

**Village of Lansing  
Planning Board Meeting  
September 25, 2007**

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 Phil Dankert, Carol Klepack Maria Stycos, and Mario Tomei; Village Attorney David Dubow; Trustee Liaison Lynn Leopold; and Code Enforcement Officer Ben Curtis.

**Public Comment:**

Hickey opened the Public Comment period.

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

**Colonial Vet Landscape Plan Amendment:**

Landscape contractor, David Fernandez of Cayuga Landscape, representing Colonial Veterinary Hospital made the presentation. Board members were given a revised landscape plan and handouts describing the changes. Fernandez stated the principal rationale for the changes overall is to constrain cost and to eliminate species which are invasive, unnecessary or susceptible to deer damage. The original proposal included an unusually large number of plants for this site, many of which are unnecessary and constitute a financial burden for the owners. This revised landscaping proposal will retain an ample amount of plantings. Fernandez indicated which trees were deleted and where new plants will be placed. The final grading is not yet complete and the northern portion of the property will be deeded to the Village as a natural area with a footpath after the landscaping is done. The building is being constructed in two phases and once the front section of the new building is completed, the business will move into it and the original building will be demolished. All conifers on the original plan were kept although they may be shifted slightly. Other vegetation on the northern side was also saved to provide screening. Additional trees were also saved but do not provide screening. The number of shrubs providing ground cover behind the building was reduced because there were 279 shrubs proposed in a relatively small area and some of the plants were less than ideal. The new proposal replaces 279 honeysuckle and euonymus with around 100 boxwood and spirea. On the embankment on the eastside mountain laurel and winter creepers were replaced by a lesser number of spirea and sargents juniper which are more deer resistant and will grow well on an embankment. The embankment will also have gro-low sumac. A few flowering dogwoods were eliminated so that those remaining can achieve their potential. No changes were made in the flowering trees in the front of the building. Hickey asked how much of the planting would be done this year. Fernandez stated that none would be done in the front this year although seeding may be put down. Fernandez stated the embankment would be stabilized by mid October. Curtis stated a sewer line was discovered in a different location than expected in the course of excavation in the rear area and the stormwater management practices will need to be changed to accommodate this. He noted that whoever is assuming the landscape architect's function while the original landscape architect, Rod Kearl, is out of the country should address this. Curtis stated that Brent Cross, the Village Engineer, must review and approve any amendment to the stormwater management plan. Fernandez will follow up on this with Cross. Hickey asked when the path would be completed and what material it would be surfaced with. Fernandez stated it would be completed but he did not know the surface type. Fernandez will discuss this with Superintendent of Public Works John Courtney. Hickey recommended it be a black top surface. Fernandez stated it might begin as a crusher run base because black topping could not be done until the spring when the asphalt plants reopen. Dubow stated there might need to be an easement as the path, as proposed, discharges into the Colonial Vet driveway. It will be a walkway or trail rather than a sidewalk.

Hickey stated that after the last meeting some Board members felt more information was needed. Hickey stated 243 junipers in one area are a lot of plants when ground cover is also utilized. Fernandez stated the plants are in a close spacing because it is a steep slope and dense root structure is required to hold the soil. Fernandez stated this is a small watershed area and jute mesh will be placed on the bank first before the mulch and plantings are installed. Fernandez stated in some very steep slopes, decomposable, non-pressure treated boards are placed on the slopes and then covered with mulch. Hickey stated the mesh cloth near Applebee's on that steep embankment worked wonderfully. Fernandez stated the project will still end up with over 600 plants on the embankment area. Dubow stated the Board must

consider that this is a 25 ft variable width buffer strip which must meet the criteria and be comparable in terms of screening with a full 75 ft. buffer strip area. Fernandez stated the lower shrubs wrapping around the top will be more effective as a screen. The only deletions are in the groundcover plants, and, at the bottom of the slope, the removal of two trees which would not have contributed to the buffer strip as the neighbors would be looking over them. A few other species of trees were changed. On steep slopes, ginkgos were changed to maple and linden which will fill out sooner. Fernandez stated conifers will also remain as they are fast growing. Other minor changes were also made and will be shown on the as-built plans.

Hickey would recommend the Board accept this amended plan as meeting the intent of a variable width buffer strip and waive the prescriptive requirements. Klepack stated the neighboring property being higher in elevation is a factor. Hickey asked when the plantings will provide a buffer. Fernandez responded that the existing buffer, ½ of which is owned by the neighbor, already provides significant screening and the proposed shrubs will thicken the hedge and be a more effective screen. Tomei noted that headlights will shine into the embankment. Dubow stated the Board should look at the prescriptive requirements for a buffer strip and a variable width buffer strip. Dubow stated the original number of plantings may have been based on the requirements as listed in Section 145-24 of the Zoning Law. Hickey stated that section of the law may need to be reviewed. Hickey stated that given the unique situation of the topography, layout and alternate proposed plantings, he moves the Planning Board waive the prescriptive requirements for the standard landscaping of a buffer strip in favor of the revised Landscape Plan dated 9-25-07 for Colonial Vet submitted by Cayuga Landscaping. Seconded by Dankert. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.

