

Planning Board site visit notes

SD-2022-05, Salvatore Subdivision — September 20, 2022, 9:00 AM

Site visit starting point: Side of Russell Farm Road, between the intersection with Norway Drive and the driveway for 21 Russell Farm Road.

Attendance:

- Planning Board members: Chairperson Millard Dority, Vice-chairperson Ruth Eveland, Secretary Elissa Chesler, and members Earl Brechlin, Zach Soares and Cali Martinez. Member Joe Cough was not present.
- Applicant Eben Salvatore and applicant representative Perry Moore.
- Abutters: Francis “Pancho” Cole, Helen Caivano, Kate Macko and Donna Sunday.
- Town staff: Assistant Planner Steve Fuller

Notes

Chairperson Dority opened the site visit just after 9:00 AM with an explanation of the purpose of the site visit and the process. Mr. Salvatore spoke next and recounted his history with the property and his desire to build a residence there for his wife and son.

Chairperson Dority asked about sight distance from a future driveway for the to-be-created lot. Mr. Moore said the Police Department had concerns about visibility. He referred to a triple-flagged tree, which would mark the southeastern corner of the to-be-created lot, and then referred to a large, dead spruce tree further to the north along the same side of Russell Farm Road. He said the large spruce marked approximately 250 feet south from the intersection of Russell Farm Road and Norway Drive, and said a future driveway – while not shown on the plan – would fall in between the two trees (the triple-flagged corner marker and the dead spruce). He said it would be a condition on the plat that the future driveway for the lot could not be any closer to the Russell Farm Road/Norway Drive intersection than 250 feet to the south of it.

Mr. Moore explained one issue is when looking north on Russell Farm Road, it is often difficult to discern until the last minute whether southbound traffic on Norway Drive will bear left to remain on Norway Drive or continue straight to turn onto Russell Farm Road. Mr. Moore also described the site distance to the south of the proposed future driveway, and referred to a 4-foot wooden stake he had placed in the ground which he said showed there was 250' of clear sight distance to the south, too. Mr. Moore noted Russell Farm Road has a 25-mph speed limit.

Mr. Moore pointed out how the northern property line was marked by fiberglass stakes (the kind used to mark driveways for plow truck drivers in the winter). He spoke about how the Land Use Ordinance requires trees 8” and larger to be shown on site plans (see 125-66 J. (29)), and he said the Planning Board has sometimes waived that requirement. He said it is difficult to do

on a wooded lot, and said what he had instead done was identify all trees 8" or larger along the road and all trees 18" or larger in the interior, wooded part of the parcel. He said he hoped that would be adequate for a submittal requirement in the eyes of the Planning Board.

Mr. Moore said any new dwelling units in the subdivision would require residential sprinkler systems, in compliance with a requirement of the fire code as articulated by the fire chief. Mr. Moore said there would also be a well with adequate water supply to serve the sprinklers.

There was further discussion on where the future driveway to access the new lot might be located. Mr. Moore said it would likely be about where the aforementioned dead spruce tree is.

The site visit was opened to questions from the public. One member asked further questions about subdivision review, and Mr. Moore gave additional explanation about why this creation of a new lot was coming for subdivision review by the Planning Board. He said it was ultimately "in the interest of being cautious" after receiving opinion from legal counsel.

Mr. Brechlin asked what the minimum lot size is in the zoning district (McFarland Hill Residential). Mr. Moore said it is 80,000 square feet, just under two acres. The lot to be created is shown as 4.42 acres on the site plan prepared by Mr. Moore.

Mr. Moore referred to comments made by Ms. Chesler at a recent Planning Board meeting during a review of another subdivision, and specifically about the layout of remaining, undeveloped land. He wondered aloud how it might be applied here. No one had the specific Land Use Ordinance reference in front of them, but Mr. Moore said it would be helpful to look at this matter with regard to this project.

Mr. Moore asked if there was any interest in walking off of Russell Farm Road and into the site itself. As it was a rainy day, there were no takers. Mr. Moore said his interest was going to see a flat spot where water often pools when it rains. Ms. Chesler asked if it was mapped as a wetland, and Mr. Moore said it was not. One neighbor asked what the requirements would be if it were found to be a vernal pool, and Mr. Moore responded. There was agreement from Planning Board members that they could not make a pronouncement, either way, whether the spot in question was a wetland, vernal pool or any other similar type of land.

The site visit concluded at 9:22 AM. Mr. Moore and Mr. Salvatore remained on site after the site visit and walked out onto the property with some of the abutters in attendance.

Site visit notes prepared by Assistant Planner Steve Fuller on Tuesday, September 20, 2022.