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ACTON BOARD OF APPEALS

Paulina Knibbe, Chair
Acton Board of Selectmen

October 13, 2009

Acton Board of Appeals
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

Subject: Comments on Application for a Comprehensive Permit for 93 and 113 Central Street

The Board of Selectmen has reviewed the revised plans for 93 Central Street (Marsh View) and 113 Central Street (Richardson Crossing) and we have the following comments:

1) We would have preferred that the applicant had applied for their permit through the Local Initiative Program (LIP), enabling more dialogue regarding the plans, and early discussion with the abutters as to placement of the homes, concerns to be addressed, etc.

2) The plans are for 4 single family homes on each of the lots with a common driveway out to Central Street. One home out of 4 will be affordable in perpetuity as per the rules and regulations regarding re-sale of the unit. The homes are arranged in a courtyard configuration, facing a central area. This results in the sides and rear of two of the homes to be oriented toward Central Street. The revised plans include the planting of large evergreens to screen the rear yards and decks from the street view. This is a great improvement over the original plans which did not show such screening.

3) Increased plantings are shown in the landscape plan to shield some of the adjacent homes on Central Street. However, no increased planting is shown to shield the neighbors at 40 Tuttle Drive and other surrounding homes. We recommend that planting of suitable evergreens be placed between the proposed homes and homes on Tuttle Drive and any other surrounding homes.

4) Mature trees are not marked on the plan. Every effort should be taken to retain mature trees on the site.

5) The wastewater disposal for these homes is a common septic system. A condition should be placed on each development to require proper upkeep and monitoring of the system, as it is shared.

6) The developers have not shown elevations of what the homes would look like from the street. We recommend that the ZBA ask the developers for a sketch or other rendering that would show what the final project might look like.

7) Will the existing terrain be altered? How will the homes be arranged on the hill? Will any retaining walls be needed?

8) We would like the ZBA to inquire as to what other designs were considered for this project and why this design was chosen.

9) Central Street is an arterial street in Acton, and is targeted to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street. We request that the applicant provide a sidewalk along their frontage on Central Street, or contribute in-kind funds to build a sidewalk there in the future.

Again, thank you for considering the Board's comments as you review this project.

Paulina S. Knibbe, Chair

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