

**Village of Lansing
Planning Board Meeting
July 25, 2006**

The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Chairman Ned Hickey. Present at the meeting were Planning Board Members Doris Brown, Phil Dankert, Carol Klepack and Maria Stycos; Alternate Member Mario Tomei; Attorney David Dubow; Trustee Liaison Lynn Leopold; Code Enforcement Officer Ben Curtis and members of the public.

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Public Comment:

Hickey opened the Public Comment period.

As there was no one who wished to speak, Stycos moved to close the Public Comment Period. Seconded by Klepack. Ayes by Brown, Dankert, Hickey, Klepack and Stycos. Motion carried.

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Homewood Suites Landscape Plan:

Hickey stated there were some minor adjustments made to the plan and Curtis explained them. Curtis stated the plan was revised to incorporate the comments made by the Board in April. Curtis stated the caliper of the deciduous trees was increased to 3" and an additional tree was added on the south island to provide additional screening. Curtis also provided construction drawings showing a 4' chain link fence which is to act as a guard and was added to the SW corner where there is a steep bank. Curtis stated the conditions of approval for the Special Permit also require a detail be provided for screening of the dumpster enclosure and this has not yet been provided. Curtis will suggest a couple of examples of enclosures which the Planning Board has approved for other projects such as those at Parkview Health Care Campus or Village Office Campus. Leopold asked what the trees were that appeared as 9 circles on the east side. Hickey stated those are the Village's relocated saplings as well as some additional oaks and maples.

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On the subject of street trees, Hickey expressed concerns about the type of soil to be used between the sidewalk and N. Triphammer Road. Leopold recommended Cornell structural soils. Leopold stated the landscaping has been contracted out. It was noted that Kathryn Wolf was involved in the design and may have specified how the trees were to be planted. Hickey was uncertain whether the plantings would be burlap balls or bare root trees. Hickey stated if bare root, it is more important to use the Cornell structural soil, as well as possibly using water bags, to ensure the survival of the trees. Leopold stated structural soils encourage the roots to go downward so sidewalks are less affected.

Returning to the landscape plan under consideration, Dankert moved to accept the Landscape Plan submitted by Homewood Suites on July 25, 2006 with the condition that a detail for screening the dumpster enclosure be submitted and approved by the Code Enforcement Officer. Seconded by Klepack. Ayes by Brown, Dankert, Hickey, Klepack and Stycos. Motion carried.

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Lansing Trails 2 Update:

Hickey stated the next agenda item was an update on Lansing Trails 2. Curtis stated they are moving along and Bomax Drive has all been graded, staked out and ready to bring in the stone and place the binder coat. Dubow stated all agreements have been signed including an offer of dedication of the road by the Deans. The Board of Trustees have adopted a resolution accepting the offer of dedication. Then the Board of Trustees set a Public Hearing for August 7th, and if there is no comment to the contrary will probably adopt a resolution at that time re-affirming the previous resolution accepting the offer of dedication. Dubow stated the approval is subject to certain conditions such as the road being constructed according to the specs and all title and conveyance documents being provided. Dubow stated there has been discussion on the allocation of costs and the Public Hearing will allow for additional comment. Curtis stated Jonson is finishing up the storm water drainage system. Hickey noted that sidewalks on Bomax Drive will be done at a later time by the Village, but Jonson has an obligation to build sidewalks to the edges of his property. Curtis stated the Bomax Circle binder is also down and looks good. He is not aware of any current plans to

build on or sell the single family lots on the circle.

- **Steep Slopes** - General Discussion:

Hickey stated Curtis has expressed concerns about the definition of steep slopes in the Village Code as it states that the Steep Slope Conservation Combining District includes all lots that contain slopes of 15% or greater without stipulating any horizontal base line. He noted that over a short horizontal distance, the Village Office parcel, that of Pyramid Mall and many others contain slopes of 15% or greater. As you increase the horizontal base line to 100 feet or more the number of parcels will decline as you eliminate those with ups and downs over short distances. The Board needs to better define what it is really concerned about and what "steep slopes" means in that context. Curtis had copied and distributed general handouts with discussion and sample regulations from New Hampshire, as well as the Westchester Land Trust, along with special conditions for building on steep slopes found on page 14582 of the Village of Lansing Code.

