

**MEETING OF THE ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**  
**SITE VISIT: Scott-Farrar, 11, 13 & 15 ELM STREET**  
**Minutes of November 10, 2012**

**Members Present:** ZBA: Chairman Jim Stewart, Vice Chair Sharon Monahan, Loretta Laurenitis, Peter Leishman, Alternates Bob Lambert and Maude Salinger.

Board met at 9:00 am at 11 Elm Street. Only 2 vehicles parked in the “overflow” area, remainder of board and public parked in existing Scott Farrar parking lots or walked to site.

Chairman Jim Stewart opened meeting and handed out a letter to all present with guidelines for site visit. He went over the guidelines and stressed to public that questions should be kept to a minimum, only addressed through the Chairman and saved for the continued public hearing on continued 11/14 if possible as it is difficult to capture everyone’s questions and comments in the Minutes (of which the Chairman would be taking). Jim Stewart proposed that the group walk from the overflow parking area down Elm Street towards US101, down Evans Road, along the back of the property and Nubanusit River then back to the overflow area. After which time the group should walk down Union Street and back.

Representing Scott-Farrar, Jay Heavisides and Jerry Menke from EGA architects were asked to guide the group around the entire property and point out the location of the proposed buildings, parking areas and features.

Beginning of the guided tour included the location for the relocation of the existing Barn to be used as a maintenance shed. There was a discussion about where this Barn would be placed, grading requirements and the removal of trees necessary for its placement. As we walked up Elm towards US 101 other features were pointed out including the keeping of the existing stone wall, removal of the small house and removal of the house attached to Barn. Jay Purcell asked if the front door elevation of the new proposed entrance would be the same as existing and it was explained that it would be approximately 8 feet lower. As we moved toward the corner of Elm Street and Evans Road, Sharon Monahan asked a question about the elevation of the existing barn. It was stated that the top 2 floors of the barn is what would be relocated if it was structurally viable. The elevation of the barn in its new location would be the same as existing from the east side but lower than the existing elevation from the west side as a result of its existing grade (basically having what is similar to a “walk out basement”).

As we continued around the property on Evans road the proposed rear access, loading dock and retention basin were pointed out. Chair Stewart asked about consideration of moving the barn/maintenance shed to the rear of the property near the proposed retention basin. It was noted that because the proposal is in three districts, movement of the barn would place it in the family district; as a result its use in connection with the project would need a variance.

When we reached the back of the property there was a lengthy discussion regarding the existing sewer easement and its location. The manhole covers were pointed out. Jay Purcell asked about a “well developed” cluster of pines near the manhole cover and if they were going to be removed. It was noted that because of the increase in grade in that area, to accommodate the fire lane it was necessary to remove this cluster of trees. Many abutters had concerns that removal of

these well established trees would eliminate buffer and visibility to the new project for residents on Union Street. Chair Stewart stated that he appreciates these concerns but asked the residents to think about when there are property owners on opposite sides of a river does one owner have more of a right to control the others property? He pointed out for example that the removal of the well established pines in the back could be mitigated by substantial planting of conifers along the side of the property facing the Union Street abutters and in his opinion could actually improve the screening substantially greater than what exists. He stated that there is a balance the Board needs to find when reviewing any application; “we are doing our best to find this balance”.

Loretta Laurenitis had concerns about “filling in” areas near the river but it was explained by the applicant that they meant that it would be a vegetative infill and not a gravel infill.

After returning to the overflow parking area the group made their way down Union Street. June Strickland and other property owners on Union invited us to walk along the back of their property to observe the existing view to the Scott-Farrar Home. It was noted that the presentation on 11/8 by the applicant showing overlay photos and what the view would look like from 26 Union Street included the cluster of pines on the back of the property that would be cut down to accommodate the fire access.

The group made their way back to the proposed overflow parking area. There were several questions and comments by Board members that they wanted the applicant to try and address at Wednesdays continued Public Hearing.

Chair Stewart asked 1. Could the applicant provide a more exact list of all the special events and holidays they felt would require the overflow parking need; 2. An approximate number of employee vehicles that would be present on these dates; 3. If possible, provide a thorough landscaping plan that included conifers and other plantings that could be substantial enough to screen the proposed use from the abutters on Union Street; 4. If the applicant could provide a more thorough explanation of the requirements by the Fire Department regarding the fire lane in the back of the project and what other options if any were available for placement of the fire lane.

Peter Leishman felt overflow parking should be eliminated as it was his opinion that because of its location and terrain it would be a safety hazard to Elm Street and visitors and was unnecessary if other overflow accommodations were made. He also expressed concern that the removal of the cluster of tall pine tree at the back of the property for the fire lane would substantially decrease the screening to the abutters on Union Street to the back of the proposed retirement facility.

Loretta Laurenitis asked if an explanation could be provided to move the center part of the building forward towards Elm Street to eliminate the need all together for the variance and prevent having to cut the cluster of pine trees down in the back. She felt that on the plan there appeared to be room to make this accommodation.

Henry Taves asked about the upper level of the overflow parking if anything would be happening to it either improvements or parking. Jim Stewart explained that from the testimony and documents that have been submitted it was his understanding that this area would have no parking and be untouched; any enforcement of flagrant parking violators in this area would need to be enforced by the applicant or the town. June Strickland, Robert Wood, Matt Waitkins, Ian Meiklejohn and other abutters on Union again expressed their concern with this overflow parking area, their desire to have it eliminated from the plan as well as the need for vegetative buffer of substantial significance to mitigate the proposed expansion and removal of the well established pine trees in the back of the property. Posy Bass asked about final fire access requirements and if this was an issue that should be addressed by the ZBA or the PB. She also expressed concerns regarding the issues of what specifically should be addressed by the ZBA and what should be addressed by the Planning Board and that she did not want to see things get overlooked because one Board is thinking the other will address the issue.

An audience member asked about what time lights would be turned off and a discussion of whether this should be set by the ZBA or PB ensued.

Maude Salinger suggested the Board go to the knoll on Elm Street to look at site lines as this would be the primary access and drop off for the facility. Board and group walked to knoll. General observations included; there was no stop sign at Winter Street as it comes into Elm, vehicles came around the corner quite fast and there was a significant need to improve visibility of the crosswalks and to put in place traffic calming measures.

Loretta Laurenitis asked if it was possible for the Fire Chief to come to Wednesday's meeting to explain the fire lane, its necessity and location requirements. Chair Stewart said he will speak with Carol Ogilvie about this.

Documents submitted to the public record include the engineering drawing the applicant used during the site walk and a photo page from Robert Wood showing the back of his property looking at the existing Scott-Farrar home.

Site Visit ended approximately 11: 15 am.

Respectfully Submitted

Jim Stewart, Chairman

**Approved January 7, 2013**