

Minutes
Regular Meeting

April 20, 2016

HINGHAM PLANNING BOARD
April 20, 2016 @ 7:00 PM – South Hearing Room

Present: Planning Board Members, **Sarah Corey, Chairman, Gary Tondorf-Dick and Judith Sneath, Clerk.** Also present: Community Planning Director Mary Savage-Dunham

Planning Board Agenda

**7:00 PM Scenic Road Hearing: 246 Lazell Street
Alicia Secor and James McGorry**

Request for approval to remove and reinstall in a different location 10 linear feet of stone wall to construct a driveway, to temporarily remove and re-install 13 linear feet of stone wall to construct a rain garden, and to temporarily remove and reinstall 6 linear feet of stone wall in order to construct a drainage swale, along the frontage of property known as 246 Lazell Street.

Old/New Business:

1. Discuss Draft Planning Board Comments on Viking Lane Comprehensive Permit

Hearing(s)

**7:00 PM Scenic Road Hearing: 246 Lazell Street
Alicia Secor and James McGorry**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and recognized Attorney Adam Brodsky for the Applicants. Mr. Brodsky explained that the request is for approval to remove and reinstall in a different location 10 linear feet of stone wall to construct a driveway, to temporarily remove and re-install 13 linear feet of stone wall to construct a rain garden, and to temporarily remove and reinstall 6 linear feet of stone wall in order to construct a drainage swale, along the frontage of property known as 246 Lazell Street. The applicants have a shared driveway with their neighbors, and, they would like a 12' driveway over their frontage. Because the grade would be so steep they would likely use the new driveway as an exit only. There is an existing opening in the stone wall which would be opened further for the driveway, rain garden and swale. The Driveway is in the 50' buffer but is the best alternative for a new driveway location. The Conservation Commission approved the proposed disturbance with mitigation. The storm water management standards typically do not apply to single family residences, but, the Applicants are installing a raingarden to collect the small volume of water from the driveway. They are also doing wetland mitigation planting.

Mr. Brodsky said this is a scenic road, and, three activities are proposed. First, removal of 10 linear feet of stone wall to widen the driveway, with the stone proposed to be used on site to delineate the driveway. Second, 13 linear feet are proposed to be removed for the construction of the raingarden and then reinstallation, and finally, removal of 6 linear feet of wall to construct a drainage swale along the driveway with wall to be reinstalled. No tree removal is proposed. He referenced the revised plan depicting a bituminous concrete apron, and said that the driveway is 120' from the intersection of Lazell and South Pleasant. He noted that the existing shared driveway access would remain and be used to enter the site. No stones are proposed to be removed from the site, they will do pre & post construction photographs is the Board would like, and, they would like to build the driveway prior to winter if possible. Mr. Brodsky said that there will be no problem with the walls being reconstructed in the drainage swale or raingarden because the water will flow through the gaps in the stone wall. The driveway is to be 1,584 square feet and there will be 217 cfm water in a 1" storm, so it is a small amount of flow. Why is the driveway proposed? The Applicants want access over their frontage.

Mr. Tondorf-Dick said he is concerned about raising the slope from the existing grades, and concerned about the intervention to the natural system and the impact that will have on the scenic road landscape. He asked why the driveway has to be so steep and curved to follow existing grades? Mr. Brodsky said that the driveway was designed for managing storm water, and, the

grade is raised by the street. Mr. Tondorf-Dick noted that as a result the streetscape view will be altered from the natural agrarian view, and the proposal also has significant swales. He noted the precedent is to work with the grades. Ms. Corey commented that the panel on this application were on the original decision and worked hard over 4 meeting to minimize curb cuts on this scenic road. She said she had concerns about safety as others have raised, related to additional curb cuts in this same location on Lazell Street previously. She noted that in 2008 the Deputy Chief expressed concerns about the number of curb cuts on this one way section of road way, and that Chief Olsson had expressed concerns of a similar nature more recently. She said that in her opinion it is a safety issue adding another curb cut close to the intersection on this steep, narrow, one way section of the road. Ms. Corey noted that the present shared driveway configuration was approved because it resulted in less impact on the historic walls and streetscape of the scenic road. It was noted that stone walls should be replaces as a stone wall on the streetscape, otherwise there is an impact. This is a scenic road so it is protected. Ms. Corey noted that the former DPW superintendent and conservation agent both had objections to the multiple curb cuts in this area of steep grades. She cited the concerns noted in the March 13 and March 27 minutes, and said that what this project is asking for is not consistent with the intent of the scenic roads act, and unsafe. The Police Chief has expressed concerns and would require additional signage which is not desirable in this location either. The Board noted that this is an unnecessary road cut, with a steep slope to the driveway. Mr. Brodsky said the extra stone could be used in other places on Lazell Street.

The Board then asked for public comment. Andrea Young provided comments from her perspective as a citizen. She said she felt it was important to protect historic and architectural elements I the town. She noted that walls are a historic phenomenon and a geologic phenomenon. They are part of our heritage and landform. Walls were used to mark paths and boundaries. Many were lost or overgrown over the years. Farmers built them when clearing fields. This is why South Pleasant Street and Lazell Street are scenic roads. Gaps do occur over time. This is common. Sadly walls are taken by private residents and we lose them over time. Walls are precious. Using stones as part of a driveway is not in keeping with what we are doing to protect these resources. Any disruption has an impact. For example, a raingarden isn't the original landscape. Additional signage on the scenic road would be unfortunate. Sadly human nature is to take shortcuts so perhaps this site would be accessed from South Pleasant Street, who knows for sure. There is access in and out now, and the number of curb cuts for these houses were minimized in 2008 for good reason.

Mr. Brodsky asked the Board for a continuation to the hearing to allow the engineer of record to respond to questions on the grading. The Board discussed dates and Mr. Brodsky said he was not sure that he was available that day. The Board noted that they had a full agenda. The Board discussed timing and all agreed that the Board would try to hear the matter on May 2nd if something came off the agenda, but more likely it would be on the June 6th agenda. A written request was submitted and the Board granted the extension and continued the hearing as requested.

Old/New Business:

1. Discuss Draft Planning Board Comments on Viking Lane Comprehensive Permit – The planning board reviewed the working draft and suggested edits and additional information. The Town Planner will revise the draft for finalization on April 25th before Town Meeting.

As there was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary F. Savage Dunham
Town Planner