TOWN OF HANOVER
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Board of Selectmen

December 14, 2009

Eugene Beaupre, Chairman
Hanover Zoning Board of Appeals
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, Massachusetts 02339

Dear Gene:

In response to the Town Planner, Andrew Port's memo dated October 26, 2009, we submit the following regarding Woodland Village:

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Town of Hanover recognizes the need to have all communities reach the goal of ten percent affordable housing in compliance with MGL 40B. The Town acknowledges the importance of reaching the ten percent level and is proud of working towards this goal. The Department of Housing and Community Development recently notified the Board that the Town of Hanover has been certified and is in compliance with its Affordable Housing Plan.

The Board is concerned that this is immediately adjacent to an existing residential neighborhood and the residents of this neighborhood will be significantly and permanently inconvenienced and have to endure total disruption of increased construction traffic, noise and other related intrusions during the construction phase.

The Board of Selectmen previously requested comments from various Town Departments and Boards and received the following input. The Board suggests that the Applicant meet with these Departments/Boards to discuss concerns.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

1. The Conservation Agent has walked the site on multiple occasions and reviewed the files related to previous wetland permits for this site as well as the abutting parcels. The Agent found extensive wetlands on the site and one or more vernal pools. The Agent reported that the owner has had a wetland scientist flag these wetland resource areas, but there has not been a filing with Conservation/DEP to validate these resource area boundaries. What are the applicant's plans for having the wetland resource areas confirmed on this parcel? (The Commission recommends that the applicant file an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation.) With such a significant amount of new impervious surface, what are the applicant's plans for satisfying the new MA DEP Storm water Management Regulations? If the applicant is proposing to fill any wetland resource areas, is he aware that there has been previous wetland filling on this site and that the MA Department of Environmental Protection would need to approve any additional wetland alteration?

2. The Conservation Agent noted that not until the applicant files an ANRAD, or a Notice of Intent, with the Conservation Commission will they be able to know the extent of the wetland resources. The Agent suggested that the property owner have these areas confirmed by the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission is concerned that site plans have been drafted without any approved wetland delineation. There are a few large vegetated wetlands on the parcel as well as some potential vernal pools.
3. If the project is not subject to review by the Hanover Planning Board, who will be responsible for storm water review?

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department has done an initial review of the proposal. As the project progresses through the approval process, additional reviews will be done and the Department will work with the applicant and Town Boards to ensure that Department concerns are addressed.

Listed below are the Departments initial comments on the proposal.

1. Based on the proposed access through residential neighborhoods, with varying roadway widths and conditions; along with the distance of the dwelling units from the nearest manned fire stations, it will be of utmost importance to determine if response times fall within acceptable standards.
2. In terms of site access, the requirement is that the angle, width and grade of roads/ driveway provided be sufficient to allow access for fire department apparatus from both directions. It appears that the interior site access does not meet these requirements. Who will insure that these requirements are met?
3. In terms of building access, the Board of Fire Prevention Regulations 527 CMR 25: Obstructions And Hazards In Certain Buildings And On Public Or Private Ways sec. 25.07 Buildings Of Habitable Occupancy stipulates "Each building built for residential occupancy after the approval of 527 CMR 25 shall include a suitable paved access for fire apparatus on at least one side of the structure. In addition, a clear, unobstructed way shall be provided from such fire apparatus access point to all exits of such building…." It appears that this proposal does not meet this requirement. Who will insure that these requirements are met?
4. The approximate 1,510-foot proposed gravel emergency road access does not meet any of the design requirements for Fire Department access. Will the State require the developer to modify the design?
5. Proposed landscaping must be designed to prevent infringement on the roads/ driveways and blocking access to the buildings for fire department operations.
6. Fire hydrants shall be located on looped water main, spacing to be determined by the Department of Public Works, Water Division. The final placement of hydrants must be approved by the fire department. These hydrants should be in operating condition prior to the beginning of construction. The spacing shall be such that the distances from the hydrant to the buildings not exceed 300 feet.
7. Fire Protection systems must be installed in accordance with 780 CMR and Massachusetts General Law. Chapter 148, section 26I requires that any building

occupied in whole or in part for residential purposes and containing not less that four (4) units shall be equipped with an approved system of automatic sprinklers in conformance with the provisions of the State Building Code. Building plans review must be performed prior to issuance of building permits. Plan review to include review by Town's appointed Fire Protection Engineer. Costs associated with this review to be borne by the applicant. Has the applicant budgeted for this cost?

