

2016 MERRIMAC PLANNING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

In calendar year 2016 development in the town under the authority of the Planning Board continued at a steady pace and the Board continued to attend to other aspects of its role of providing citizen input for perspective land use and development.

The end of year status of ongoing projects approved by the Board and subject to continued construction oversight is as follows:

Quail Ridge (off of Battis Road) – Construction of this 11 single-family subdivision that was approved in the early 2000's nears completion. Several issues related to erosion and drainage were rectified by the Town at the request and expense of the developer. Estimated completion in 2017.

Poplar Hill (off of Middle Road) – Many of the homes are completed or under construction in this 15 home Open Space Residential Development. Estimated completion in 2017.

Freedom Way (106 E. Main) – Construction of the 36 over-55 units in nine buildings is near completion and most of the units have been sold. Estimated completion in 2017.

22-32 Bear Hill Road (Abbey Road) – Interior road and drainage work and housing construction on two lots is under way in this 13-single family home Open Space Residential Development. Developer delayed too long to begin improvement of water lines and extension of sewer lines up Bear Hill Road before winter so these will need to be addressed immediately in the spring. Estimated completion in 2018.

Regency Village (106 W. Main) – On August 2nd the Board voted to approve the sub-division of the property into four lots and Special Permits and Site Plan Review for development of buildings on two lots with a total of 96 apartments for over-55. Land for the street was cleared in the fall and construction will begin in spring 2017.

New developments with public hearings for a Special Permit opening in the past year include:

128 W. Main - Applicant is seeking to modify previous Special Permit granted for auto repair and sales to include a new large building for maintenance and repair of dump trucks. The Public Hearing was opened on Nov. 15th.

Lily Village Plaza (118 E. Main St. – old Corona site) – Applicant is proposing a Special Permit for a 12,450 sq. ft. commercial building in front with two buildings consisting of a total of nine two-bedroom condo units behind it. The Public Hearing was opened on Nov. 15th.

Alternative Therapies Groups (17 Board St.) – A commercial building on this site was previously approved for Site Plan Review (SPR). It is now proposed that the building be used for distribution of medical marijuana which requires a Special Permit. The Public Hearing opened on Dec. 6th at which time it was determined that the previous SPR had expired and a new application needs to be included with the Special Permit application.

In other business, the Board granted three new Approval Not Required (ANRs) during the year. The Board advised the Playground Committee on how to proceed with an application for SPR once the Board of Selectmen and they have agreed on a site for new playground for children 2-12. The Board also reviewed and commented on several pre-conceptual plans for perspective developments.

The Board collected \$24,508 in filing fees for its review activities in 2016. During the year the Board also voted approval and support for the Town's 2016-2020 Housing Production Plan, the 2016-2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the 2016 Community Development Strategy.

The Board engaged a consultant to draft proposed changes in the zoning provisions for the Rural Highway District as development in this district has not proceeded as envisioned when major changes were made to zoning in 2004. Town departments, boards and residents were invited to a discussion to comments on the possible options being proposed. The Board will continue this review in 2017.

The Board reorganized in May and voted John Thomas as MVPC Commissioner, Ron Barnes as Vice Chair, and Sandra Venner as Chair. Sandra Venner also continues to serve as chair of the Affordable Housing Board of Trustees. As always, the Board is grateful for the professionalism and dedication of its administrative assistant, Patricia True, who not only serves the Board well but the entire community.

Respectfully submitted by
Sandra Venner, Chairperson
Merrimac Planning Board

John Thomas	Term expires 2017
Ronald Barnes	Term expires 2018
Sandra Venner	Term expires 2019
Karol Flannery	Term expires 2020
Dennis Brodie	Term expires 2021

Keith Pollman	Alternate for Special Permits
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