

**PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**

October 3, 2006

The Planning Board, Town of Bethlehem, Albany County, New York held a **Regular Meeting**, on October 3, 2006, at the Bethlehem Town Hall, 445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY. Chairman Mathusa presided and called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Present: Parker Mathusa, Planning Board Chairman
Daniel Odell, Planning Board Member
Katherine McCarthy, Planning Board Member
Chris Motta, Planning Board Member
Tom Cotrofeld, Planning Board Member
Howard Engel, Planning Board Member
Brian Collier, Planning Board Member

Michael Morelli, Deputy Director of Economic Development & Planning
Terry Ritz, Town Assistant Engineer
Janine Saatman, Deputy Town Planner

Jon Lathrop, Keystone Architectural, Bethlehem Dental Arts
Virginia Plaisted, Bethlehem Dental Arts
Bill Hennessey, Corner Market
Mark Dempf, Vollmer Associates, Van Dyke Spinney
Rex Ruthman, Van Dyke Spinney
Ed Feinberg, Van Dyke Spinney

Agenda: Bethlehem Dental Arts
Corner Market
Van Dyke Spinney

Bethlehem Dental Arts – Initial presentation

Chairman Mathusa called the meeting to order and noted the presence of a quorum. The first item on the agenda was a site plan amendment for 74 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, Bethlehem Dental Arts. Jon Lathrop from Keystone Architectural presented for the applicant.

Mr. Lathrop stated the Dental Arts Building was in need of repairs to the roof. The curb masonry top was leaking. It would be replaced with an exterior insulated finish fascia system around three sides of the building with a roof membrane over the new framing. It's a shed roof that sheets to the rear of the building, then gutters carry the water to dry wells on the site. That would not be changed. He showed the Board a colored elevation of the new roof and fascia. The dental practice would remain open during the repairs.

Ms. Saatman said that this was an amendment to a previously approved site plan. The Code allows staff to waive a site plan and that was done because the change would only affect the roof. The Albany County Planning Board had been contacted and because of the minor nature of the change, the project would not need to go to their Board for review.

For an official copy of the minutes, please visit the Town Hall, 445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY or call 439-4955.

A motion to table the project was offered by Mr. Cotrofeld, seconded by Ms. McCarthy and approved by all Board members present.

Corner Market

Chairman Mathusa turned the Board's attention to the next item on the agenda, a site plan request to add gasoline fuel service with an overhead canopy to the Corner Market.

Mr. Hennessey, Hennessey Engineering, presented for the applicant. He stated the property consists of two (2) lots with a total acreage of one point nine (1.9) acres. Wetlands exist to the rear of the property. They had gone before the Zoning Board for a setback variance for the canopy. They have worked with engineering and planning to realign the canopy for better circulation on the site. The proposal was for three (3) MPD's (multi-purpose dispensers) under a canopy. There is some existing green space on the site but they would put in additional landscaping and a grass area to the front corner. There would also be a five (5) foot landscaped area along the building. Parking to be allowed in the front and the rear of the building with an entrance in the rear for the public.

The ingress/egress currently closest to the intersection onto Rt. 9W will be eliminated and pushed further south about twenty (20) feet. They wanted to discourage the movement of trucks through the site; it would be possible but difficult. This would encourage them to use the rear of the site and the one ingress/egress onto Rt. 9W. Vollmer Associates were the traffic consultants on the project. They had prepared turning curves for the fueling vehicle. The vehicle would come onto the site by way of Rt. 9W and exit by way of Maple Avenue. It was a difficult maneuver but it could be done. They proposed to pave some of the existing gravel area. The gravel areas within the one hundred (100) foot buffer area for the state wetlands would be left as such.

The height of the proposed canopy was fourteen (14) feet six (6) inches. They were proposing a red strip around the canopy with no lettering. The brick pedestal ground mount sign was to be located in the front corner of the project. This location required a variance. The size is within the limitations of the Zoning Code.

The striping of spaces to alert the public where to park would control the parking. The old fence on the easterly border had been removed and they would add two (2) trees in that area. They were not opposed to putting in additional landscaping on that border.

The storm water would be handled by a catch basin on the property and one in the right of way. Currently storm water flowed from the catch basin into an outlet that discharges into the wetlands. The grading plan would direct runoff to the back.

The applicant had been working with staff to get to a finalized plan. They were waiting for items from the land surveyor so they could modify the grading. They have already received approval from NYSDOT for the entrances and would be applying for another approval to include the landscaping.

The applicant would improve the esthetics of the structure by painting the structure. Mr. Collier wanted to know if they would consider making the canopy less commercial looking. The applicant agreed to look into the options.

A motion to table the project was offered by Mr. Odell, seconded by Ms. McCarthy and approved by all Board members present.

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Van Dyke Spinney

Chairman Mathusa turned the Board's attention to the next item on the agenda, Van Dyke Spinney. It had most recently been on the Town Board agenda for acceptance of their Planning Development District application and subsequently referred to the Planning Board for review and recommendation. The Town Board would be lead agency for the project.