8. A minimum distance of thirty feet between the building and the natural vegetation must be cleared and maintained to prevent any issues with a wild land fire.
9. Will the State require adequate building separation be addressed so as to ensure protection of adjacent properties? By statute, not all of the housing units will be required to be provided with an automatic fire sprinkler system. With a project of this size, and with limited fire protection systems built in, it will be imperative that buildings be separated so as to limit exposure to a fire incident.
10. Fire Alarm systems shall be provided in each unit per State Building Code. If required, a U.L. listed, monitored fire alarm system shall be installed. Panel location to be approved by the Fire Department. The fire alarm system shall alert all occupants, and notify the fire department. This will be to the standards set in 527 CMR and 780 CMR.
11. All habitable structures shall be equipped with Carbon Monoxide protection as described in the Fire Prevention Regulations 527 CMR and the State Building Code 780 CMR.
12. Buildings with Fire Alarm/Sprinkler Systems shall have an exterior red flashing horn/strobe to indicate the fire alarm is activated.
13. No construction or delivery of building supplies until the road is of sufficient quality to support emergency vehicle traffic in all weather conditions.
14. No town department/board issues a certificate of compliance unless the buildings are clearly marked with the assigned numbers in compliance with MGL chapter 148 section 59.
15. The owners shall detail their plan in writing for the control of gas fired and other fueled barbeques grill on any proposed balconies to the fire department.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. The project will increase traffic on Woodland Drive between 300 to 600 vehicles per day, depending upon how many vehicles are owned by the project residents.
2. Woodland Drive is a thickly settled neighborhood with a maximum posted speed of 25 miles per hour. The area is currently traffic sensitive, with some times of the year more sensitive than others.
3. The Department can undoubtedly anticipate more calls for service, both in the build-out phase and the finished phase of the project.
4. Traffic wise, this project will change this area from one of great concern, to simply dangerous. In addressing the entrance to Woodland Village, marked "Road B" on the map presented, there are concerns with respect to the proposed entrance location on the east side of Woodland Drive. When traveling northwest on Woodland Drive from Washington Street to Webster Street after passing Dillingham Way and Blue Spruce Lane, there is a right curve, followed by a downgrade. Special care should be taken with regard to preserving the line of sight and proper signage should be installed to insure that the new road is identified.

5. With regard to the intersection of Blue Spruce Lane, Woodland Drive and Dillingham Way, the traffic is currently controlled by two stop signs for eastbound traffic on Dillingham Way and one stop sign for westbound traffic on Blue Spruce Lane. With the expected increase in traffic flow, upgrading the intersection should be considered.
6. The proposal also calls for an entrance/exit to Woodland Village on Webster Street, in the area of Boston Interiors. An increase in traffic at this location is a concern due to an obstructed line of sight for westbound traffic on Webster Street, passing under Route 3. In addition, there is another construction project currently under consideration directly across from this Woodland Village project entrance/exit which would impact the traffic volume and flow.
7. Will the Police Department be involved with the resolution of all traffic issues?

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

1. Enrollment and Cedar School. Children from this proposed project that are eligible to be enrolled in Pre-kindergarten through Grade 4 would attend Cedar School. The proposed location of this project means that elementary students would be attending their neighborhood school which is Cedar. As of October 1, 2008, Cedar has an enrollment of 522 students. All available and suitable spaces for classrooms are currently being utilized with the exception of one which provides space for students, personnel and equipment for a very robust Before and After School program. In addition, Cedar houses the Teepee Program, a very successful daycare program. Obviously, if elementary age students move into the Woodland Village development, then class size which is currently 21-23 would be impacted first. After that there would be financial considerations if the need to add an additional class(es) and teaching staff members arises. Also, another financial impact could be felt in the cost for SPED services. These costs can have large fluctuation ranges depending on the level of services. Although the state currently has mitigated the initial entry of a student during the year through costs sharing for that year, that cost would become Hanover's in the following year. In addition to these costs, there is the assumption that new staff will be needed which would result in added costs and benefits added to the fiscal year 2008 total expenditure of $10,121 per pupil system-wide; noting that yearly there has been at least a 5.3 percent increase per pupil. Finally, depending on the number of students, there could be increased costs in transportation system-wide.
2. Enrollment and Redistricting to Center/Sylvester School. If the proposed project brought an increase in the enrollment at Cedar School to an amount that could not be accommodated at Cedar School, the Hanover Schools would need to study, propose, and consider redistricting students to Center/Sylvester. A look at Center/Sylvester would indicate that it is really not possible to absorb redistricted students and that this would just be moving the enrollment problem from one elementary district to the other elementary district. Center/Sylvester is used to capacity to accommodate approximately 620 students. In the absence of space, an increase in enrollment would mean an increase in class sizes.
3. Enrollment and the Middle School. Children from this proposed project who are eligible to be enrolled in Grades 5 through 8 would attend Hanover Middle School. The same issues mentioned under the elementary impact statement would hold true for the Middle

