

TRURO PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2016 6:00 pm

Planning Board Members present: Bruce Boleyn, Peter Herridge, John Hopkins, Jack Riemer, Mike Roderick, Steve Sollog, Lisa Maria Tobia

Other participants: Ben Zehnder, Attorney, Robert Smith, Mary Ann Larkin, Ray Clarke, Roger Dias, Nathan Nickerson, Carlos Verde, Chris Lucy, Chuck Steinman, John Marksbury, Carole Ridley, Planning Consultant.

Meeting was called to order by Ms. Tobia at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Tobia asked for a show of hands as to who among the members of the public was present for the Pond Village application. She noted a large number. She then asked the Board if they would be amenable to changing the order of the agenda to consider the Pond Road traffic study and Sage Ridge Road traffic study ahead of the Zoning articles. The Board was in agreement.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Commercial Site Plan Review – Public Hearing Continuance – Applicant has requested further continuance to October 18, 2016

2016-001SPR Winkler Route 6 Trust, Michael F. Winkler, Trustee, seeks approval of an application for Commercial Site Plan Review pursuant to §70.3 of the Truro Zoning Bylaw for the current condition and use of the property as a commercial staging area for a crane company, for storage of equipment and supplies, and for commercial use. The property is located at 1 Noons Heights Road, Atlas Map 39 Parcel 166. Continued from May 3rd, July 19th, 2016 and September 6th 2016.

Ms. Tobia noted that the only Board members who will be able to vote on this application when it does come before the Board are: Mr. Riemer, Mr. Boleyn, Mr. Roderick, Mr. Sollog and herself. The other Board members, if they certify that they have watched the video of the meetings missed, will be able to participate in the discussion, but not the vote. Mr. Sollog made a motion to continue the hearing to October 18, 6:00 pm, Mr. Herridge seconded. Mr. Riemer referred to Appendix 2 of the Truro Handbook, that the Board should only grant a continuance for good cause shown. Ms. Ridley responded that there were two developments, one that Town enlisted the services of a technical consultant to look at water resources issues on the site, jointly funded by the Town and the applicant. The information was delivered on the 25th to the applicant. The continuance allows them to consider this information. Motion approved unanimously, 7-0.

Pre-Submission Consultations – Definitive Plan

Pursuant to a Preliminary Plan Decision for 2016-003PB Steven F. Rogers, the applicant seeks to present to the Board the results of a traffic study related to a 9-lot proposed subdivision of property located at 25 & 25A Pond Road, Assessor's Map 36, Parcels 39 & 35.

This is a continuation from a presentation on August 16, 2016, to present information on seasonal traffic counts then requested by the Board.

Ms. Tobia spoke briefly about the fact that she is a trustee of the Truro Conservation Trust and due to an interest by the Trust in a possible purchase of the Pond Road property in question, she recused herself. Mr. Sollog filled in to chair the discussion on the Pond Road traffic study.

Mr. Zehnder, attorney, recapped what was accomplished at the last meeting and the request to do a further traffic study during the "high season." Robert Smith of McMahon Associates, traffic engineers, talked about the new traffic count taken on August 20, 7 am to 6 pm. Vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles were counted. There was a substantial increase in numbers from the count in April, as would be expected. Mr. Smith also reported on the Francis Road study, which did not produce an increase in traffic numbers (vehicles only) from the April study. He noted the finding that the increase of vehicle trips from the proposed nine houses would not alter the functioning of the road or key intersections.

Mr. Herridge asked what an unacceptable increase in the number of vehicles would be. Mr. Smith explained that Pond Road is still relatively low volume usage. Mr. Riemer asked about the method used to count traffic. For Pond Road an employee did the counting so that pedestrians and different types of traffic, ie bicycles, could be counted. For Francis Road a rubber tubing was used to count vehicles. Mr. Smith explained the way the estimates are determined, based on national metrics, which includes service vehicles.

Ms. Ridley reminded them that preliminary plan approval doesn't lock the Board into anything should a definitive plan be submitted. This traffic study is about adequacy of access, one factor in the larger process of Definitive Plan review.

