

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TOWN of DAMARISCOTTA
Monday, May 1, 2023 – 6:00PM

Hybrid Meeting: Town Office & via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Eaton, Chairperson; Jenny Begin, Neil Genthner, Wilder Hunt, and Ann Jackson

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Gary Rosenthal, and Dan Day

ABSENTEES: Gary Rosenthal

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Martone, Acting Town Planner; Lynda Letteney, Recording Secretary

PUBLIC PRESENT: Steve Bushey; Meg Robinson; Laura Reading; Steve Weatherhead; Dick McLean; Steve Hefnagel (6:55 pm); Haven Simmons, LCTV; and, Elizabeth Waltztoni, Lincoln County News

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Eaton led the Pledge at 6:00pm

2. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm by Chairperson Eaton

3. Review of Meeting Minutes

On motion (Genthner/Hunt) to approve the minutes of March 6, 2023 and April 11, 2023, as presented.

Vote: 5-0-0

4. Public Hearing

Review Site Plan Application 207 Ledgewood Court Drive (Tax Map 001, Lot 050-003)

Michael Martone, Acting Town Planner, introduced this project for the public hearing. At the last meeting (4/11/23), the project was reviewed by the Board. This public hearing is to review the changes and updates since that meeting, and entertain approval of the application. Michael said that they would proceed with the project presentation and then go over the changes and conditions.

Meg Robinson, Developers Collaborative, opened the presentation by stating this would be affordable housing with 32 single bedroom units for residents 55+ in age. The companion units (24) are in an existing adjacent building and it is for family housing. They hope to get approval for low-income authorization. Plan is to get the financing in 2024 and finish building ready for occupancy in fall of 2025. The current management company will remain in place. A total of 6.5 acres will be devoted to the new development. This building is connected to the existing housing by sidewalks. This property is zoned within the village and is close to many amenities. Taxi and rideshare are available. All units are one bedroom with 4 ADA accessible units. There are 33 parking spaces with 4 being ADA accessible. The goal is to provide a safe, clean, affordable housing so our community can "age in place."

There is a demonstrated need in this community for affordable housing: 60% can't afford a two-bedroom apartment now. Cost is indexed to 60% of the area's median income (\$35K-\$39K) at \$906/month.

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There is a limited funding gap allocated by Maine Housing, and Damariscotta qualifies for additional points. The project is LYTEL Program qualified. This is cost effective for high quality living.

Steve Bushey, Civil Engineer with Gorrell Palmer, presented updates from the previous hearing. Parking lot spaces are now at a 30' setback (single lane parking). The patio has been modified to accommodate the fire lane. Waste is now 50' away from building. There will be 2 acres cleared for building parking and water capture.

Jenny Begin asked if the utilities were buried. Response was yes; the division into 2 parcels is all compliant. Sewer and power are already there. They are reusing the pump station which has been approved by the sewer district. Water is an extension of the water main, with a branch off and second hydrant. Building is fully equipped with sprinklers. Fire and Police have voiced no concerns, but they are awaiting to hear officially in writing. LP tanks will be installed underground (ok with ordinance). Power will be underground with an emergency generator, wired to the pump station or well. The lighting has been updated with new parking lot configuration. 6-16' poles w/1.2 candle light. 2.0 is the new security standard. 2.3 is the highest in one spot, 0.3 average; 1.2 average in parking lot. Parking lot bollards are only required to be 36" but with winter weather and snow banks often that high, 42" is recommended.

Landscaping: They will be using an ALA landscape architect. The Board asked for black ash indigenous people used this), but experts say that the ash boor is significant in southern/central Maine and it probably won't make it. Plan is for yellow birches, red maples, a mix of deciduous and evergreens with lawn and meadow. A ramped sidewalk to Piper Mill Road is planned.

- Waivers:
- 1) Reduction of sidewalk from 8' to 6';
 - 2) sight frontage sidewalk no needed;
 - 3) landscape design rendition shows patio 10.5' X 48'

Steve Weatherhead spoke next saying that this was a 2-story facility with 16 units per floor, 4 of them ADA compliant (2 up and 2 down). Entry is at the main entrance in the middle of the building; 2 egresses at either end are exits only. Some discussion as to whether residents could have a swipe key for the ends. Color scheme is gray on gray on gray-with three different shadings. Jenny asked if there was to be a covered area for the patio (even if it were seasonal?) Jenny also asked if there was an interior rear elevator. Response: No, just off the main entrance. Jenny asked if there was an on-site manager. Yes, but the office will be in the first building.

