



TOWN OF ACTON
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Review Memorandum: Grassy Pond Way – 3 & 11 Fort Pond Road Residential Compound
In Person Meeting
June 23, 2021

Design Review Board (DRB) Members in attendance: Peter Darlow (Chair), Holly Ben-Joseph, David Honn, Richard Keleher, Dean Charter, (Select Board Liaison), and Jon Cappetta (Planning Board Liaison)

Proponents in attendance: Paul Kirschener of Stamsky & McNary representing Celestine Properties, LLC

Documents Reviewed: Definitive Subdivision Plan for Grassy Pond Way, Acton MA, date May 10, 2021.

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Sheet 1 Title Sheet

Sheet 2 Record Plan

Sheet 3 Existing Conditions Plan

Sheet 4 Site Development Plan

Sheet 5 Site Development Plan

Sheet 6 Construction Details

Sheet 7 Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan

It is proposed by the proponents to subdivide an existing approximate 9.5 acre (415,415 square feet) lot, located at 3 & 11 Fort Pond Road, into a residential compound comprised of 4 house lots. Lot 1 will provide 2.3404 acres for a new house. Lot 2 will provide for an existing house to remain. Lot 3 will provide for a new house. Lot 4 will preserve the existing house. All four lots as proposed, are of similar size at between 2.3404 acres and 2.4459 acres.

Despite not sharing the common driveway, the proponent stated that the existing main house on Lot 4 will be a part of the homeowners association. The two proposed retention ponds are located on this parcel, and they will share in common expenses.

This is the first review of the proposed Grassy Pond residential compound. The compound is laid out so that all of the four buildings are at the front of their lots, thereby preserving wetlands leading down to Grassy Pond at the rear of the properties. Grassy Pond was not shown on the Definitive Subdivision Plan.

The new house on Lot 3 is within the 100' buffer zone from the wetlands, but is outside of the 75' buffer, which is the no build zone.

The DRB asked whether there are Public Shade Trees along the roadway that will be impacted by the project. The proponent stated that there are trees that will be impacted, but could not identify how many and where (they are not shown on the plan). The proponent was advised to check with the Town Planning Department regarding the recently changed Select Board Policy on Public Shade Trees, to get direction on what are the new requirements regarding Public Shade Trees, which should be shown on the plan.

There was discussion of the 275 foot sight lines, of which there is a plan in the drawings presented. Trees will need to be removed to meet this requirement. As noted above, they are not shown on the plans. To ensure public safety, the DRB recommends that the developer's measurements should be independently verified by a third party survey, speed analysis, and measurements.

There was discussion of the slopes at the infiltration basins. The concern was that they are fairly steep and are in the front yards in prominent locations along the street and at the entrance drive.. The DRB wondered if they might be made less obtrusive by designing them in a natural shape and by reducing the slopes.

There was discussion of the mounds for the septic systems. The proponent said that they would not be obvious.

The proponent said that the current request is for a permit for just the road installation. They will be resubmitting for approvals of the rest of the development.

The DRB recommends, and advocates for, a condition of approval to prioritize maintaining as many mature trees as possible when new developments in Acton are approved. The DRB suggests the proponent be required to walk the land with a landscape architect or arborist to identify individual and stands of mature trees to be maintained in conjunction with the subdivision as proposed. The DRB suggests that the proponent definitively illustrate how many trees are to be removed along Fort Pond Road to achieve the site lines per the sight line diagram.

The DRB is otherwise comfortable with the definitive plan as proposed.

Respectfully submitted,

The DRB