Public Comment

Mary Ann Larkin, 12 Pond Road, wants the Board to know that as part of the Conservation Trust, she has been in touch with the owner to look into purchasing the property. She talked about the twine fields, where fisherman used to tar and repair their nets, and that they are part of local history and worth preserving. She spoke to the historic significance of the neighborhood. Her statement was submitted to be attached to the minutes.

Ray Clarke spoke about environmental and wildlife impacts regarding development of the property in question. His statement was submitted to be attached to the minutes. Mr. Hopkins asked about groundwater issues and asked if there had been a hydrological study done. It was stated that there is no knowledge of a study.

Roger Dias talked his concerns about traffic and safety on Pond Road, which he says has worsened in recent years. His written statement was submitted to be included with the minutes.

Nathan Nickerson, developer of this project, spoke about his willingness to sell to abutters, Conservation Trust, the Town of Truro, etc. He will negotiate in good faith. He will give it until Town Meeting and suggested that those interested should work with Fred Gaechter of the Trust.

Mr. Hopkins brought up the fact that people park on Pond Road. He feels that the study is inadequate because it does not account for things such as periodic on-street parking.

Mr. Smith reported that he asked about accidents filed with the Town of Truro Police Department. No accidents have been recorded by the Department in the last three years.

Mr. Sollog stated that the Pond Road traffic study was informational in response to a condition of the preliminary plan decision, and no further action was taken by the Board.

Pre-Submission Consultations – Definitive Plan

Pursuant to a Preliminary Plan Decision for 2016-005PB Thomas H. & Erik A. Peters, the applicant seeks to present to the Board the results of a traffic study related to a 4-lot proposed subdivision of property located at 7 Sage Ridge Road, Assessor's Map 39, Parcel 78. This is a continuation from a presentation on August 16, 2016.

Mr. Smith, McMahaon Associates, reported on the Francis Road traffic count that was also completed on August 20. The traffic counts came out to be similar to or lower than the numbers in April. Francis Road is a very low volume road.

Ms. Tobia returned and asked Ms. Ridley to summarize the response from Town Counsel as to whether Francis Road is public or private. She stated that Counsel said there is not sufficient evidence that Francis Road has become a public road. Mr. Zehnder responded and explained why he disagreed with Town Counsel, based on the information contained in his submission to the Board. He stressed that the importance of this question was to determine the safety and access for the subdivision, whether the road is public or private.

Ms. Ridley noted that the distinction of public versus private road is significant in determining whether the proposal meets the requirement under section 3.66 of the Subdivision regulations, which limit the length of a dead-end street to 1,000 feet.

Public comment

Carlos Verde disagreed with Mr. Zehnder and believes there is no proof that Francis Road is a Town Road. He believes the road is unsafe road and he is against this proposal.

There was further discussion about Francis Road and its status as a private or public road. Mr. Sollog stated that he felt the status of Francis Road will have to be determined if the preliminary application is to be approved.

Mr. Nickerson was hired to help with this project. He asked if Francis Road turns out to be private will it put a cloud over this project. He also asked about the 1,000 foot rule. He then commented on a safer way for fire trucks to access Francis Road.

Mr. Verde came back up and made comments about paved roads sometimes being private and about the fact that this proposal will double the development of homes on Sage Ridge Road. He also brought up parking issues and the small width of the road.

Mr. Hopkins asked about the open space and if it is being deeded to the Town. It is not to be developed but would not be deeded to the Town, according to Mr. Nickerson. Mr. Zehnder talked about how the open space can be restricted so as not to be developed, and noted the large lot size. Mr. Verde came back up and explained that he thought the lots were large because there is a lot of wetlands. Mr. Nickerson disagreed and said the owner wanted large lots. He would be willing to widen Francis Road and tilt the road towards the land so the water would drain properly and be kept away from the wetlands and wells.

Discussion on Possible Zoning Articles

§40.2 Affordable Accessory Dwelling Units

Ms. Ridley made reference to the summary of the policy discussions on the Zoning Articles held at the Planning Board workshop September 22, 2016. Since there was not a full complement of Planning Board members, those not present would have an opportunity to weigh in now.