Steve Bushey spoke to other permits. A tier 1 Army Corps of Engineers permit has been issued re: wetlands. A DEP permit for stormwater management has been written, awaiting signature. Site Plan standards give the developer one year to start construction. Steve asked if there can be a time extension. Jenny said if there are no changes, no problem. Steve Hefnagel from Coastal Rivers spoke in favor of the project (abutter); he said the land trust is also in favor. Dick McLean also spoke in favor. The Treasurer of Mid-Maine Community Action spoke saying that they had no stake in the project directly, but their mission revolves around housing. Dick McLean, speaking about the management company, said that historically it was not functioning well. When C&C took over, it became flawless; highly recommend the current management company.

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Hearing no other comments, questions or concerns, the public hearing was closed at 7:05 pm by Chairperson Eaton.

Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

Mr. Michael Martone found this project to be consistent with the Town's most recent Comprehensive Plan (June 2014-February 2015) and falls within the Village Expansion Area.

The request meets the conditional use standard as defined by 101.9.C.2. This is a multifamily dwelling in a rural area. Meets Articles 1-8 with no adverse effect on health or safety; sanitary district has okayed with a letter; water district also approved with letter; quiet subdued environment. All dimensional standards are met (under the maximum); setbacks are okay as are street frontage and building height. Site Plan Review noted a waiver request for 2.3 maximum lighting in the parking lot. The Board finds that the landscaping within and around the proposed parking area including the peninsular in front of the main entrance, and at either end of the parking area meets the requirements of 102.6.H.6.b.

Lighting:

Jenny opened discussion stating that if 1.0 is what's in the ordinance, that's what we should stick to. Wilder Hunt said he was in favor of the waiver as it enhanced safety. Jenny said she was very concerned about light pollution. Dan Day said given it is senior housing, we don't need someone tripping and falling. Neil Genthner reminded the Board the plan was to have some go out at night (10:00 pm-6:00 am). When asked about wall mounted or single pole. Consensus was a pole. Additionally light shielding @75 degrees from nadir with no up lighting. (Note: When revising ordinances review lighting restrictions).

On motion (Genthner/Jackson) to accept the application as complete with 2(two) waivers approved: bollards to a 42" height; and lighting variation to allow 2.3 candle light in the parking area.

Vote: 5-0-0

On motion (Genthner/Jackson) to approve the Conditions of Approval with the addition of dimmer ability for all exterior lights from 10 pm - 6 am.

Vote: 5-0-0

The need for crosswalks connecting Ledgewood Court and the Piper Mill Rd facility was brought up. Initially the project manager will see to this. Maintenance will have to be figured out by property owners on the road. Jenny Begin also asked about runoff into Castner Creek. Are the fertilizer and weed control/herbicides being monitored? Michael said it was not land use so not for the Planning Board. Management of the facility is responsible.

5. OTHER

- a. Questions from the Public**
(none)

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b. Planner's Report

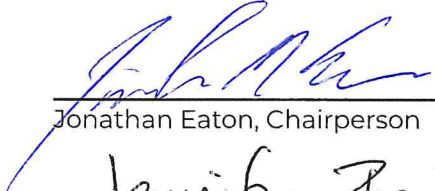
Michael plans to have the next meeting to go over changes in the ordinances; updates to Site Plan Review; and identify where the Comprehensive Plan fits in. He would like to know if the Board prefers a special workshop meeting or do this the first meeting in June (the 5th). Consensus was to do it at the next meeting. Michael will forward all of Isabelle's updates ahead of time. Jenny reminded the Board that this would have to go to a special town meeting or be on the November ballot as it is too late for the June Town Meeting.

6. Adjournment


On motion (Genthner/Begin) to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Vote: 5-0-0


We the undersigned approve the minutes for the Planning Board Meeting of May 1, 2023.


Jonathan Eaton, Chairperson

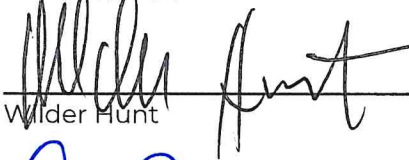
6/5/23
Date


Jenny Begin

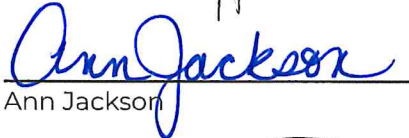
6/5/23
Date


Neil Genthner

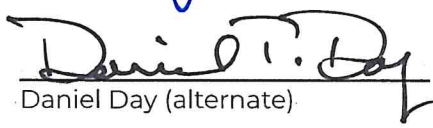
6/5/23
Date


Wilder Hunt

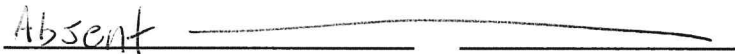
9-17-23
Date


Ann Jackson

6/5/23
Date


Daniel Day (alternate)

9/12/23
Date


Absent
Gary Rosenthal (alternate)

Date