah Bowen; Bud Gardner; Vivian deGeorges, Secretary  
**Also present:** Jeff Paige, resident and Green Solutions member; Gretchen Stevens, CAC

Meeting called to order at 7:30PM by Chairman Henward.

**1. Neil Costa; George Lagonia - Collins St. LLC minor 3-parcel subdivision Tax ID 136.-2-28  
37.5 acre lot; 212-397-1088**

**Received:** two copies of the proposed subdivision map.

Mr. Costa described the plans to the Board, to renovate the cottage that is currently on the parcel, keeping 4 acres of land with the cottage and then subdividing the remaining +/- 32 acres into 2 16-acre lots. He showed the maps to the Board, pointing out the "no further subdivision" restriction on the map, as well as building envelopes, proposed driveway and existing structures. There is also mention on the map of the fact that there will be a common driveway agreement, deed restrictions and covenants, and no-cut zones described. The cottage needs a new kitchen and other fixes, but they are staying within the current footprint. The property is crisscrossed by many old stone walls, so Mr. Lagonia described how they're using the walls to form the boundary between the two new lots, and that the driveway will go along a stone wall.

Ms. Levy asked why the lots have such an irregular shape and Mr. Lagonia said that they want to keep the forest as undisturbed as possible and that using the stone wall as a divider ensured this. He further said that this is very pretty land, undulating and good for walking.

Mr. Freiman asked if there is any water on the property and Mr. Costa pointed out some in one corner of the lot. Mr. Barbato asked if the house is on the historic register, since it was built in about 1812 and had not been out of the Wood family since it was built. Mr. Lagonia said he didn't think it was. Mr. Costa said that the previous owner did a lot of "renovations" but that they need to be redone. There are some original fireplaces, beams and flooring, but the stairs need to be done to code and other fixes need to be made.

Mr. Henward told everyone that this is just an informational meeting, but that he had walked the property. He said that this is a pristine white pine forest of very mature trees, though some low pruning can be done to let light in. Mr. Costa responded that the trees will be protected with no-cut zones which will be very extensive throughout the property. There will be some judicial pruning, some removal of dead material, but very carefully done. The driveway was planned to take a path that will ensure that the least amount of cutting will be needed. Mr. Henward concurred and said that very little earthwork will be involved in the construction of the driveway.

Mr. Henward asked if there were any further questions. Ms. Bowen asked if the Board could go out and see this site, and Mr. Henward said that they'd need a guide, not to get lost in the woods. He further told Mr. Costa that he will need to talk to the DOH and also that we'd like to see the covenants and also get a copy of the driveway agreement as we send them out to our attorney, for which an escrow account will need to be established. He said he imagines they'd have Serge Bervy as the contractor do whatever earthwork is needed for storm drainage. Mr. Costa said yes, and that there's just one area that has some slope to it, just over 10%, and that with some grading, it could be taken down to 10%. It's the part that comes off the common driveway.

*This application will be continued next month.*

## **2. Kathy Bluestone - to present changes to the original house plan concerning the material to be used for retaining walls.**

Mrs. Bluestone told the board that originally, concrete retaining walls were going to be used, with staining to make them less visible, on the surface of approximately 750 linear feet of walls. They're now proposing a possible change to the material because the cost of the concrete is so high. She said they were now thinking of boulder walls instead of concrete. She said they wanted to propose this as an option to the Board so that as they proceed, and find they might want to use boulders in some of the areas, they won't have to go back and forth to the Board for each change.

Mr. Henward explained that we approved the colored concrete walls to blend in with the view so they wouldn't stand out. Mr. Barbato said that the boulders will be expensive and maybe not save any money over the concrete. Mr. Henward said that it's really the color that we're concerned about. You can't stain stone, but if you get stone native to the area, it would fit into the landscape, or use the crevices in the wall to grow things that would soften the wall. Mrs. Bluestone said that just the front of the walls in front of the house will be seen, the ones in back won't, so we're only talking about those two front walls.

Ms. Levy said that it seems boulders are more attractive than concrete, but Mr. Henward said that the light boulders would show more than the darker stained concrete. Mr. Barbato suggested that if the boulders are placed on an angle, not a straight vertical line, they'd be more natural and less visible and also cost less to build. Mr. Henward told Mrs. Bluestone that the Board would be willing to work with them to find a solution for these retaining walls.

**3. Hawthorne Valley - Gary Ocean works as HV director of campus services and Project Manager; Ian Rasch contractor; Mike Sullivan, engineer; to present 10-20 year site plan for the HV Hamlet**

**Received:** application; check for \$100 for application fee; agricultural data statement; short SEQRA form; small map of the Town of Hillsdale showing the site; 4 copies of small site plan map; 1 large site plan map.

The application is regarding expanding the current farm store and the development of the dairy creamery project.

Mr. Ocean spoke about the general organization of Hawthorne Valley as well as its mission. HV has been in existence for 42 years, operates a K-12 school as well as summer camps, a farm learning center where children can spend a day at the farm and a training program for farm workers.