Ms. Ridley can take what comes of this discussion and work with Counsel to create a new draft by-law for the Board to review. First, the existing AADU by-law is structured as a special permit. Should it remain so, or should an accessory unit be allowed by right, if all zoning issues are met?

Mr. Riemer said he would rather see the special permit remain. He does not see that existing accessory units should not need a special permit. Mr. Sollog asked about Zoning Board approval regarding the special permit. Ms. Ridley replied that the Planning Board currently has approval for the AADU special permit and that most of the by-law has to do with affordability.

Mr. Hopkins said he is not in favor of the Special Permit or anything that would make it more difficult for residents to create year round accessory dwelling units. Meeting zoning requirements should be enough. He stressed the need for housing for young people and the work force.

Mr. Ridley reminded the Board that the special permit has to do with use. Design guidelines, setbacks, dimensions, etc., can be addressed in the zoning by-law without a special permit. Removing the affordability aspect to the by-law removes the current criteria for the special permit. Mr. Boleyn stated that he thinks the affordability issue needs to be considered separately. Mr. Herridge agrees with Mr. Hopkins about removing the difficulty for the applicant.

Mr. Sollog does not think a special permit is a hurdle. He would prefer to know about these projects before they get permitted in order to have input. Ms. Tobia talked about the zoning issues and wanted the Board not to let affordability cloud the issue. She spoke against retaining the special permit.

Due to the sounding of a faulty alarm that could not be turned off, Mr. Riemer made a motion to recess for 5 minutes, Mr. Herridge seconded, so voted 7-0. At 7:52 pm, the meeting resumed after a seven to eight minute recess.

Ms. Ridley asked if the Board wished to allow the ADU in Seashore, i.e., in all districts in town. Mr. Riemer said that we should not allow ADU's in the Seashore. "By right" options don't give abutters a chance to weigh in prior to the building of the project. Mr. Sollog wants to allow the ADU throughout the town. Mr. Hopkins agreed. Mr. Boleyn and Mr. Herridge said they would not want the ADU's permitted in Seashore. Ms. Tobia agreed with Mr. Sollog and Mr. Hopkins.

Ms. Ridley worked with the assessor recently to find out how many habitable studios there are in the town. There are 94 habitable studios outside the Seashore and 37 in the Seashore. She handed out a table to Board members. She asked if the Board thought the Seashore studios should be eligible to become ADU's.

Mr. Roderick said he would leave it the way it is, excluding the Seashore. The Board voted 4-3 excluding new ADUs in the Seashore, but existing studios would be considered for ADU permitting. Mr. Riemer would like to see the existing studios' applications prior to approval.

Affordability can be removed from the bylaw. Anyone seeking a tax abatement would need to meet affordability requirements. Mr. Riemer asked about the rates for affordability. Ms. Ridley replied that HUD sets the rate for income and rent. These rates are published annually by the Federal government. She also brought up the issue of those families that fall in the range of 80 to 150 % of the area median income who are looking for housing and would not qualify under the HUD affordability standards (80%).

Ms. Ridley stated that we would be removing the need for enforcement of affordability, relying on the market forces to set rent, and requiring year round rental. Occupancy requirements, which all agree are essential, would need to be enforced. Mr. Riemer cited the example of how Wellfleet regulates rents. Mr. Herridge agreed that the Board does not need to require "affordability."

Size of units also was discussed. Ms. Ridley mentioned the tiny house movement. Comments have been received that 400 sf is too high for a minimum and 1,400 sf is too large for a maximum. The minimum, if lowered, would need to meet Building and Health codes. It was noted that a family would probably need a full 1,400 sf.

Ms. Ridley will check with Board of Health and with the Building Code on size, as well as whether basements are included in the calculation.

Public Comment

Chris Lucy brought up the fact that the special permit, if it meets zoning by-laws, simply asks if a project is a detriment to the neighborhood. Why require the special permit? It is expensive. Upgrading the septic system is a big issue. The Board of Health should be involved. We could be innovative and look into a nitrogen removal system. He believes market forces will regulate rents and “affordability” not necessary. Elderly folks could really use an ADU.