First, Hickey felt the Board needed to work on the definition. Curtis stated some sample definitions contain a corresponding base line of 10', 30', 100', etc., but the Village Code does not contain a base line. Again, using the language currently in the Village Code, would subject the Village Office, as well as Pyramid Mall property, and many others to review as they contain slopes 15% or greater somewhere on the parcels. Curtis stated there is nothing indicating whether the slope is natural or man-made. Curtis feels the definition as it currently exists is nebulous. The question is what would the Board like to protect and then how best to describe that situation accurately. Hickey stated there needs to be additional criteria added to the existing law.

Board members discussed the 15% slope. Dubow recalled the Remillard lot on E. Shore Drive which was included in the Steep Slope Combining District although the proposed addition for which he required a Special Permit did not fall within a steep slope section of the lot. Hickey stated the Adler lot on Cayuga Hills Road also fell within the Steep Slope District. The house was proposed for the most level spot on the lot, but some terracing and retaining walls were required to stabilize construction on the lot. Hickey stated the Board was not so much concerned about the location of the residence as it was concerned about soil erosion, stability, and the septic system which were handled under special permit conditions. Dubow stated Adler needed a special permit anyway because of the conditions of approval for that subdivision. Dubow stated it is unclear how to handle the steep slope situation where a building permit is requested for approval to build a residence but the lot does not require subdivision approval or special permit. Hickey stated conditions apply to Unique Natural Areas and designated streams and drainageways which permit the Planning Board to protect slopes in those areas. Dubow stated the Village Law currently applies to all areas of the Village where there is a slope of 15% or more. Curtis stated that it is not common for applicants to bring in a topographical map when applying for a building permit. In summary, Dubow stated there are two issues: defining more clearly what a lot of 15% or greater slope is; and how to address the situation where an applicant comes in with an application for a single family residence with a 15% slope on the parcel and subdivision or special permit regulations do not apply.

Hickey thought the Village had maps with contour lines, possibly the Unique Natural Area maps. It was noted that the contours would need to be at something like 2' intervals and topographical maps of the Village may be at 10' or 20' intervals.

There was much discussion on how to make the 15% slope requirement more useable. Tomei suggested that if the footprint of a building is on the 15% slope, then it must be reviewed. Leopold suggested the submission of a topographical map for all sites. Curtis noted the Board might be concerned about some areas of the Village but not other areas, and an overlay map delineating the areas where steep slopes are of concern might be useful. Hickey stated the west side of Cayuga Heights Road is already protected for the most part because much of this area is in the Unique Natural Area District and a Special Permit would therefore already be required. Maps showing these protected areas in the western portion of the Village are in the Comprehensive Plan. Other ideas included having the Village Engineer provide an evaluation for any site with steep slopes or to require topographical information for any site where slopes might be an issue. Dubow noted that Section 145-48 of the Village Code prohibits development on slopes over 25% unless the applicant provides additional documentation including engineering studies. This part of the Village Code should also be clarified. Hickey recommended pulling down the ancient document done by Cornell students when the Village was formed showing slopes and contour lines. Curtis stated the Comprehensive Plan also has a slope map although it is hard to read and specific sites are difficult to pinpoint.

Board members noted there are many ways to address the 15% slope issue including using minimum area, using area requirements, using base lines, and using thresholds or other criteria to require a review by the Village Engineer prior to referring a proposal to the Board.

Hickey stated the Board must first identify the 15% slope areas and then consider making an overlay map or proceeding from there. This information delineating areas with 15% slopes is missing. Curtis will check with County Planning about mapping areas with 15% or greater slopes. Dubow also recommended that areas with 25% slopes also be identified. There was a question as to whether this should include all areas in the Village or only specific areas. Hickey stated the base information is needed first. Hickey will pull out the 1970 map first and then consider the possibility of having Curtis ask the County for refinement.

Hickey spoke about the Tompkins County Scenic Resources Inventory requested from the County. Hickey has provided information to them using the Village map to identify 7 viewscales in the Village and feels nothing else is required at this time.

Approval of Minutes - June 27th:

Klepack moved to approve the minutes of June 27th as revised. Seconded by Dankert. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack and Stycos. Abstain by Brown. Motion carried.

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Reports:

Board of Trustees: Dubow stated the Board of Trustees has received the two proposed local laws providing for amendments to Zoning Law provisions for buffer strips and telecommunication facilities, and Public Hearings have been scheduled for the Board of Trustees meeting on August 7. Curtis stated the BZA has also reviewed the proposed laws and expressed no objections.

Adjournment:

Klepack moved to adjourn at 8:35 P.M. Seconded by Stycos. Ayes by Brown, Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, and Stycos. Motion carried.