

TOWN OF BEDFORD
August 13, 2020
PLANNING BOARD
CHESTNUT DRIVE SITE WALK MINUTES

A site walk of the Bedford Planning Board was held on Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at Chestnut Drive, Bedford, NH to view a site plan violation that occurred at the site of a proposed 93-unit workforce housing development. The site plan violation involved the removal of trees from the site prior to final approval of the site plan and without a performance guarantee for site stabilization and erosion control in place, and the removal of trees within the vegetative buffer area as shown on the conditionally approved site plan. Present for the site walk were: Rick Sawyer (Town Manager), Mac McMahon, Stephen Clough, Priscilla Malcolm, Charlie Fairman (Alternate), John Quintal (Alternate), Becky Hebert (Planning Director), and Mark Connors (Assistant Planning Director). Also participating in the site walk were the applicant's representatives Tom Burns, Mike Krzeminski and Adam Jimenez of TFMoran, Brian Mikol as well as Joanne Dumas, Paul Scarpetti, and Jennifer McCourt.

Planning Director Hebert started the site walk at 9:32 a.m. and asked all participants to introduce themselves. Ms. Hebert noted that there were a few ground rules for the site walk. The site walk was being conducted purely for informational purposes in preparation of the anticipated site plan amendment application to be submitted to address the site plan violation and removal of trees in the site buffer area. Mr. Connors handed out plans showing the approximate vegetated buffer as stipulated on the approved site plan and areas where encroachments into the buffer area had occurred. The site walk will follow the boundaries of the site to view areas where trees were cut inside the 'no-cut' buffer zone or outside the property boundaries. Site walk participants should withhold comments until the public hearing. She noted that the applicant's representative, Tom Burns of TFMoran, would help lead the site walk.

Mr. Burns noted that orange and white flags marked the property boundaries, blue flags marked edges of wetlands, and signs staked into the ground indicated the approximate no-cut boundaries under the site plans. Participants in the site walk noted several areas where trees were cut within or immediately adjacent to the 'no-cut' area or outside the boundaries of the site. Mr. Quintal asked if the piles of brush and other debris would be removed from the site if they represented a fire hazard. Ms. Hebert indicated that a forester had already visited the site and indicated he had no concerns regarding fire hazards on the property. Mr. McMahon had to leave the site walk early at approximately 9:55 a.m.

Ms. Dumas and Mr. Scarpetti noted that the site boundary flag location looked different than they did on a previous site walk after the violation had occurred. Mr. Burns indicated that there should have been no changes to the flagging. Mr. Burns noted that the site would be re-flagged and the post would be numerically identified on an updated plan so that there was no confusion. Ms. McCourt noted that it was difficult to see the areas of clearing in some areas because of the large

piles of brush. Ms. Hebert noted that the Town would be consulting with a forester to fully evaluate the areas of clearing.

The participants walked uphill along the property boundary to Bedford High School where utility work was underway to extend natural gas service to the high school. There was general agreement that the encroachments of tree cutting had occurred on Ms. Dumas' property and not the Bedford High School property. The end of Chestnut Drive was closed because the Public Works Director had provided permission for that area to be used as a staging area for the utility work. The group returned to Chestnut Drive via the Bedford High School emergency access driveway at approximately 10:30 a.m. Mr. Mikol asked for an approximate timeline to address the issues. He indicated they were anxious to move forward. Ms. Hebert indicated that it depended on the owners and when they could submit an application for an amended site plan showing updated landscaping and restoration measures. She noted that she had been in touch with a forester, who could evaluate the areas of clearing, and VHB, who could conduct a peer review of a restoration plan. Ms. Hebert noted that the Board had to travel to another site walk scheduled at 11 am and thanked everyone for participating. The site walk concluded at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Mark Connors