Chuck Steinman asked how you make sure ADU’s stay year round rentals. Car registrations, beach permits? Enforcement is important. Seashore existing accessory units allow people to keep their houses. An accessory dwelling unit should be smaller than the primary unit. There needs to be a better definition of the accessory unit in terms of size.

Ms. Tobia mentioned design standards and aesthetics. Mr. Hopkins talked about the variety of house types and designs in Truro and suggested that we should not get too caught up in regulating those. Ms. Ridley said design standards can be more about size and proportion of primary to secondary structures. She will talk with Pat Pajaron and the Board of Health about alternatives regarding septic systems. She will do more research and also talk with Counsel about a new draft for the Board’s review.

§30.3 Seashore District

Ms. Tobia made a statement about voting at the conclusion of the discussion regarding request of Counsel to review and strengthen their efforts to create an effective Seashore by-law.

John Marksbury, member of the Planning Board subcommittee that worked on the Seashore draft, spoke about the overwhelming public support for the protection of the Seashore. He mentioned the group that has been formed called “Save Truro Seashore.” He urges that there be a vote tonight on this issue. The work has been thorough. He urged the Board to include the subcommittee on further developments. Town Counsel should continue to be included even if expensive. Money should be spent on this project; it is worth it.

Mr. Herridge talked about the need for simplicity in a new by-law, but also the importance that it be strong and legally defensible.

Mr. Hopkins brought up the issue that total gross square footage hasn’t specified that barns, livestock buildings, and greenhouses should be excluded. Mr. Steinman said he thought that language could be added. Mr. Hopkins believes this house size restriction should be applied Town-wide.

Mr. Steinman said he agreed that it should be Town-wide, but not at this time for this vote at the next Town meeting. They don’t have the time to do the community meetings required to get it

passed Town wide. Mr. Steinman discussed the new by-law draft in detail, which was distributed to the Board. He pointed out one statement on page three that might need to be changed by Counsel regarding Planning Board and ZBA approval being considered simultaneously. He hopes the Board will send this draft to Counsel for their review.

Mr. Lucy spoke about access to Town Counsel, and that issues should be addressed to the Town Planner and Building Commissioner before being sent to Town Counsel, to avoid miscommunication or duplication of effort.

Mr. Riemer made a motion that we that we send this proposal to Town Counsel for review and returned to us with any concerns or suggestions for strengthening it from a legal standpoint. Mr. Herridge seconded. Ms. Ridley reviewed the core issue to be conveyed to Town Counsel:

- Broaden the uses excluded from the sf calculation to include greenhouses and agricultural uses
- Comment on 30.3.1.B re: joint review by ZBA and Planning Board
- Provide Town Counsel with the scatter diagram

is the treatment of the limitations as proposed. We should be looking for any input to legally strengthen the by-law. Ms. Ridley will include the exclusions Mr. Hopkins brought up, the graph, and the point on page 3 B. Motion unanimously approved, 7-0.

§30.4 Water Resource Protection District

A joint meeting between the Board of Health, Water Resources Committee and the Planning Board will be scheduled soon. Mr. Sollog asked if the septic issues regarding the ADU could be addressed with Ms. Pajaron at this time. Ms. Ridley will talk to Ms. Pajaron.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2016 Planning Board Meeting

Mr. Herridge moved to approve the minutes, Mr. Boleyn seconded, so voted 7-0.

Reports from Board Members and Staff

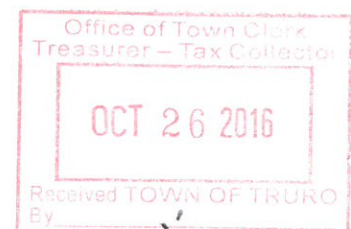
Ms. Ridley asked if there were future Planning Board workshop topics that members wanted to request. A letter was distributed regarding the White Sands Beach club.

