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Martha's Vineyard Commission

Land Use Planning Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of August 20, 2007

Held in the Stone Building, New York Avenue, Oak Bluffs. 5:30 P.M.

Commissioners Present: John Breckenridge; Christina Brown; Peter Cabana; Chris Murphy, Kathy Newman; and Mimi Davisson

MVC Staff Present: Mark London; Paul Foley, Bill Wilcox, Christine Flynn

1. YMCA (DRI 600) Post- Public Hearing Review

Present for the Applicant: Mark Baumhofer; John Clese; Stephanie Mashek; Theodore Lempka.

Project Location: Village Road, Oak Bluffs, MA, part of Map 50 Lot 29 (5 of 25.2 acres)

Proposal: To construct a 35,000 square foot recreational facility with a pool, teen center, family programs, and eventually a gymnasium. The site occupies 5 acres within a larger 25.2-acre property owned the High School also occupied by MV Community Services and the Skate Park. The YMCA will be leasing the land from the High School in exchange for pool time for a High School Swim Team.

Geo-Thermal

- Stephanie Mashek (architect) said that they had asked their engineer to come this evening to speak to any refinements that would clarify the issue for commissioners.
- Ted Lempka of RFS (engineer) passed out a packet of four spreadsheets with a sensitivity analysis that the Commission had asked for.
- Chairman Brown said that she had left the written record open and that Mr. Lempka could not make an oral presentation.
- Commissioner Cabana said that if it were the conclusion of the YMCA that the geo-thermal system is not more cost effective than a conventional system, he would not want to force them to install geo-thermal. Whatever the analysis shows is what the YMCA should do. He did not think that it should be a condition set by the MVC.
- Commissioner Murphy agreed to a point. He doesn't want to push them too much but he does want them to seriously look at the geo-thermal option. He added that it would be nice to have a quick explanation of the graphs they had just received. We are getting information that will educate all of us and we should be able to come to a logical conclusion.
- Chairman Brown said we want to become more educated on geo-thermal. The Y has submitted written information. Educating us on geothermal is separate from our decision on the YMCA. Peter is willing to not condition the YMCA and let them make their own decision on this. She reminded the commissioners that sometimes we make recommendations.
- Commissioner Newman suggested that the decision be based not only on the dollar comparison; the payback should also be calculated in terms of the environment.
- Commissioner Murphy said that if we just look at the simple payback, if the price differential was 200,000 then it pays itself back in 12. 6 years and that would seem to make sense. When we were

looking at 45 years it did not make sense. If that is the number we are looking at, then why wouldn't the Applicant do it?

- Commissioner Cabana reiterated that he recommended that there be no condition regarding geothermal on this proposal but that the Y be encouraged to continue looking into it.
- Commissioner Davisson made a motion to recommend that the MVC is very interested in learning more about geothermal and encourages the Applicant to continue to study the benefits for geothermal and share their analysis with the MVC.
- Chairman Brown summarized the consensus, namely that we look forward to a forum in the future on geothermal and that we have re-written the third bullet as a recommendation.
- Commissioner Murphy noted that by the time the YMCA returns to the MVC to add their first addition we will all be better educated on this subject of geothermal.

Landscaping

- Commissioner Davisson said that the landscaping plan should say "shall" and should include "absorbing heat".
- Chairman Brown said she would like to add that the landscaping plan shall be submitted to the LUPC for review.
- Chairman Brown suggested the following wording for guidance in the preparation of the landscape plan: "In the perimeter of the building, non-native plants including cool season grasses for a lawn may be used; all landscaping outside of that perimeter shall be native plants only, predominately pitch pine and scrub oak with limited areas in native grasses such as little bluestem and switchgrass".

Affordable Housing

- Commissioner Davisson had previously suggested a condition that the YMCA make a payment to affordable housing and that they should include housing in a future phase.
- Chairman Brown pointed out that in clarifying their original offer, the YMCA had offered to donate \$7,100 a year for ten years to the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority's rental conversion program to be made available to YMCA employees.
- A commissioner asked what would happen if there are no eligible employees.
- John Clese clarified that they intend to donate \$7,100 a year to the DCRHA. They could rewrite the offer to read "limited to" instead of "targeted to" YMCA employees. They will donate the \$71,000 over ten years to the DCRHA. The money goes into the pot and it stays there as long as it lasts for YMCA employees. If YMCA employees are not eligible in a given year the money still goes to DCRHA and accumulates and is held until it is dispensed to YMCA employees.
- By consensus, members agreed to recommend that the YMCA offers, as clarified, were sufficient.

Transportation

Public Transit

- Commissioner Davisson brought up the suggestion by Angie Grant of the VTA that the bus stop and the drop-off should be exchanged.
- Commissioner Murphy said that you have to be logical. People are going to drop off as close to the front as possible and if you put a bus stop there you will create confusion. Whoever drew this up knew what they were doing and we should leave it alone.

- Chairman Brown said that although the Commission favors the general principle of prioritizing public transit, here it is a question of safety. It would be better to keep the car drop-off by the front door because younger children are more likely to be picked up or dropped off by parents and they should be able to get straight into the building, whereas kids riding the bus alone are more likely to be older.
- Commissioner Newman recommended that the YMCA carry out an informational campaign promoting the use of buses. It is especially important during the initial opening phase to get good information out about the bus system so people get used to using it from the start.

