

Residents raise questions about Hull Cove subdivision

By Michaela Kennedy

Residents from Hull Cove Farm Road voiced opposition to the proposed use of the private road off Beavertail Road at the Planning Commission's Nov. 1 meeting. With agreement from the abutters present, the commission scheduled a public hearing for the proposed two-lot subdivision for Dec. 6.

Attorney Quentin Anthony, representing applicant Norton Reamer, brought the proposal before the board "for informational purposes" prior to a public hearing. Anthony reviewed the history of the 1903 farm property, which has a right to subdivide into four lots, and noted that the plan would create one lot on three acres. The applicant recently purchased about 10 acres on the northern part of the land, increasing the overall size of the property, Anthony added.

In 1993, the owner gave up the right to use Hull Cove Farm Road for heavy equipment only, but gave up no other rights to use of the road, Anthony said. He pointed out that the subdivision plan included an entrance to the lot from the private road. "The plan is consistent with cluster zoning, furnished by a private road," Anthony noted.

In a letter from attorney Mark Liberati to Town Solicitor Larry Parks, neighbors at Hull Cove contested the proposed frontage. Parks sent a letter to the town planner suggesting the applicant could create the necessary 200 feet of frontage on his property to comply with standards if the road were extended.

Commissioner Betty Hubbard said she liked the idea of the plan naturally clustered with the other existing house.

William Smith of Hull Cove Farm Road, abutter on the north side of the property, said he was in verbal communication with the neighbors that share the private road.

He noted the road winding around Reamer's property was grown over and had not been used in years. "This new lot should not be accessed by our drive," he said, voicing concern about adding too much traffic to the unpaved road.

Gail Thompson, also of Hull

Cove Road, claimed that she had just found out the application was on the agenda, and asked for time to contact other property owners that shared use of the road. "This is the first time Reamer has claimed access to the road, and has not contributed to the maintenance," she said. In 1993, the road Reamer built to access his property would be used to access any subdivisions in the future and not affect the residents of Hull Cove Road, Thompson added. "I'm astonished, because he built a beautiful road and cleared the land," she said.

Anthony acknowledged that he represented Sidney Wright when he sold Reamer the land in 1992. He recalled the negotiation that Reamer would not use the road for heavy equipment, but insisted that no other rights were forfeited.

The Hull Cove residents shook their heads. "No, we never knew that," Thompson and Smith said in unison. Thompson pointed out that participation of maintenance was part of ownership. "I never saw a letter that said we agreed he could use the road."

Town Planner Lisa Bryer said the rights to use the road must be resolved before advancing with the development plan review.

Commission Chairman Gary Girard agreed, and urged Anthony to work with the abutters to resolve the issue before the plan went to public hearing on Dec. 6.

In old business, the Planning Commission denied a development plan for property owner John Perrotti to build a three-bedroom house with a garage on Ship Street.

The board had asked the applicant to remove the garage from the plan at an earlier meeting. Craig Corrigan, engineer for the applicant, argued that the removal of the garage from the original plan would force a high spot on the property which currently sags into a bowl shape. "Excavation during dismantling of the Jamestown Bridge created a bowl on the property," he noted.

Corrigan said that runoff would be forced into an infiltration basin, and the garage would provide a retaining wall for the basin, noting that removal of the garage would make a negligible

difference in drainage, and possibly create a slight increase in runoff if the garage were removed from the plan.

When asked about grading, Corrigan said he had not yet calculated the amount of fill needed.

"If you don't have a garage, you don't have a wall. If you don't have a wall, you don't have to change the contour that much," Girard said.

Commissioner Jean Brown asked about the intent of the ordinance, which was to lessen the impact on neighboring properties. "We can get theoretical about impact," she said, adding it made little difference if the applicant were containing the runoff on his property "and being a good neighbor."

Attorney Margaret Hogan, representing Perrotti, scolded the board for adding personal interpretation to the meaning of minimal impact in the ordinance. "Under the law, that is not a standard by which you should be evaluating. He should be allowed to use the property any way he wants as long as it doesn't disturb

the neighbors," Hogan argued, wagging a finger at the commission.

Brown told Hogan, "I find that statement offensive."

Commissioner Victor Calabretta agreed with the engineer about minimum disturbance in runoff to the abutters, but upheld the point of impact to the

land. "This is not a reflection on the engineer, but what we are looking at is minimal impact."

Commissioner Richard Ventrone made a motion not to approve the plan, and Hubbard seconded it. Based on the fact that the plan was not minimal impact, the motion passed 5-2.

Send us recipes and memories of the holidays

Sailboats are still coming out of the water, the weather is sunny, but believe it or not, there are just about six weeks left until Christmas.

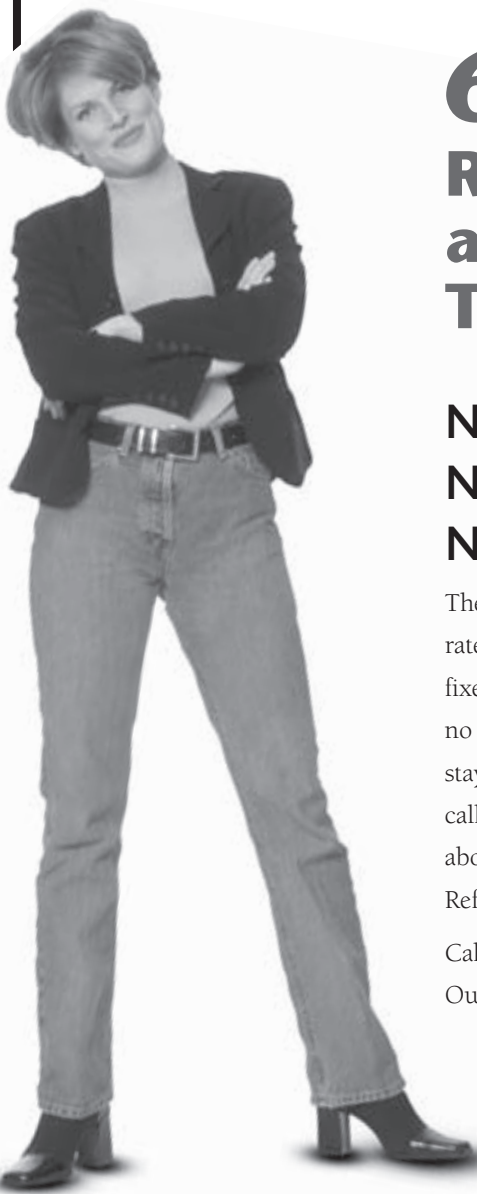
That said, the Press wants everyone to start thinking about two things: the first is favorite holiday memories (If they happened in Jamestown, all the better!), and the second is favorite holiday recipes.

Send us your recipes for holiday cookies, festive appetizers, and all the trimmings for a holiday feast. Be sure they have been tested, and that all the ingredients are accounted for.

Limit holiday memories to 500 words, and if you have a photo to accompany the memory, we'll take that too.

Send them to news@jamestownpress.com, or mail them to 42 Narragansett Ave., Jamestown, RI 02835. We'll print as many as we have room for during the month of December.

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