Mr. Herridge made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Hopkins seconded. So voted, 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

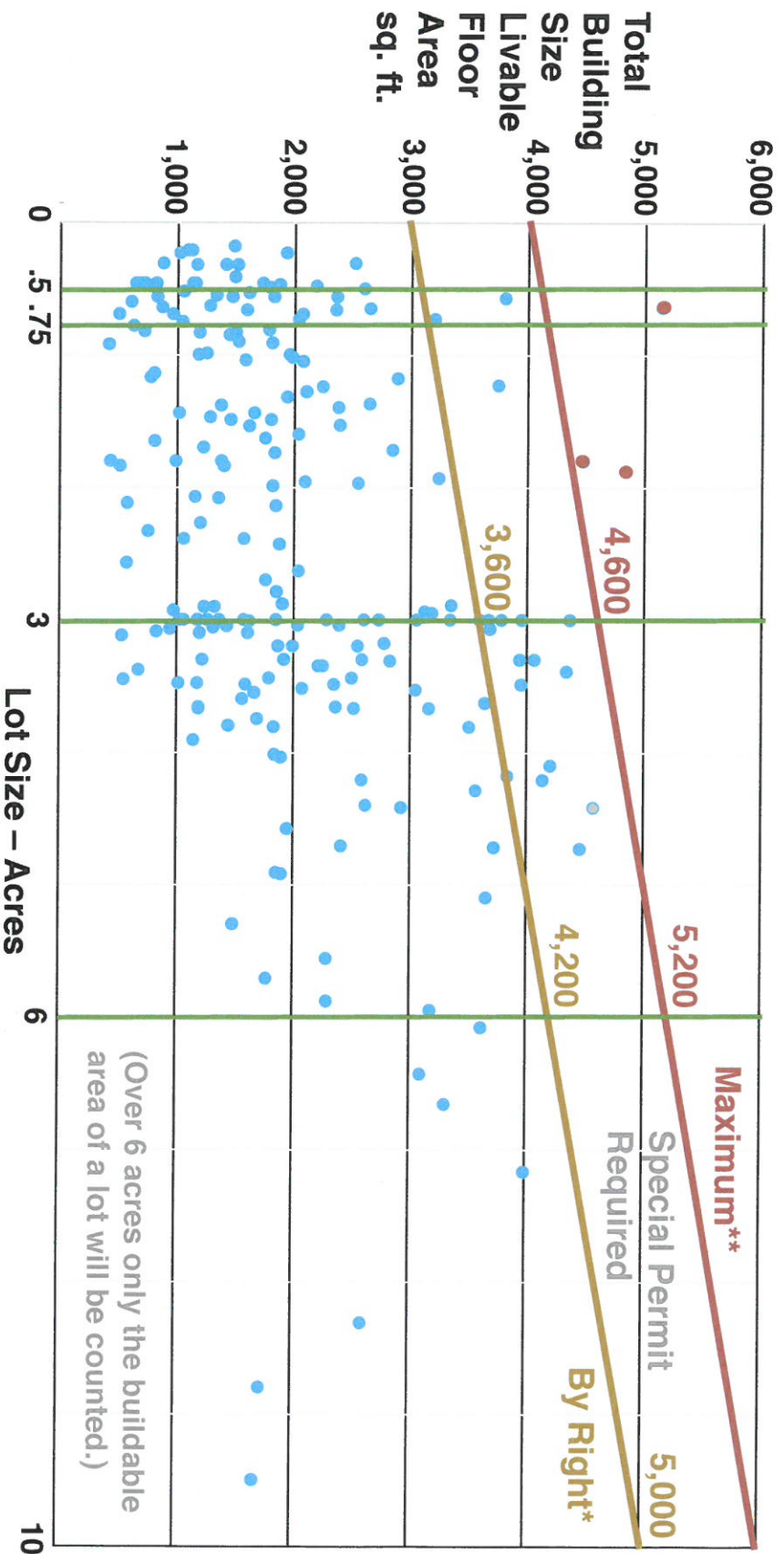


Katherine Black



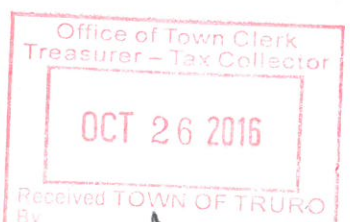
Proposed Truro Cape Cod National Seashore Building Size Limits

Based on the Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Zoning Bylaw Approach
(Each dot represents one "improved" residential property in the Truro Seashore District.)



