



TOWN OF HOLDEN

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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING, April 20, 2023

(Previous Case # SP-0508) Case No. SP-2304

Jefferson Mills, LLC

(Previous Case #V-0501) Case No. V-2302

The Zoning Board of Appeals held a public hearing on Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:25 p.m. in the Holden Senior Center on the Petition of Jefferson Mills, LLC for property located at 1665 Main St for an AMENDMENT to a VARIANCE and an AMENDMENT to a SPECIAL PERMIT granted in 2005 to enable the conversion of two Mill buildings into forty seven (47) residential units. This amendment is to allow for an increase of units.

Members in attendance: R. Spakauskas, R. Fraser, J. Deignan, D. George, and B. Parry

Others in attendance: D. Lindberg – Building Commissioner, C. Perkins – Secretary, D&K Higginson – 44 Homestead Rd, T. Orciuch – 72 Homestead Rd, G&K Merk – 2 Village Way, K. Salins – 9 Village Way, K. Olson – 40 Village Way, J. Magnuson – 10 Village Way, L. Wells – 12 Village Way, P. Craig – 7 Village Way, T&F Lorusso – 41 Village Way, T. Connolly – 29 Village Way, B. Vitalis – 34 Village Way, T. Kluck – 43 Laurelwood Rd, D. Jacobs – 28 Village Way, J. Ohara – 22 Village Way, D. Perry – 20 Village Way, A&S Lambert – 36 Village Way, L. Laliberte – 25 Village Way, S. Plourde – 33 Village Way, D. Strowe – Jefferson Mill, M. Mischenko – 11 Village Way, S. Dagle – 42 Phillips Rd, M. Nettekoven – 3 Southview Rd, M. Peloquin – Atty Jefferson Mill, M. Powell – 5 Village Way

R. Spakauskas opened the meeting, reviewed the procedures for the hearing and the secretary read the application and findings of fact. Two letters pertaining to this Special Permit were received and read aloud as noted below:

1. Holden Fire Department, submitted by Russ Hall, Fire Chief, dated April 12, 2023 (see attached letter)
2. Karen Phillips, Senior Center Director, email dated April 20, 2023 (see attached)

R. Spakauskas then asked the applicant to address the board. Atty. Peloquin, representing the applicant, addressed the Board and provided some background information regarding this project. He stated in 2005 a Variance and Special Permit were issued for a residential 47-unit project which is underway and they are in the planning stages of Phase 2 (Main St building) of this project. They have determined the original plans for Phase 2 are out of date and require extensive revisions. The applicant has requested the Board to consider an Amendment to the Variance and Special Permit to allow for revisions for a 63-unit residential project for a total of 16 additional units.

D. Strowe, applicant, stated the proposed changes to Phase 2 include a reduction in number of parking spots in the basement of Building 5 due to unresolvable issues and to create a parking lot in the northeast corner of the site to ensure there is adequate parking for all tenants and their guests. This revised design will help reduce the traffic on Village Way for the benefit the neighbors at Mill Pond townhouses. Their goal is to maintain the historic look and uniqueness of the Main St building with the revised plans acceptable to the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC) and the National Park Service (NPS). This continued project will help the Village District to be viable and make the neighborhood better with renovations to a now dilapidated building. The applicant's hope is revitalize the Jefferson Village with more people, stores and restaurants. Atty Peloquin also stated that the applicant will need to get Planning Board and Conservation Commission approvals before moving forward.

R. Spakauskas opened the hearing for Board comments:

J. Deignan discussed the ownership of the dam. R. Fraser confirmed the Fire Department's approval of the proposed plan and Atty Peloquin stated the Fire Department will be included in the final sight plan of the project. B. Parry asked how many units are they asking to add and the applicant stated, 16 more units. R. Spakauskas stated he recently toured the facility and was pleased with the information he received and with the improvements thus far. The MA DOT has approved the new parking lot and the entrances and exits to/from Main St. R. Spakauskas stated adding another access to Main St is a bonus. R. Fraser asked if the applicant owns the small lot across the street and the applicant stated yes, this lot is owned by Jefferson Mills, LLC. D. George briefly discussed what is needed for Planning Board review. The Board had no further questions or comments.

R. Spakauskas then opened the hearing for Public comments:

K. Olson of 40 Village Way has parking concerns along the retaining wall as there is not much room and where are all the people going to go if more units are to be added?

B. Vitalis of 34 Village Way submitted a Jefferson Mill Apartments slides/packet consolidating the public's comments regarding this proposal of increased apartments and provided a quick review of their concerns. In short, they welcome the rehabilitation of the Mill Buildings but have concerns with the increase of units and parking, traffic and safety, and utilities.

T. Kluck of 43 Laurelwood Rd stated he doesn't believe Holden has the infrastructure to support this project and an increase in apartments would make it worse.

A. Lambert of 36 Village Way stated entering and exiting Main St is extremely dangerous and believes it's over-reaching to ask for 63 total units. This approval will increase pedestrian risk and more accidents.

M. Nettekoven of 3 Southview Rd stated this approval will put more stress on schools.

T. Connolly, S. Lambert, and J. Ohara of Village Way all have concerns with parking on site.

M. Powell of 5 Village Way stated that there is a blind curve where mailboxes are currently located and is not safe for residents to collect their mail.

The Board comments continued with R. Fraser, he stated that Hilltop Ave can be looked at for another entrance into the Mill Pond neighborhood.

D. George stated the Zoning Board's authority is to approve the proposed amendments to increase the number of units. This Board does not have the authority to make a decision on parking or otherwise. The applicant must get approvals from Conservation and the Planning Board which parking/traffic is in their purview.

D. Lindberg stated many town departments are looking at this project to include HMLD, Fire, Public Works, ConCom, Planning, Engineering etc. He continued that the developer has been great to work with and looks forward to this project continuing.

The Board discussed putting together a letter to submit to the Planning Board prior to their meeting to address Hilltop Ave, moving mailboxes, and parking. The Board had no further comments.

D. George made a motion to vote on granting approval for 63 units and R. Fraser seconded that motion. All in favor 5-0 UNANIMOUS with no conditions.

The public hearing was closed at 9:11p.m.

Ronald E. Spakauskas, Chairman