



Town of Hinesburg
Planning & Zoning Department
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Development Review Board
FROM: Alex Weinhausen, Director of Planning & Zoning
DATE: March 11, 2013
RE: Bissonette Recreation Fields – Preliminary Plat Application Narrative

Attached to this narrative, you'll find preliminary plat application materials for the proposed 2-lot subdivision and Planned Unit Development (PUD) of the Haystack Crossing LLC (i.e., Bissonette family) property. The purpose of this subdivision/PUD is to create a lot to be transferred to the Town, for new recreation fields.

The DRB reviewed the sketch plan application for this project on November 20, 2012, and granted sketch plan approval on December 18, 2012. As previously discussed, the Bissonette Family has graciously offered to gift the Town a parcel of land for much needed municipal recreation fields. The overall Haystack Crossing LLC parcel is approximately 85 acres, and is located west of Route 116 and south of Shelburne Falls Road. This parcel is lot 4 from the 2011 Bissonette subdivision, the master plan for which anticipated the proposed recreation area. The current proposal is to create a new 10 acre parcel, referred to as lot 5, in the middle of the property at the western edge of the existing farm land in the Agricultural Zoning District – just west of the village growth area boundary. Lot 5 will be landlocked, but will have access to Shelburne Falls Road via a dedicated right of way. The sketch plan approval included several conditions of approval. Our progress to date on these issue areas is outlined below:

Order #1 – Standard Preliminary Plat Submission Requirements:

A preliminary plat/survey has been prepared. The draft deed language has been updated, but is still a work in progress. The overall engineering for the site remains largely the same. All of these items will be finalized after preliminary plat approval, prior to submission of the final plat application. A few of the technical submission requirements have not been addressed (Subdivision Regulations, Section 4.1.1 #9, 14, 15, 19). These will be addressed with the final plat application.

Order #2 – PUD summary and documentation:

This subdivision is proposed as a PUD. Pursuant to section 4.5.5, PUD applications must include: 1) a statement explaining the proposed zoning waivers; 2) a brief summary of the project and how it meets the PUD standards in section 4.5. First, no zoning waivers are requested or necessary. See above for the brief project summary. It is proposed as a PUD simply to allow transfer of future development potential from lot 5 to the balance of the property on lot 4. The idea is to hold the landowner harmless with regard to future development potential on the property. Since no residential development is proposed on lot 5, the PUD will transfer any development potential from the 10 acres that constitutes lot 5 on to the remaining land on lot 4. Section 2.4.4 (Zoning) prohibits density transfers into or out of the Village Growth Area; therefore, the density transfer will benefit only that portion of lot 4 that is in the Agricultural Zoning District. As you can see from the master plan, some residential lots are shown to

the east of the recreation fields, and still within the Agricultural Zoning District. It is likely that any development density in the AG district portion of lot 4 will be utilized in this area.

Regarding the PUD standards in section 4.5 (Zoning), this project fully conforms with both the purpose and the general standards. With the conceptual master plan in mind, the overall project certainly represents an innovative design that promotes the most appropriate use of the land in order to implement the vision expressed in both the Town Plan and the Zoning Regulations. The project meets several of the specific objectives listed in section 4.5.1, especially objective #2 by facilitating the adequate and economical provision of streets and utilities while providing a huge public benefit in the form of the gift of land for community recreation fields.

Although this project is simply an early step in the development of Haystack Crossing LLC property, the overall project master plan presents an efficient and unified treatment of the development possibilities, with provisions for future Town roads, water and sewer supply, pedestrian access, mixed uses, etc. Pursuant to section 4.5.8, this PUD must provide at least 15.4 acres of open space – i.e., 25% of 46 acres in the AG district, plus 10% of 38.56 acres in the Village NW district. Pursuant to section 4.5.6 #6, the location of this open space is flexible – i.e., it could in each district, or all in one district. This project provides approximately 10 acres of open space for recreation in the form of lot 5 to be given to the Town. The remaining 5.4 acres of required open space will be delineated within the southwestern portion of the property (west of lot 5) coincident with a large area of floodplain forest area that constitutes a “fragile feature” per section 4.5.8c.

Order #3 (a-e) – Items to show on the Preliminary Plat:

With the exception the stormwater pond location noted in Order #3e, all the other elements have been addressed. The northern boundary of lot 5 has been adjusted to ensure there is a full 100’ of width for the strip of land connecting the west and east sides of lot 4. This change also helps ensure that access to the western portion of lot 4 can be accomplished outside of the flood hazard area and stream setback area as much as possible. The future stormwater treatment area shown on the master plan should not be shown on the survey/plat as it is a conceptual feature specific to the master plan. With that said, it will easily be accommodated entirely on lot 4 – still along the southern boundary which is conducive for stormwater treatment as the lowest elevation on the site. The master plan simply needs to be amended to remove the large parking lot area shown to the east of the stormwater area. Parking areas will be more internal to future development patterns, meaning this parking element of the master plan is not necessary or even advisable in this location.