* Building Size Limit allowed by Right:
3,600 sq. ft. for 3 acres plus or minus 200
sq. ft. for every acre above or below 3 acres,
and prorated for a portion of an acre.

** Maximum Building Size Limit that may be
allowed by ZBA Special Permit approval:
4,600 sq. ft. for 3 acres plus or minus 200
sq. ft. for every acre above or below 3 acres,
and prorated for a portion of an acre.



HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF ROGERS PROPERTY ON POND ROAD

Both Pond Road and the Twine Fields contain much of the history of Truro and, as such, need to be protected and preserved.

1. For those who may not know, the Twine Fields were where the fishermen once spread out their nets in the winter to repair and tar them to protect against fleas biting through the nets. Each town once had a Twine Field. Mark Robinson of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts knows of only two Twine Fields left on the Cape: the upland meadow on the Rogers property behind the house and one in Chatham. Chatham bought their Twine Fields last year through a public-private partnership with the Chatham Conservation Foundation, community preservation act funds, and private donations, just as we are trying to do in Truro. It is our belief that the unprotected Twine Field on the Cape should be protected.
2. Pond Village and Pond Road is a National Register Historic District. Such a designation indicates that Pond Road is not only a Truro treasure but a national one that needs preservation.
3. The building on the Rogers property was built around 1850, but moved to its present site in 1959. The property at 25 Pond Road, known as the Rogers property, was purchased by John E. Rogers, a Portuguese fisherman, from Isaac Green in 1908. The Rogers family had owned property on Pond Road since the late 1800's. According to Truro's PRESERVING HISTORIC PROPERTIES BYLAW, the building would meet the criteria for a demolition delay review by the Truro Historical Board if a demolition permit were to be requested from the Truro Building Commissioner.
4. Pond Road is one of the oldest roads in Truro. The Pilgrims camped on the shores of the pond on their second night ashore in 1620 and followed the forest path from the pond to find fresh water. Thoreau walked Pond Road in the mid-1800's commenting on its beauty. The Massachusetts Historical Commission describes the area: "The area along the small pond in North Truro provided two small valleys sheltered from the wind and access to bay-side anchorage and thereby attracted some of the earliest settlement of the town." According to the Commission, the road's "Maritime Boom Years" had already begun by 1790. The proposed new

40 foot wide road would destroy the Twine Fields and empty into historic Pond Road just yards from the memorial plaque placed in the park to commemorate the Pilgrims. The serenity of the park and the road would both be compromised. Places holding such a history need protection and preservation.

5. During the centuries since 1620, Pond Road has not been an idle place. It has supported income producing activities such as fishing, farming, candle making, fish storage, painters' studios and a fishnet business which made women's clothing sold in NYC and other markets. But today, our narrow road has become a major tourist destination. People come to boat and swim in the bay, rest and picnic in the park, and bring their children to fish and boat in the pond. Berry picking is common in the Twine Fields and there is still some clamming in the bay. In the winter, town residents ice skate on the pond. Our neighborhood's fragile eco- system can barely hold up under its present influx of people in the summer. Our road is more like a boardwalk than an actual road. Safety and history both dictate that we do not need more cars.
6. Pond Road and the Twine Fields are that quintessential road and meadow in a village that people yearn for because of its simple archetypal beauty. In addition to its thousands of visitors yearly, nothing proves this more than the many paintings made of the road. Just in the last 100 years, and decades before that, hundreds of artists from Edward Hopper on have painted the road from many angles. The loss of our upland meadow and a 40 foot gash in the road just yards from the Pilgrim monument would be a major step in the destruction of the beauty and history of Pond Road and the Twine Fields.