Klepack moved to accept the Amended Landscape Plan dated 9-25-07 for Colonial Vet as submitted by Cayuga Landscaping. Seconded by Tomei. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.

#### **Arleo Landscape Plan Amendment:**

Again, landscape contractor David Fernandez of Cayuga Landscape made the presentation for the Arleo Eye Institute. Fernandez provided summary sheets for Board member review and displayed a formal landscape plan. Curtis noted that he would require a copy of the formal landscape plan for the record. Fernandez stated the goal for this project was not to save money, but to make the plantings more effective and more deer resistant. A good buffer strip was also needed for the Swim Club. Some of the trees in the back were shifted and more plants placed in the front. The gap in the northern end of the existing hedgerow was filled in. A white pine had to be removed to construct a drainage swale so an Austrian pine was planted in its place. At the north edge of the disturbed area a large pine and some poplars and elms were saved. Some pines were shifted from the center to the buffer side. One goal was to make the complex look somewhat like the medical complex on the other side of Warren Road with groupings of evergreens and trees. Flowering pears and maples will be planted on the site. Fernandez noted the retention pond will be planted with a native seed mix with grasses which can take wet to dry conditions. The edges of the site will have more trees and less small shrubs. There will be groupings of boxwood, dwarf spruce and grasses along the back. There will also be crabapples planted in islands close to the front of the building.

Fernandez stated that there will be 7 shrubs on two sides of the building and 6 on the other sides which more than doubles the amount of shrubs that were originally proposed. Stycos asked about climbing honeysuckle to break up the wall spaces. Fernandez stated that would be an excellent choice. Fernandez stated the back side was originally to have had 6 low junipers but is now mostly grasses, boxwood and dwarf spruce. Stycos asked about the side near the swim club. Fernandez stated the buffer has the same number of evergreens as in the original plan. The hole in the existing hedge will be filled with additional plantings of clump maple and spruce to provide a better screen. Fernandez stated that the dumpster area will now be screened with forsythia.

Dubow stated that this project is like the last project where the Board has previously approved a 25 ft. variable width buffer strip. Dubow stated that the previous minutes for this project reflect that the originally approved plan is acceptable for this site because it abuts the Swim Club rather than a residential neighborhood. Dubow stated the minutes reflect that the Board felt this was an adequate buffer because the Swim Club is a recreation site which is occupied only part of the year. Hickey stated whatever reasoning applied then for the buffer would also apply now with the new landscape plan. Klepack moved that because of the unusual siting of the Arleo Eye Institute building adjacent to a recreation club, the prescriptive requirements for plantings within the variable width buffer are

unnecessary and shall be waived and the Planning Board will approve the 9/25/07 plans as a more appropriate landscape plan. Seconded by Stycos. Hickey stated he walked the Swim Club property and has identified those areas as needing a better screen. Fernandez has addressed these areas and filled in the gaps. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.

Dankert moved to accept the Amended Landscape Plan for the Arleo Eye Institute as submitted on the 9/25/07 Landscape Plan. Seconded by Tomei. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.

Fernandez provided a copy of the Landscape Plan to Curtis which will be marked approved for the record.

**Traffic Impact Study:**

Board members reviewed the SRF Associates Report dated 9/12/07 for the Traffic Impact Study done for the proposal to change the zoning of a parcel of land at the SE corner of Warren Road and Rt. 13 from Business and Technology to Human Health Services. Hickey noted that the conclusions indicate that all the intersections will operate at Level C or better which is okay.

**Other Business as Time Permits:**

Hickey has written a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for the proposed zoning change referenced in the Traffic Impact Study. The Public Hearing is set for Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. Dubow has mailed documents and maps to the Board of Trustees.

Hickey referenced the article on *Cluster Development: Modern Application of an Old Town Form* from the Zoning Practice 8.07 magazine. Dubow noted there was an article in the New York Times about second structures built on a residential lot for a relaxation or get-away space which is becoming popular.

Hickey noted that the potholes in the University Heights parking lot are being repaired.

Hickey thanked the Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer for his report with interesting statistics. Board members talked about the report numbers as well as the current housing market.

**Approval of Minutes – September 10<sup>th</sup> :**

Tomei moved to accept the minutes of September 10<sup>th</sup> as revised. Seconded by Klepack. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.

**Adjournment:**

Klepack moved to adjourn at 9:00 P.M. Seconded by Stycos. Ayes by Dankert, Hickey, Klepack, Stycos and Tomei. Motion carried.