

May 2, 2013

A special meeting of the Allendale Planning Board was held in the Municipal Building on May 2, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 PM by Mr. Sirico, Vice-Chairman, who announced that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act were met by the required posting and notice to publications.

The following members answered to roll call: Mr. Sirico, Mr. Barra, Mr. Strauch, Mr. Sasso, Mr. Walters, Ms. Sheehan, Mr. Zambrotta, and Mr. Scherb.

Absent: Mr. Quinn, Mr. O'Connell, and Ms. Checki

Mr. Sirico opened the meeting by explaining that this was a special meeting of the Board to discuss the proposed Ordinance Number 13-10 involving boundary changes to the ML-3 Zone District and the AAA Residence Zone District. Mr. Dunn reiterated that this is considered a special meeting of the Planning Board because it is being held two weeks before the traditional monthly meetings. Allendale did give notice about the meeting through posting in The Record, the Star-Ledger, the Borough website, and on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall. Mr. Sirico asked Mr. Barra to give the Board some background information on the proposed Ordinance.

Mr. Barra said that going back several years ago the Borough of Allendale had submitted Round 2 of the COAH plan on affordable housing. There were three parcels included in that plan which were designated as ML-3. The three sites were the five acres behind Hillside School, five acres behind Trinity Episcopal Church on George Street, and a five acre former farm located on East Crescent Avenue by Arlton Road and the Ramsey border. Each site was designated multifamily for forty townhouses with eight units set aside for COAH. We revamped the affordable housing element when we reviewed the third round. The Town Council, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board worked together and decided to eliminate the three sites just mentioned. The acres behind Hillside School and Trinity Church were eliminated completely from the COAH plans. The former farm was changed from forty townhouses to residential with eight market rate homes and two affordable ones.

Mr. Barra stated that in order to replace our obligation with COAH Allendale developed the Orchard Commons site where ten special needs units were built. The Council decided to change our affordable housing approach to address the needs of special needs housing. There are eight thousand people on a waiting list for special needs housing. Allendale is the model for this type of housing. Building the ten special needs units gave us twenty COAH credits which would be equivalent to building a hundred townhouses with twenty percent set aside for affordable houses. We bought the Roberts house at 343 West Crescent Avenue and converted that into a small group home for three special needs individuals. Then Allendale bought the Foreit site. This has been built and the opening was in January. Twenty-four special needs units were built with twenty units for the developmentally disabled and four units for people with multiple sclerosis. Now we are finishing the project by building six affordable units which will be sold in the future.

These projects more than compensated for the three sites that we are removing from our original Round 2. Our Round 3 was approved by COAH, the Town Council, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board.

Mr. Barra said that all three owners from the sites mentioned agreed that the zoning could be removed or changed. The Board of Education at Hillside School agreed because they didn't want forty units behind the school anyway. Trinity Episcopal Church agreed as they were not in accord with having 40 townhouses located behind them. The attorney representing the estate of the former farm also agreed, and sent a letter to the COAH Planner and the Mayor and Council indicating on behalf of his client the willingness to change back from forty townhouses to single family residences. All of this was reflected in Round 3 and COAH agreed to this plan. We never changed the zoning for the acres behind Hillside School and Trinity Episcopal Church from ML-3 back to what they were originally. We also never changed the former farm site from ML-3 to ML-7. The ML-7 zone allows for eight market rate and two affordable homes. The Town Council has approved the Ordinance and is referring it to the Planning Board to make sure it complies with the Master Plan. Then the Council will vote on it at the May 9th meeting. Mr. Barra turned the meeting over to Mr. Snieckus for his comments on the Ordinance.

Mr. Snieckus read from his report which is on file at the Borough Hall. Under Section 3, 270-159.1, he explained to the Board that the Borough of Allendale's third round of COAH certification was granted on December 29, 2008. He said the Planning Board recognized those changes when the Master Plan Examination Report was reviewed. The reasons for the Ordinance are to take the three sites out of the ML-3 districts and update the Allendale Zoning map. The lots behind Hillside School and Trinity Episcopal Church will be reverted back to what they were originally to AAA zoning. Mr. Snieckus presented exhibit one to show where these lots are located in town. He also stated that there would be a new district established for the former farm site. This zone will be designated ML-7. This zone would allow for eight market rate single family homes as well as two affordable homes (Section 270-159.2). Since the area is surrounded by single family homes it would not conflict with the surrounding community. It would also not impede traffic conditions on East Crescent Avenue or Arlton Avenue. The minimum lot size would be 15,000 square feet. The lot should have an average width of 85 feet within 150 feet of the street lot line. The shortest distance between the side lot lines shall not be less than sixty feet. The setbacks and building height limitations shall be subject to the bulk and building height regulations in the A-Residence Zone District. This is the same for the impervious surface requirements, the floor area ration requirements, and accessory buildings.

Mr. Barra asked Mr. Snieckus if 270-159.2 was the exact wording that came out of Round 3 Housing element that was approved by COAH and Mr. Snieckus agreed. Mr. Sirico asked if there were any other questions. Mr. Walters summarized that the Board was just finishing what was started a few years ago. Mr. Snieckus agreed and added that the Planning Board needs to let the Town Council know that this Ordinance is consistent with the Master Plan.

Ms. Sheehan asked why they had to create a new zone. Mr. Snieckus answered because the Board is zoning for a single family development and the other ML districts are multifamily. He continued with the comment that this zone is unique. Mr. Sirico asked if the new zone would conform with Ramsey since it borders that town. Mr. Snieckus responded that the zone would be consistent with what is in Ramsey. Mr. Strauch said that everything around the area is single family detached homes. The closest multifamily houses are Crescent Hollows in Ramsey and Orchard Commons in Allendale. He added that everything has to conform to what COAH approved otherwise Allendale is in violation. Mr. Sirico questioned whether Ramsey had complained at all and Mr. Snieckus stated that they had been notified. Mr. Barra commented that several people from Ramsey have come to the Borough Hall to question what was being done and that the people are thrilled with this plan as they would rather see residential homes than multifamily units. Mr. Sasso remarked that there was no one from the public present to comment on the changes.

Mr. Sirico asked if there were any further questions. Since there were none from the Board, Mr. Dunn read the Resolution and a copy of it is on file at the Borough Hall.

On a motion from Mr. Sasso, seconded by Mr. Zambrotta, the Resolution Recommending Adoption of Amendment to the "Revised Zoning Ordinance 1979," Chapter 270, Being Ordinance number 13-10, was approved.

The next meetings will be on May 13th and May 16th as the paperwork is in for Trinity Episcopal Church.

On a motion from Mr. Strauch, seconded by Mr. Zambrotta, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Knispel