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CRSE · Concerned Residents of Southeast

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Message 838 of 860 | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [Up Thread] [Message Index](#)

From: "Lynne Eckardt" <midfarm@bestweb.net>

Date: Tue Aug 17, 2004 2:34 pm

Subject: Southeast ZBA Recap 8/16/04

Hi All,

This is a highly abridged recap of the ZBA meeting last night. As always I am not bothering with shed and deck applications.

Rather mysteriously the Ross Alan 'Resource Protection Plan' variance had vanished from its number one slot on the agenda.

I'm a fan of this board but for the second month in a row only four of the seven Board members were in attendance. I actually miss Chairman Colello when he's not there. He has a good sense of humor, is kind, and seems to keep everything in perspective. Of course it helps immensely that Mr. Colello has a great BS detector and doesn't hesitate to use it. Come back, Chairman Colello, I'm beginning to think that no one wants to weigh in on the 'Resource Protection Plan' ...

Thanks to two new CRSE Board members, Brian Alberghini and Bill Heath, for attending. After all we don't call it the ZzzzzzzzzzBA for nothing.

AGENDA:

3. STEVEN HEWITT: 211 Joes Hill Road

The applicant was asking for four (4) variances in order to subdivide two lots on 14.9 acres without removing structures. The lots are oversized.

Neighbor, Willis Stephens Sr., seemed mollified by the offer to plant 150' of screening along the property line. Points were made that almost 80% of the land is on slopes of 10% and greater. The Board explained that they had no control over erosion, run-off or any environmental concerns. That these issues would fall within the purview of the Planning Board.

The Board granted the following four variances:

8' variance on the driveway, 22' variance on the cabana, 13' variance on the pool and 20' variance on the pool shed.

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4. ENVIRONSTAR: 50 Fields Lane

The applicant here was asking that a 'temporary' variance be granted allowing three Environstar trucks to park overnight at their Fields Lane location. Before the applicant can go back in front of the Planning Board all existing violations must be cleaned up. They will need a 'special permit' for outdoor storage.

Board member Costello seemed 'skeptical' (his word) that the applicant could find no where else to park the three offending trucks until this application has gone through the planning process.

This Public Hearing will be continued next month.

COMMENTS:

HEWITT SUBDIVISION: 211 Joes Hill Road

I particularly liked when the applicant's attorney explained that this project was proceeding swimmingly through the planning process and that it had recently received a 'negative declaration'. Considering that I haven't seen any project over the past two years receive a positive dec. I didn't think that this was really anything to write home about. And since all the ZBA has to consider is the variance itself, leaving the environmental fallout to the Planning Board, I'm not even sure why this was pertinent.

Much attention was paid to Mr. Stephens' concerns and once he was happy the Board seemed happy to let the four variances fly. Now it's back to the Planning Board with this baby.

ENVIRONSTAR: 50 Fields Lane

Dear God, concern shown over 'outdoor storage' on Fields Lane! Talk about a day late and a buck short.

Now, just try to imagine a 'special permit' use in this Office Park 1 zone. Oh right, almost everything along Fields Lane has been or is line to be 'specially permitted' because while some projects have an 'office' they are predominately warehouse or outdoor storage.

Ah, let me count the projects... Arborscape (landscaping), Palazetti (warehouse), Barnes (warehouse), Northwater (landscaping), and Hardscrabble Club (Health and Tennis) and that's in the last two years. And yes, there is one corporate proposal that's going in: Sutton Corporate Park. So in the 'Special Permit' column we have five projects and in the Office Park column we have one. Remind me again why after years of rezoning angst we've even bothered to retain OP 1 zoning for Fields Lane?

Well, as we have all been recently reminded 'special permits are allowed uses' especially when 'harmonious with the surrounding development' and if that's true who let Sutton Corporate Park through? It's clearly out of sync with all the surrounding warehouses, outdoor storage and landscaping materials.

Board member Costello was skeptical of Environstar's claim that they couldn't find affordable truck parking near by? Well, call me crazy but I'm beginning to get a little skeptical of the entire planning/zoning process in Southeast. Maybe it's time to focus on the big picture... rather than three trucks illegally parked over night.

As always please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or comments you might have.

With best regards,
Lynne Eckardt

Message 838 of 860 | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [Up Thread] [Message Index](#)

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