

MINUTES OF THE DESIGN WORKING SESSION
SUDBURY BOARD OF APPEALS
Thursday, April 7, 2011

In Attendance:

Jeff Klofft, Zoning Board of Appeals
Jon Gossels, Zoning Board of Appeals
Jody Kablack, Planning and Community Development
Beth Rust, Sudbury Housing Trust
Ben Stevens, Trask, Inc.

Mr. Stevens presented attendees with a draft of a revised site plan. In the new plan, front setbacks were kept to fifty feet, with twenty-five feet from wetlands, and twenty feet from neighbors. After the initial hearing Mr. Stevens essentially flipped the original plan front to back, which would leave the same curb cut as originally proposed and require a smaller retaining wall with increased plantings. A Cul-de-sac would form at the back. He also suggested changing three-unit groupings to four-unit clusters. A four-unit building could stand at the left-hand side of the development although he would need to get approval from the Fire Department for the ninety foot diameter cul-de-sac. Driveways in the area could be driven over by emergency vehicles if need be. Mr. Stevens said that he felt strongly that the left-hand units need to face in toward the other units and not out toward Boston Post Road.

Mr. Klofft stated his concerns about the visual impact from Route 20. He wanted to see as many front-facing units as possible on Route 20 and less density at the front of the development.

Mr. Gossels said that a focal point was perhaps needed on the units with walk-outs. He felt that there currently was no room for landscaping around the lower units. He also wanted some common green space created as he felt that open space would be more attractive to buyers.

Mr. Stevens brought as a comparative reference the plans for the 40B development The Villages at Old County Road.

Mr. Klofft asked if there were architectural details that could be added to the upper floors so it would look interesting from Boston Post Road and not as flat. He liked the denser, mounded landscaping which he felt was better for the neighbors. Mr. Stevens agreed that he too liked the open space at the center of the development, although he noted that the setback was tighter by the wetlands area.

Mr. Gossels said that he was still struggling with the number of units. He felt that thirty-two units was too many and suggested that twenty-eight units would be better. He agreed that the revised design was an improvement, however he feels that four-unit groupings are too much for the lot.

Ms. Kablack said that all of the proposed interior buildings had four-units and two of the interior units were the proposed affordable units.

Ms. Rust suggested that to reduce the size of the buildings, one of the affordable units could be a one-bedroom unit as there is a high demand for one-bedroom units.

Mr. Stevens said that from his experience at Old County Road all of the interior affordable units had two cars. The market trend for the middle units appeared to be single parents with children either full-time or visiting on weekends, and couples without children.

Mr. Stevens said that he still feels that the project can be done with thirty-two units, maybe by increasing the affordable units to four-unit groupings. He said that if all of the buildings were comprised of three-units then he would lose the four middle units. He said he preferred to maintain the middle four units. He did propose decreasing the spacing between the units as another means by which to shift buildings.

Ms. Kablack asked Mr. Stevens how he could incorporate a one-bedroom unit.

Ms. Rust suggested that perhaps the Sudbury Housing Trust could do an affordable housing buy-down.

Mr. Stevens said that constructing a thirty-unit project with a ninth affordable unit as a buy-down unit would allow one more market rate unit and one more affordable unit to be built. He said that the affordable buy-down unit could be reduced to a one-bedroom.

Mr. Gossels said that a thirty-unit development was better than a thirty-two unit development.

Discussion ensued about changes to interior layouts and alterations to square footage.

Ms. Kablack asked whether buyers were interested in three-bedroom units. Mr. Stevens said that there was some interest and that it helps with negotiations to have a three-bedroom unit to offer.

Mr. Stevens said that he would create another set of plans to incorporate comments. It was decided that one more working session would be scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2011 before the next public meeting on Monday, April 25, 2011.