



Planning Department

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MEMORANDUM

To: Planning Board

Date: November 27, 2007

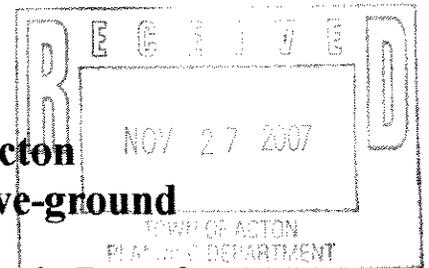
From: Roland Bartl, AICP, Planning Director

Subject: Quarry Woods (Peet) – Request to Allow Above-Ground Utilities

Attached, please find the

- Peets' request;
- an N-Star plan;
- back-up e-mail correspondence; and
- in the event the Board is inclined to approve the request, a draft decision amendment.

Request Amending Plans for 68 Quarry Road, Acton Change Utilities lines from under-ground to above-ground



In the original plans it states that the Peets agrees to give water right to the Town of Acton provided that the Town will be responsible to excavate the trench and allows the Peets to install the underground utility lines in the same trench; it also stated that the Town has to excavate the trench according to the Peets' construction schedule.

Aesthetically Peets has preferred to put the utility lines underground; however, after thorough investigation and evaluation by experts, Peets find that to install the utility lines above ground appear to be beneficial to the Town and practical to the Peets; therefore, the Peets request to amend the plan and bring the utility lines above ground.

These reasons are:

- 1) To enable sharing of the Town's water pipe and Peets utilities lines (electricity, telephone, cable... etc.), the engineer from NSTAR and Verizon both requests that a trench has to be minimum of 6' wide and 4' deep, which will be very costly for the Town.
- 2) The expert evaluation suggests that blasting (estimated at \$15,000) would very likely be required in this case, which Town would have to pay for.
- 3) In order to access the Quarry Pond water, Town has to go through lengthy process internally, i.e., testing water (twice), evaluation of financial cost and effect, coordinate timeline of each steps in the process and keep up with the Peets' construction schedule. It is quite clear already that Town is not able to comply to the original PCRC decision ruling that said "Town will do the excavation according to the Peets construction schedule. Therefore, to put the utility above ground relieves Town's burden and pressure to follow this ruling.
- 4) Peet's construction is such that the utility lines have to be installed in the month of Nov. and no later than early Dec. Town's administrative mechanism simply cannot respond to this need.
- 5) After Peets move the utility lines to above-ground, the Town will be beneficial from the following:
 - a) Save money: digging a 2' trench as opposed to a 6' trench; no blasting needed.
 - b) Town may proceed the water right accordingly to Town's own schedule

While we agree that utility poles are not as aesthetically attractive as having no poles at all, we also feel that all Americans are very used to seeing utility poles, even in scenically beautiful and peaceful locations, and thus the public should not find the existence of four poles to be an undue burden.

Based on weighing the pros and cons of using a trench to install utility lines versus the alternative of using poles, we believe the poles make the best sense economically for all concerned and also allow logistics to proceed more smoothly for all parties. We request that the Town favorably consider our request to make a change from our original plans and allow the utility company to install utility poles and lines above ground.

Thank you for your consideration.