

COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN

PUBLIC HEARING

Council Chambers, Municipal Building
Middletown, Connecticut

December 4, 1958

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by the Chairman, I. Robert Traverse, who read the petition.

Dale Johnson appeared for the petitioner, Sebastian Brunetto. Mr. Johnson is a real estate agent from Kensington, Connecticut. Mr. DiAnthony is the developer. A plot plan of the area was submitted to the Commission indicating land west of Ridgewood Road, above Mr. Brunetto's house.

Mr. Johnson stated that this land was suitable for a road through the center with access to the property to the south. He said all requirements set forth in the regulations of the Planning Commission have been met and Mr. DiAnthony expects to go ahead with the road and developing of houses if this petition is granted. Other houses have been built across the street and it is hoped that houses in keeping with the neighborhood will be built.

The Chairman asked if anyone wished to speak on the petition.

Attorney Flood appeared, who is from Middletown, representing a group of people desiring to be heard in opposition to this development. He suggested that these people be identified for the record and submitted a list which is attached hereto, and made a part of these minutes. He stated that these people feel that this land is not suitable for the type of development proposed. This is one of the last areas available for nice residential homes. No new streets are being opened. The proposed road through this property would end in a cul de sac which is not good planning.

This land is bordered on the south by a large dairy farm belonging to Mr. Higgins who is very much opposed to this development. The operators of this farm have seventy head of cows which need this land for pasture and this would be detrimental to such development. The land does not lend itself to development next to a farm. The people who lived there would be liable to complain and it would be penalizing a use already there. Odors from the farm would be objectionable. He further stated that there is a rock ledge through this property and there is a drainage problem which would make wells difficult. Lots to the south would drain into Mr. Higgins' property. There is a ten-foot in every 100-foot rise and facilities would be a problem. Also, the people who are living in this area bought their homes with the feeling of having plenty of room and no back area has been opened up as yet. Mr. Higgins feels that encroachment of this nature would limit the operation of his farm and there would be no room for expansion.

Attorney Flood stated any future development provided for by the road outlined on the map is not possible because Mr. Higgins would not sell for development. Wherever you have a cul de sac, thought should be given for some future highway from it, but here it could not be done.

Mr. C. B. Stone, Jr. of Ridgewood Road, stated that he was convinced that drainage on this property is a basic problem. He said drainage was a problem on his side

of the road and would be worse where this development is proposed.

Michael Shonta, of Ridgewood Road, said he bought there because he thought he would be in the country and away from developments and he was opposed to this development.

Mr. Dale Johnson said that in the town zoning regulations this area is designated as "Class A Residential Zone" and stated that their subdevelopment has taken this into consideration and has ample area to meet that requirement. He said, as for the farm to the south, they were in sympathy with them, however, Mr. Brunetto has twelve acres of land going to waste. It would be a hardship if he is refused permission to subdivide this lot. As far as the road ending in a cul de sac is concerned, he said they are aware of that and, in thinking of the general good of the town, they feel that their proposal will fit very nicely if future land becomes available for subdivision. He said the Commission has set firm requirements for storm sewers and they are provided for. Some eight catch basins will be provided to follow along the storm sewers. He said Mr. DiAnthony and Mr. Brunetto are willing to work with the city officials to see that this requirement is properly met. He said in that type of soil 20,000 square feet are ample for wells and septic tanks.

Attorney Flood asked where the water would go from these catch basins. Mr. Johnson said along the natural water shed which is the south side of Ridgewood Road to the present brook which is below Ridgewood Road. He said it would not affect anything on the east side of the road but follow the present path of the water shed.

Attorney Flood asked if he meant the storm sewers would empty into the open onto Ridgewood Road. Mr. Johnson said that would be worked out with the city officials.

Mr. C. B. Stone, Jr. said that the present residents are convinced that the drainage is very poor. He said it is true that there are few houses now there. He said where the storm sewers are going to go they do not know but they are sure they will cause trouble.

Attorney Flood said that Mr. Higgins is familiar with the land on which this subdivision is proposed and there is lead throughout and in some places it hits the surface and he doubts whether any proper drainage would be possible without blasting, and that would change the entire area's drainage. He said there is presently some difficulty in digging wells in this area. One neighbor had to go deeper for water when a new artesian well was opened nearby. There has been no fit answer as to drainage or for the need of this subdivision. He felt there must be some indication of future development to another street but that is not going to be the situation here. There will be a problem of snow removal, he said; also the rise of this land 10-feet and 100-feet is a serious problem where septic tanks are concerned. This could be a serious problem for each succeeding future resident. It would not be good planning.