Mary Ann Larkin
12 Pond Road
pepperlarkin@juno.com
10-4-16

~~Roger 10/17~~

Marianne Larkin

10/4/16

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING DEVELOPMENT OF ROGERS PROPERTY ON POND ROAD

INTRODUCTION

The heavy traffic in peak months on Pond Road by cars, trucks, joggers, pedestrians, bikers, strollers, beachgoers, dog walkers and neighbors heading for coffee, the store, the bay or the PO, while posing a considerable safety hazard in itself, is not the only safety consideration that should prevent further development from occurring on Pond Road.

A. Contours Of Pond Road

1. Many of the houses on the road are old and built very close to the road. Several houses on the road feature steps that drop directly on to the road without any barrier at all between the house and the road. Other houses are within a few feet of the road. There is no sidewalk.
2. The road divides into a Y as it heads toward the beach. At this intersection, cars are coming and going from three directions, often all at once. I have seen families scurrying to one side or another as they are not sure in which directions the cars will turn.
3. The uphill road to the beach has no room at all in which to step off the road when cars approach. On one side is a downhill slope bordered with poison ivy. On the other side is an uphill slope.
4. Two roads, Pond Village Avenue and Twine Field Road, already empty into Pond Road. However, both of these roads have outlets to #6A. The road that is proposed to go through the Rogers property will have no other outlet. It will empty only onto Pond Road, with a dangerous entrance into an already congested area. This proposed road is a mere 250 feet from Pond Village Ave., greatly increasing the possibility of collisions.
5. Pond Road is already a narrow 20 to 22 feet (as variously measured up and down the road). Two cars cannot pass on Pond Road when pedestrians are near.

B. Dangers Due To Road Contour And Increased Traffic

1. Because many of the houses on Pond Road go right up to the road, no parking is available on either side of much of the road. As a result, cars park partly in the road itself. The road can become one lane with traffic going in both directions because of church services and events held in houses on the road. It is not uncommon for houses to have three or four cars parked partly on the road itself.

2. Dead animals are found on the road every few weeks: cats, squirrels, birds, geese, ducks, turtles. I, myself, once found 16 baby turtles dead on the road as they attempted to cross from the dune where they were hatched back to Pilgrim Pond.
3. Children walking or biking on the road or going to the beach or to the pond to fish are almost always accompanied by adults today because it is no longer safe for them to walk the road alone as my children and other children did for decades. The traffic is far too intense.

C. Dangers Of Excessive Development

1. Pond Road and the Twine Fields behind it are surrounded with development from every side: Sawyer Grove, Bay Village, the campground on Highland Road, and, in the future, the important affordable housing that is slated for the other side of Rt. 6. Only the sea is undeveloped on our borders. The popularity of the wonderful new businesses in Grozier Square has also increased traffic, with the police having to be called this summer because of a traffic altercation. The neighborhood is fragile and rare with only 23 houses on the road. Its very safety is jeopardized by this increased traffic.
2. The construction vehicles caused by future development would not only decimate the character of the neighborhood with noise and pollution for many years to come, but would increase the already high likelihood of accidents.
3. The proposed development calls for nine houses. This would not mean just nine cars using the proposed road, but more like eighteen cars or even more with guests visiting. All of these would be exiting onto narrow and already congested Pond Road. The opportunity for accidents would again be great.

CONCLUSION:

We have had enough development around our fragile Pond Road, Pilgrim Pond and Twine Fields. The most valued asset of any public land—its safety-- is being destroyed. Provincetown has no undeveloped land left, only congestion. We are now in danger of the same happening to one of the oldest and most loved roads and fields in Truro.

In my opinion, voting to allow this development to move forward would violate the mandate given to this board by the State of Massachusetts to ensure public safety.

Ray Clarke

10/4

Testimony to Planning Board, Oct 4, 2016

Environmental Effects of Developing Rogers Property

My name is Ray Clarke and I live on Priest Road but I walk Pond Road almost daily. I have a Ph.D. in ecology from Yale University and taught ecology and marine biology at Sarah Lawrence College for 40 years.