Mr. Dempf from Vollmer Associates presented for the applicant. When the project had first been presented to the Board, it was under the old zoning designation of Senior Citizen Residence District. The Zoning classifications have since changed and they were now requesting a zone change to a Planned Development District. The concept remained for active seniors, fifty-five (55) and up. The proposal was for apartments with the applicants retaining ownership of the property. They were proposing two hundred twenty (220) one-story units on the ninety (90) acre parcel. The units would be on the level part of the site and avoided the wetlands. The first proposal included a cul-de-sac with additional apartments on the opposite side of Van Dyke Road. Planning had encouraged and the applicant had decided to eliminate the apartments and cul-de-sac and put single-family lots on that side instead to keep in character with the other homes on the street.

The applicants had spoken with an architect to work up different styles of the front facades of the apartments for visual interest. The structures along Van Dyke would have rear-loading garages off of the internal road system. The structures along the internal road system would have traditional front-loading garages. There would be series of trails throughout the site to connect it from one end to the other. The applicant would be bringing in the water and sewer to the site. They were looking for input from the Board on this preliminary concept.

Chairman Mathusa wanted to know if any amenities would be provided. Mr. Dempf said there was a clubhouse planned, leaving the details of what would be offered for a later time. It was established that the grade school being built was about a half (½) mile away from the project. The applicant would be submitting a traffic study as part of the review of the project, as well as an archeological study and wetland delineation.

The Board voiced concern with the intersection of Van Dyke Rd. and Meads Lane and the condition of Van Dyke Rd. Mr. Dempf said they were working with the Engineering Division and the division had already developed some scenarios on how to alleviate that problem. The applicant would work to incorporate those suggestions into the plan.

Mr. Engel wanted to know if sidewalks were planned for Van Dyke Road. Mr. Morelli said that one of discussions was to extend a sidewalk along Van Dyke to connect to the Delmar By-pass. This would allow residents to walk to Delaware Ave. or the Town Park. Mr. Engel wanted to know if the property bordered on Meads Lane and if they had any plans for that area. Mr. Dempf said that the property would allow only a few single-family lots.

Mr. Collier said when the project had been before the Board a few years ago; there had been a discussion of affordability. He asked them to address that issue. Mr. Ruthman thought that affordable would apply. The median income of Bethlehem in the age range they want to target was about \$60,000; within Albany

County it was \$40,000. He said that HUD's guidelines for income applied to residential living was about 28%. That would be an allocation of \$12,000 to living. They were trying to keep the rents within the \$1.00 to \$1.10 per square foot range. The rents would range from \$900 to \$1,200 per month with no additional maintenance fees.

Mr. Ruthman said they planned on remaining in control of the project and the units would be rentals. They were committed to keeping the project for active seniors between the ages of 55 to 85, healthy and capable of caring for themselves. They don't want it to become a community of providing care that it wasn't designed for.

Mr. Ruthman said the original plan of several roads off the main interior roads had been changed because the single-family homes on Van Dyke had expressed a concern with lights from the original design. Now the roads were offset from those houses so exiting lights would not spill onto those homes. They found that the series of pods did not work well for site or traffic with the driveways. The interior roads were not straight but gently curving, breaking up the view of the buildings. They had left a green area in the middle of the project that was about two hundred (200) feet across. Each of the units had a patio in the rear and a porch in the front and a garage. They didn't have a common façade; different styles, depths and colors would be used. They thought that this style of living could be the transition for seniors between owning homes and care facilities.

The renderings of the apartments were a concept but the applicant had asked the architect to incorporate a Dutch look into the design. They were open to different looks. Ms. Motta wanted the front porches kept no matter what design they ultimately decided on.

Mr. Engel pointed out that even though this project would not have a direct effect on the school district; families would purchase the homes that they left with children. Chairman Mathusa said that per the Capital District Data the Town had grown 4.7% in the last five (5) years. Mr. Odell said that it did increase the diversity of housing within the Town.

The Board suggested that the applicant move the units to face the green space in the interior and have more of the units with rear garages so that fronts of units are not facing backs of other units. Mr. Odell asked if a commercial area had been considered for the project, such as a convenience store. They had considered it but the Town had not felt that this was a good area for commercial services. They were still open to suggestions. They would offer some services within the clubhouse and possibly guest suites on the second floor for visiting families.

Mr. Morelli said that the same night this project was before the Town Board, Senior Services had made a presentation about the need for more senior housing in Town. This project would add to that senior housing base.

A motion to table the project was offered by Ms. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Engel and approved by all Board members present.

The Board reviewed the minutes of September 19, 2006.

A motion to approve the minutes of September 19, 2006 as amended was offered by Ms. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Engel and approved by all Board members present.

A motion to adjourn was offered by Mr. Engel, seconded by Mr. Collier and approved by all Board members present.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.