School – staffing increases, additional benefits, increases in class size, transportation and the like. However, the added pressure point is that unlike Cedar where two rooms could be retrofitted into classrooms, there is no space at the Middle School. Currently the Middle School has 922 students as of October 1, 2008. There are no additional classrooms available. In fact, two rooms once leased out to a collaborative were taken back recently and retrofitted for technology. A substantial increase in student enrollment would first increase class size which currently ranges from 23-27 students depending on grade level. Additional classrooms and new staff would be needed. It is important to note that without current rooms available to convert into classrooms, there is the potential that some other option would need to be determined such as relocation of a grade and/or portables. Any option presents a significant financial, programmatic and more importantly educational challenge to the district.

4. Enrollment and the High School. Children from this proposed project who are eligible to be enrolled in Grades 9 through 12 would attend Hanover High School. This school is filled and scheduled to capacity to accommodate approximately 739 students. In the absence of space, an increase in enrollment would mean an increase in class sizes. An increase in class sizes would place demands on course offerings, electives, and AP courses. Although the High School, by virtue of the way programming is developed, could probably best take an increase, the current building is 50 years old and any significant increase in population could overtax an old building and create more facility issues than currently exist. Having stated this, there would also be a need for additional staff.
5. Staffing, Student Services, Related Services, Materials, and Resources. Additional students at any school would mean increased personnel and increased costs related to staffing, student services, related services, materials, and resources. Additional costs may arise based on needs of students.
6. Transportation. We are currently contracting for the number of buses required to transport the current enrollment. Transportation is provided Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8. Fee-based transportation is available for a limited number of high school students. New streets and additional students would constitute a need for new routes and additional buses and/or additional costs related to additional mileage. Based on potential needs of students, additional vans for transportation of students with special needs may need to be considered. Can the developer give the Town static, probabilities of the likelihood of special needs students residing in this large development?
7. School Building Needs. The School Building Needs Committee has been working over the years to propose and move forward school building projects including the consolidation of the Center and Sylvester schools to one facility. Any discussions about increase in enrollment must include discussions about financial support for school buildings.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The DPW has received limited documentation on the proposed 40B development and therefore cannot fully identify specific comments at this time. However there are several general concerns:

1. Concerns regarding this project center on drainage and water supply. Given the known amount of ledge beneath the Walnut Hill neighborhood raises concerns that the drainage in the project receives a thorough review prior to being permitted so as not to impact the septic systems and potentially the health of the abutters. Who would be responsible for damages to existing dwellings in the surrounding area? Will a proper impact study be required of this known issue?
2. The water main for the proposed complex must be of sufficient size, be properly looped for public health purposes to avoid stagnant water, and meet all of the DPW's rules and regulations regarding construction methods and materials to preserve the integrity of the public water supply.
3. We are also concerned in general that the Town's water management act permit is currently severely stressed due to large scale developments from the past few years and there may not be enough room under the permit cap to supply the necessary water for this or other similar projects. What provisions are being required to insure there will be an adequate water supply provided to a project of this size with the current permit cap? If the water needs of this project, as determined by the developer and agreed to by the Town, exceed the Towns capacity, can this project be built?
4. Drainage should be such that it will contain runoff to prevent dangerous icing conditions and prevent flooding on adjacent properties.

This is a significant and population intensive development proposal. It is clear the impact it will have on the Town of Hanover is significant and needs to be identified and quantified. We look forward to your assistance in accomplishing this goal.

Very truly yours,

R. Alan Rugman
Chairman

David C. Greene
Selectman

Daniel A. Pallotta
Selectman

A\12.14.09 - ZBA re Woodland Village