As you know, Truro is the most rural town on the Cape. Because of this, we have a wealth of wildlife that depends on the abundant open space providing essential habitat. The Seashore plays a big role here, but undeveloped land in the town also functions as a refuge for wildlife by serving as a source of food and shelter. It also provides corridors, linking separate open spaces, integrating isolated plots into an effectively large refuge. Developed areas, even if small back yards are forested, provide less shelter and food for many creatures. In fact, there are areas of Truro with manicured lawns that look like suburbia. These are relatively sterile environments and if they expand, will result in greatly reduced biodiversity in our town. In relation to this, I want to stress that every decision about development should consider not only the merits of the individual project, but its contribution to the whole. The widespread tendency in America is to evaluate each project individually, decide that its impact is minor, and approve it. This is done repeatedly and in the aggregate, we have major impacts.

The Rogers property is the largest undeveloped plot for some distance north of Pond Road and west of Route 6. It is adjacent to a small piece of conservation land in an otherwise fully developed large block of real estate. It is covered by approximately equal areas of oak-pine forest and twine fields, or upland meadow. Upland meadow is the rarest habitat on the Cape. It is very different from the grassy areas found among the dunes. The piece on the Rogers property is the largest in Truro. As far as I know, there are none in Provincetown or Wellfleet. This open habitat has a very high diversity of plants and animals, many unique to this environment, for example, false indigo, bluets, field pussytoes, pearly everlasting, trailing arbutus, yarrow, and many species of goldenrods and asters. These plants are adapted to the dry conditions of upland meadows by having deep and extensive root systems. For example, a mature clump of little bluestem grass has more mass below the ground than above it, with a dense, fibrous

root system extending as much as six feet underground. Each species is uniquely adapted to local conditions and season of growth. Consequently the high plant diversity of this community means that some species are actively growing throughout the summer and into the fall. This extended growing season, means that nutrients are absorbed very efficiently at all times thus helping to maintain the purity of our groundwater.

The high diversity of plants also supports a high diversity of insects and other small animals, such as meadow voles. These represent a stable food source for a range of interesting wildlife, such as bobwhites, turkeys, owls, hawks, box turtles, weasels, and foxes. It is partly this biodiversity that makes Truro such an interesting place for both permanent residents and summer visitors.

As I mentioned earlier, another important function of both the twine field and the oak-pine forest, is maintaining ground water quality. This is critical to the health of Pilgrim Pond, which is slowly filling in because high nutrients are supporting rampant growth of aquatic vegetation. If the Rogers property is developed, we will lose the filtering effect of natural vegetation, and replace it with roads, driveways, houses and lawns. The lawns and septic systems will actually add nutrients to the groundwater flowing into Pilgrim Pond accelerating its demise. In time open water will fill in and become a swamp.

In other words, the plant communities of the Rogers property provide a number of ecosystem services, functions that have real value. These are lost with development, resulting in a sterile, homogenized, environment. Do we want Truro to become just another bland town on the Cape? Or do we want it to remain a rich rural place that provides diverse landscapes with healthy populations of wildlife?

I am Roger Q Dias, a 47-year resident of Pond Road

When I first moved here my children could walk and play on the street.
People who drove were mindful of them

In the last 8 or 10 years, that has changed.

The heavy traffic in peak months on Pond Road by cars, trucks joggers, pedestrians, bikers, strollers, beachgoers, dog walkers and neighbors heading for the store, the post office, or the bay, while posing a considerable safety hazard in itself, is not the only safety consideration that should prevent further development from occurring on Pond Road.

Dead animals are found on the road every few weeks—cats, squirrels, birds, geese, and turtles. I myself once found 23 baby turtles squashed on Pond Road as they attempted to cross from the sand dune on my property, where they were hatched, to Pilgrim Pond.

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The road that is proposed to go through the Rogers property will have no other outlet. It will empty only onto Pond Road, with a dangerous entrance into an already congested area. This proposed road is a mere 250 feet from Pond Village Avenue, greatly increasing the possibility of collisions.

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