Parking Spaces

- Commissioner Breckenridge said that in the past, we have told applicants that they should only clear part of planned parking areas until there is compelling evidence for the need for additional spaces. He suggested that the YMCA not immediately create the 18 spaces closest to Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road until there is a proven need for them.
- Jim Miller said that the parking provided is projected for full build out and it would be reasonable to hold off on the 18 spaces.
- Commissioners wanted to know what the day to day use is would be. How many spaces do they need all of the time?
- Jim said that the YMCA Traffic Study came up with a trip generation of 1100 a day. He looked at the ITE parking generation and it came out to 250 spaces, which he thinks is on the high side. He thought the current design should be sufficient. He would be surprised if the daily need is more than 100 spaces.
- Commissioner Murphy said that if the Commission permits fewer spaces than they need on a daily basis, we are not doing them any favors. Commissioner Newman agreed.
- Some questioned whether Angie Grant's suggestion that we should cut parking spots further in order to force people to take the bus is realistic. It was also noted that we have already shaved them down a lot in the number of parking spaces.
- Chairman Brown noted that it is important that the area in back of the Arena become parking for the campus and not just bus parking.
- Jim noted that there are a lot spaces on the Arena that are not used at the same times that will be available.
- Mark London noted that there were only 57 exclusive YMCA spaces for their daily needs, and we will probably have to wait until the project is in operation to know whether this is sufficient. They cannot build more spaces because of NHESP.
- Mark Baumhofer then clarified that those 18 spaces are not on the YMCA lease land; that parking is already there and the trees are already gone.
- Commissioner Breckenridge withdrew the proposed condition.

Stormwater

- Commissioner Breckenridge felt that we should have two different sections for stormwater and wastewater. He asked that we move the stormwater-related conditions to their own section. He asked Bill Wilcox what he thought about some of his proposed stormwater conditions.
- Bill Wilcox said that they are okay but it seems that there is a lot of detail in there.
- Commissioner Breckenridge agreed that they are very detailed but felt it was important to include.
- Chairman Brown asked if the first line summed it up. She was concerned that it is a little too specific.

- Commissioner Breckenridge said he would like to keep it in there because unless you put it into the written record then it never gets to the engineer. He especially wanted to keep the first and third bullet.
- Chairman Brown summarized the consensus, namely that the details be included as examples rather than requirements.
- Bill Wilcox noted that the second proposed condition under stormwater is covered by the second offer under wastewater.

Habitat

- Chairman Brown noted that we wanted a time limit for the Conservation Restriction, which should be in place at the time the Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

Open Space

- Paul Foley noted that they cannot do a 90-foot buffer all along the rear boundary as offered because of some encroachment of a parking lot so it should just say as shown on plan. The Applicants and LUPC agreed.

Architectural Detailing

- Paul Foley noted that the offer on architectural detailing should be due before the Building Permit is issued rather than the Certificate of Occupancy. The Applicants and LUPC agreed.

Walking Trails

- Paul Foley noted that the offer under walking trails should be changed to read "as maintained as is" instead of "relocated where interrupted" since the revised plan that emerged from NHESP review no longer affects the trail. The Applicants and LUPC agreed.

Physical Therapy

- Commissioner Breckenridge would like to have a finding of fact or a condition that says the YMCA will have an open door policy to physical therapists and their client, provided they meet the YMCA qualifications for use of the building, but will not be offering their own physical therapy program.
- The LUPC agreed to make a finding of fact of the following: "As offered by the applicant, the Y will have an open door policy to physical therapists for the use of the facilities provided they meet the YMCA qualifications for use of the building".

Project Review

- Commissioner Davisson had submitted a proposed condition requiring an audit. She suggested that in a few years, the MVC should conduct a review of the project to consider what worked and what did not work. The proposed condition says that the applicant should work with the MVC.
- The proposed wording was modified to read "the applicant will cooperate with the Martha's Vineyard Commission with the Commissions review of this project. The review will be performed within three years of the Certificate of Occupancy". It was agreed that the statement should be in the Decision as a finding of fact.

Possible Text to Be Integrated Into Decision

- LUPC agreed to recommend to the full commission to include Commissioner Davisson's wording regarding statements by Town officials that the wastewater facility has capacity and that the water supply is adequate to accommodate the project with the exception that we are going to take out their names and leave it with just their titles.

Recommendation

- ***Commissioner Breckenridge moved and it was duly seconded that LUPC recommends to the full Commission approval of this project with the conditions discussed at LUPC. The Commission agreed unanimously.***
- The recommended Conditions will be revised into a new sheet by Chairman Brown and Paul Foley.

Benefits and Detriments

Benefits

- Community access to a swimming pool and all of the programming provided by the YMCA.
- Working with the High School to reduce the overall nitrogen in the campus area.
- Much of the open space is being retained especially the pitch pine which is habitat for rare moths.
- It was noted that the possibility of use of geo-thermal systems could become a benefit in that it would be a model for using sustainable energy on a large project.
- Traffic and parking have been minimized as part of the campus plan designed with their neighbors.
- The project is located in an area where there are already large institutional buildings.
- They are providing a membership subsidy and funds for employee housing.
- Campus coordination has distributed certain costs across the Island, rather than solely burdening Oak Bluffs.
- It adds a much needed facility (the pool) to the school.
- It creates year round jobs that are not tourist based.

Detriments

- Commissioner Davisson thought it was important that we note that the site is a prime agricultural soil and though that should not be the basis for denial we should note in our decision that this is a detriment.
- The potential transfer of nitrogen from other watersheds into a nitrogen-sensitive watershed.
- Added traffic.

Neutral

- Night lighting and noise.
- The impact on abutters is minimal and cooperative.
- Supported by Town officials (Note: Commissioner Davisson's wording to go under Burden on Taxpayers).

The Decision should note that the project might require a variance for height, although they maintain they do not need one since they are an educational facility. The Commission can note that the height increase was for the innovative heating and cooling system as well as to allow natural light into the central space.

Adjourned 7:43