

MINUTES OF THE DESIGN WORKING SESSION
SUDBURY BOARD OF APPEALS
Thursday, April 21, 2011

In Attendance:

Jeff Klofft, Zoning Board of Appeals
Jody Kablack, Planning and Community Development
Ben Stevens, Trask, Inc.

Mr. Stevens walked participants through another set of revised site plans. The plans included thirty-two units. He said that the development could be no larger than thirty-two because there could be no more than sixty-four bedrooms total due to septic system constraints. In regard to the interior units, seven were two-bedroom, one of the affordable units was one-bedroom, and one was a three-bedroom unit.

Mr. Stevens explained that an “S-curve” driveway extended from the entrance at Boston Post Road. The first and closest building was located thirty-two feet from the roadway, which, for comparison, is farther back than the buildings at the Villages at Old County Road. He said that the building is visible from Boston Post Road, but there would be a berm and landscaping as a buffer which also shields the view from the closest abutting neighbor.

He said that a landscape plan has not yet been prepared. Mr. Stevens will hire a landscape architect as plans are closer to the final stages. To address concerns raised by Mr. Gossels at the last working session Mr. Stevens noted that the ground is flat at the backs of the units where the patios are planned so there could be ample landscaping. Mr. Klofft asked about fencing. Mr. Stevens said that he preferred to use landscaping and the neighbor located in that area has several trees.

In regard to spacing between the units, Mr. Stevens said that he could create an additional foot of green space between the middle units by reducing the width of the units by a foot and making them deeper. He preferred not to do this, however.

Mr. Klofft asked about reducing the number of units from thirty-two to thirty. Mr. Stevens said that he had studied financial scenarios for fewer units and found that it would increase costs all around to do so. It would cost more per unit to build fewer so that the project may no longer be affordable for Trask, Inc. He then listed the associated costs, including fees for stretch code compliance, town permitting fees, and green energy code compliance. He said that the only way to reduce the number of units affordably would be to make them duplexes except for some triples with the affordable units located in the middle. However he said that doing so would make an obvious distinction between the affordable units and the market rate units whereas as the plan stands now there is no notable difference. He also said that the tenor of the project would change as the number of buildings increased. He also said that it would be more difficult to get final approvals and financing with that kind of development.

With a thirty-unit scenario there would be eighteen end units and a four unit building which would yield only one affordable unit for the whole project. Mr. Stevens questioned whether it was worth it for the ZBA to go through the comprehensive permit process to reduce by only two units and losing one affordable unit. Mr. Klofft said that the quality of the project might be better at thirty than at thirty-two. He felt that thirty-two was too tight.

Ms. Kablack said that the visual aspect was better in the plans Mr. Stevens showed today with some smaller units and a central green included. She suggested that the ZBA might have a broader discussion at the hearing on April 25.

Mr. Stevens said that he would bring this set of plans to the hearing and would also create a rough sketch of the development. He would also run the numbers again for a thirty versus thirty-two unit development. The next public meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 25.