Order #4a – Utility plan:

The Town and a member of the Bissonette family met with a representative of Green Mountain Power on March 6, 2013 to discuss electrical utility planning for Haystack Crossing, including the recreation fields. The Fletcher Allen Health Care (FAHC) project will bring 3-phase power to the south side of Shelburne Falls Road, and the Town plans to install the maximum size underground conduit recommended by GMP from that vault south along the access road to just beyond the proposed FAHC driveway. This will ensure easy access to underground full capacity 3-phase power for future build out of the recreation fields and the Haystack Crossing property. Any electrical service to the recreation fields will be underground and will follow the existing water/sewer line as well as future roads. In all likelihood, the Town will not extend power to the recreation fields until such time that the master plan build-out brings power closer to the site. Initially the Town plans to simply build the fields, parking, and access road, with associated facilities requiring power (e.g., snack shack, restrooms) to come several years later. The Town is still negotiating with the landowner the best route for underground power to the fields if it is desired prior to build out of the master plan. In this event, it may simply follow the temporary access road shown on the plans. This will be clarified with the final plat application and legal

language. Potentially, solar power could also be explored as an onsite solution to generate power for the recreation field facilities.

Order #4b – Pedestrian connections:

This sketch plan condition asked for “plans and approximate construction dates” for pedestrian access. In the long term, the Haystack Crossing master plan and the Town’s Official Map anticipate sidewalk access from the north, east, and south along road infrastructure that will come with the future build out. There is no construction date for this full build out, as it will likely take 25+ years. In the short term, pedestrian and bicycle access from the north (Shelburne Falls Road) will be via the 18’ wide gravel road – i.e., a shared road concept (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle) similar to most of Hinesburg’s rural roads.

From the south, the short term solution to pedestrian access will be via one or more trails – i.e., mowed grass trails through the adjacent fields. The Trails Committee did an assessment, and suggests that the Town explore both Option A (along southern property boundary to Route 116) and Option C (LaPlatte River alignment across Lyman property and Town property to Farmall Drive) – see attached map dated 1/17/2013. The Bissonette family is agreeable to providing a temporary public trail easement to facilitate trail Option A. A temporary easement will allow the Bissonette family to renegotiate alternative/better pedestrian access as other development is proposed, and/or once the future road and sidewalk connection between the Bissonette and Lyman property is completed. In the short term, pedestrians will have to walk along a short segment of Route 116 north of Kinney Drugs to the trail head. However, once this trail connection is established, it should trigger a requirement from a previous DRB approval that a sidewalk be installed along this section of Route 116 by Hinesburg Center LLC (Brett Grabowski of Milot Real Estate) – i.e., the developer of the Kinney Drugs property. Trail Option C will require further consultation and landowner agreement by David Lyman. An application for the next phase of development of the Lyman property (by Brett Grabowski of Milot Real Estate) is expected shortly, so we will likely have an opportunity to discuss this further soon.

As to timing for these southerly trail connections, the Town will work with the Trails Committee to have Option A ready when use of the recreation fields begins – earliest possible time horizon would be fall 2014. The timing for Option C will depend on discussions with and approval by that landowner.

Order #4c – Design for Shelburne Falls Road intersection:

The Town is committed to building the Shelburne Falls Road intersection to the original design as approved by the DRB in the original 2011 Bissonette 4-lot subdivision. The recently approved FAHC project will construct the bulk of this intersection, and the first 200’ of the new access road. The Town will expand upon FAHC’s plans such that the final intersection will be consistent with the original design, which envisioned a wider intersection and initial road segment to allow for a left turn lane on the access road for traffic approaching the intersection. The Town is working with FAHC to coordinate this work, since construction is due to begin on the FAHC project in advance of any work on the recreation field project. After the initial 200’ of paved road (i.e., to the FAHC drive), the access road will become a 18’ wide gravel road for access to the recreation fields.

Order #4d – Deed and/or legal language:

Draft deed language detailing easements and rights of way is still being negotiated; however, a recent draft (2/26/2013) is attached. This will be finalized ahead of the final plat application submission. Regarding a road users association, the attorney for the Town (Roger Kohn) is reviewing the original Haystack Crossing Community association that was established as part of the 2011 Bissonette 4-lot subdivision. The Town may simply join this association, or may seek to modify it slightly. This will be finalized ahead of the final plat application submission.