Mr. Rasch handed out the maps showing the future plans for the hamlet, plans which can be rolled out in phases through the years. He described that what's being looked at the most at this point are energy and water. There are 33 buildings with septic systems all over the hamlet which aren't integrated as they were put in piecemeal, and they're looking at adding additional residential, arts and other buildings. What's being proposed is a plan for 5 separate water treatment areas and a way to integrate the current wastewater treatment. He showed on the map where these areas would be. He also spoke about energy for the hamlet for the new construction, using heat pumps, energy recovery systems and photovoltaic systems for electricity. The hamlet now needs about 750kw but will probably need around 1250kw in later years when all these plans have been completed and all the new buildings built. There will be 5-10 acres dedicated to photovoltaic energy.

Mr. Sullivan spoke about the first buildings scheduled on this plan, the creamery and expanded farm store. Parking, vehicular traffic, and using dense pockets of development to retain open space have all been considered. A visiting students building will be next after the creamery and farm store. After that, practical arts and hopefully an indoor gym. Also being looked at is resident housing. Then he showed a conservation easement map which shows there are really only three areas allowable for building.

Mr. Henward asked if they have applied for grants to NYS for the wastewater treatment facilities and asked Mr. Sullivan how far they'd gone in the wastewater process. Mr. Sullivan replied that their preliminary discussion with DEC seems to indicate that they'll be able to add to the system, which is presently 1500 gallons/day, and that the soils there are very good. He said that the local DOH doesn't like to be involved in commercial systems so we'll probably go back to the DEC. What's there now is a pretreatment plan and he then showed the present water treatment on the map of the hamlet. There is a before and an after map of the area, showing the proposed creamery and other site improvements like paving for parking. Dry wells are proposed to handle drainage. The milk will be piped from the

barns to the creamery so it will be kept controlled and protected. The maps show the buildings that need to be removed in order to build the creamery and barn.

Ms. Levy asked if they have looked at the possibility of a sewer system instead of more septic systems. Mr. Rasch answered yes but we'll need to create districts rather than one plant for the whole hamlet. Mr. Sullivan added that the problem with a central wastewater treatment system is the collection from all the various buildings to get to a central plant. Down the road, the separate collection areas or districts can possibly be made to feed a central plant rather than sending the flow to the absorption area.

Ms. Levy asked if, terms of farm land and septic being close like this, there isn't a problem.

Mr. Ocean said that it's not a problem now but could be in the future, which is why we're trying to think ahead and plan for growth. Mr. Henward then asked where does the wastewater from the existing creamery currently go? Mr. Ocean said it goes into a series of tanks, 1500 and 1000 gallons, which get pumped out 3 times a year. Mr. Henward asked if they are moving the propane tanks, dumpsters, generators away from the property line and was told that they are being moved towards the back of the property.

Mr. Rasch said that there is also a 400' extension to the existing café being proposed. Ms. Levy asked if there are enough parking spaces according to requirements and Mr. Sullivan said that they actually exceed the required number and showed the parking areas on the map.

Mr. Henward asked if they have talked to the FD yet and Mr. Sullivan said that that's their next thing to do, to get a signoff from the FD.

Mr. Henward said that the Board should have letters from the DEC signing off on the septic, and also asked if the pretreatment tank needs to be increased, if it can handle this growth. He requested a letter from DEC and the Hawthorne Valley engineer saying that this is adequate for increasing demand. Mr. Ocean said that 35 gallons of wash water from anything that touches milk is all there should be, plus there's a grease trap. Mr. Rasch said that they are trying to start construction in August.

Mr. Henward said that everything seems to be in place except for a letter from DEC and maybe from the County to say they're deferring to the DEC, plus the engineer's report as to the system design and its capacity. Mr. Rasch offered that they walked through the plans with the Building Inspector a couple of months ago so he's aware of the plans.

Mr. Henward said that for a public hearing we'll need the certified receipts from adjoining neighbors for letters informing them of the hearing. Also, the County Planning Board needs to be informed. They meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. He also suggested that they have Doug Clark look at what they've given us for the septic, so he can see what's been planned.

***This application will continue next month with a Public Hearing before the PB meeting.***

#### **4. Ridgeline Amendments**

There was discussion about the new proposed ridgeline law. Ms. Stevens said that there needs to be a change of wording in the list of exemptions to make it clearer and that the CAC would like to see a much better ridgeline law, concerning habitat and water resources as well as the visual impact. She said that the CAC would like to define critical environmental areas in a town which would be State approved and passed by the town. They could establish the Taconic Ridge and aquifer areas and other critical areas.

Mr. Henward said that what he'd like to see from the CAC is a plan to get the overlaid maps done of critical areas. Ms. Stevens said that it's a very large undertaking and takes years and lots of money. Hudsonia charges \$100,000 for maps like that. It's not going to be a complete habitat map, but CAC could use grants from the DEC to work on this, but it's a long process. Ancram has more people and lots of volunteers and after years, they're only half done. Mr. Henward agreed but said that we need definitive information in order to declare areas as critical and sensitive.

***Mr. Henward asked for a motion to refer the amended law to the Town Board for a public hearing. Ms. Rohrlich made the motion and Ms. Levy seconded it. All ayes.***

***Mr. Henward asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gardner made the motion and Mr. Freiman seconded it. All ayes.***

Mr. Henward adjourned the meeting at 9:45 PM.

***The next meeting of the Planning Board will be Monday, May 13.***