Mr. Frank Buchanan, of Ridgewood Road, said that he lives across the street and that directly across the street, for a considerable area, it is quite marshy. He said a number of storm sewers would be necessary and many of them would have to be on Mr. Higgins' land.

Mr. John Churchill, of Ridgewood Road, said that his concern is the insurance of adequate water supply. He asked if there was any provision for city water or sewers. Mr. Johnson said there is no public service available. He further stated that their engineers assure them that under local and state ordinances, the land area, soil, and drainage are adequate to supply water. He felt that their provisions would take care of the surface water which is now creating a problem. He said it has been proven to Mr. Brunetto that seventeen families could live on his twelve acres adequately.

Mr. John Meadows, of Ridgewood Road, presented another possible problem. He said Ridgewood Road itself is only a narrow dirt road with hard surface and is already dangerous. He said any more building out there, and the city will have to put in a new road since the present one is barely adequate for the present traffic.

Mr. Dwayne W. Darley, of Ridgewood Road, stated that they all have trouble with their wells since there is a lack of water throughout the whole area and as every house there has been built, there has been a further decline of water supply.

Mr. Churchill said he has lived there for seven years and he originally had a flow of water at seven-foot level. A few homes were built and he had to add a thirty-foot tail pipe. Four years later, it was last Spring, he lost water entirely because of one new well and he went from a 100-foot level to 190-feet. In the summer, he said, it drops to that level.

Mr. Sokolowsky, of East Street, asked how much top soil there is on that ledge. Mr. Johnson said there is plenty of room for cellar, well, and septic tank but he could not say how much thickness of top soil there was, but there was a good growth of grass there.

Mr. Higgins said that he has cleaned more land out there than this whole area and he had bulldozers working there. He said the ledge is in the center of the lot and within two feet of the surface. He said that the top of his hill he has the same problem across the whole area. He said there are seventeen acres between his house and the proposed development. The top soil is not over 2-1/2 feet on the best of the land. The rest will have to be blasted.

Mr. Darley said that if blasting has to be done, it will disrupt their oil systems, etc.

Mr. Shonta, of Redgewood Road, said that the rock in the area is hard blue rock and that the cost would be \$1,000.00 for a hole for a cellar. After his well was drilled, he was assured that he would have seven and one-half gallons a minute. After the house was built and plumbing in, there was not a drop of water in the well. He said that blasting is going to destroy the present water status and we will all lose what water we have.

Attorney Flood summarized the position of his clients as to the water, septic tank, well, and drainage problems. He said the farm would be jeopardized and the proposed street would not be possible as long as Mr. Higgins owns his land.

These are problems that will have to be faced. He feels it is not good planning and would set a precedent. He said Mr. Brunetto has a problem as to what to do with his land, but the Commission must consider the whole area and not one individual. They must consider the welfare of the entire city and those in the immediate neighborhood. Mr. Johnson said Mr. Brunetto has been trying to sell that piece of property for three or four years and the only way he can sell it is this way.

Since it is a residential neighborhood, he cannot use the land for anything else. If he cannot sell it, it is definitely a hardship. Also, he cannot sell the house without the land. As for blasting, he said present-day methods allow this to be done without the neighborhood even knowing it.

He said that if the decision should go against them, they will abide happily by it. If it is for them, they will be very appreciative.

The hearing closed at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire E. Hedges
Secretary

EXECUTIVE SESSION - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC HEARING OF DECEMBER 4, 1958

PRESENT: Chairman I. Robert Traverse
James Higgins
Arthur Dillon
Seb. J. Passanesi
William Warshauer

ABSENT: Joseph V. Misenti (accident - unable to attend)

The Commission met for an informal session with Attorney Aaron J. Palmer, counsel for Morris Haftel, regarding the proposed subdivision "Deerfield Acres".

After discussion, it was agreed that the Public Hearing would be held on the second Thursday in January. A set of revised plans will be resubmitted, along with a list of abutters and the advertisement fee.

The Commission appointed a Committee of Two (Mr. Passanesi and Mr. Warshauer) to find and interview applicants for the position of City Planner.

No further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 P.M.

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ARTHUR DILLON, RECORDING SECRETARY