



Planning Department

TOWN OF ACTON  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Planning Board

**Date:** February 9, 2006

**From:** Roland Bartl, AICP, Town Planner

*RB*

**Subject:** Street Acceptance – Jackson and Monroe

The Selectmen have initiated the street acceptance process for Jackson Drive Extension and Monroe Drive under MGL Ch. 41, S. 81I. They are now awaiting a Planning Board's report – essentially a recommendation on whether or not to proceed.

The Jackson Drive Extension and Glenbrooke Run (Monroe Dr) Subdivision came to the Planning Board for approval in 2000 and 2002. Monroe Dr intersects with Jackson Dr on the extension. There was a connected requirement to build a sidewalk on Musket Drive, which has been done. All work approaches near completion. You may want to look it over before the meeting. The roads look rather finished, but many details remain undone – see attached memo from engineering and tree warden. Not much progress has been made since these memos were written in the winter months, except that plantings on the Ricciardo property on Washington Drive were done late last fall and some of the paperwork is proceeding. One small item was held up at our request.

A recommendation to proceed with street acceptance should be accompanied with a note bringing all the outstanding work to the Selectmen's attention. We hold more than sufficient performance guarantees to secure the work ourselves if needed: \$181,200 as a letter of credit from the Community National Bank. We prefer not taking such bonds and getting into construction management to complete subdivision roads. It detracts from the work we should rather be doing.

We also don't like recommending acceptance unless the street is fully completed. But, consistently we end up dealing with these almost completed roads. The fact is that for many developers a project slips off the priority list once the houses are sold - there is money to be made elsewhere. It is September, when we start the acceptance process at the engineering department level – plenty of time to finish work items. We like to give the developer the benefit of the doubt. The new arrive in winter with a list of unfinished item.

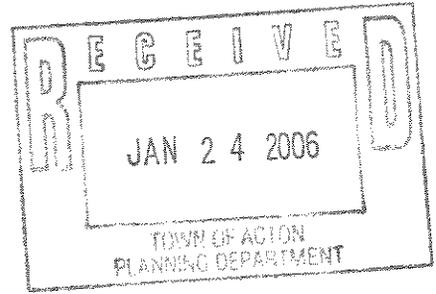
If the street acceptance proceeds to an approval vote at Town Meeting, the developer has time into the summer to finish all work before we follow through with the legal paperwork to commence the acceptance. If he does not complete all the work by then, the process will have to start over again. Will he finish the work? Some developers do and some don't. Or, will we end up before Town Meeting again next year for the same thing? How much nagging will we have to do to keep things on track? One year I negotiated cash bonds at multiple times the value of work, in exchange for a favorable recommendation. It worked in that year but I don't have a great desire to repeat that experience.

In the past, staff has sometimes recommended stopping the acceptance and putting things off to the following year. Occasionally, this resulted in an outcry from the residents on the new streets to the Planning Board and Selectmen and in a last-minute plea from the developer, sometimes successfully reversing staff's recommendation. At other times the acceptance process was halted, but the work still did not get done, so that the following year we were facing the same situation all over again. Not much gained there, either.

Where am I going with this? I think the matter of whether to recommend or not is a policy decision that the Board needs to make. I hope I gave you a glimpse of the dilemma that we seem to be facing year after year. I have notified Mr. Donelle (the developer) of this matter being before the Planning Board with the suggestion that he might attend. Perhaps he can shed some light on the status of his work and his plans to finish it.

Cc: Engineering Department  
Town Manager

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Middlesex, ss.

Town of Acton

**To the Planning Board**

January 23, 2006

In accordance with Section 81I of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, notice is hereby given by the Selectmen of the Town of Acton that they have made the initial step required for laying out as a town way, for acceptance by the Town at the Annual Town Meeting, the ways known as:

In the **JACKSON DRIVE EXTENSION SUBDIVISION**

**JACKSON DRIVE** - from the previous limit of acceptance at the easterly end of Jackson Drive a distance of 1,466 feet, more or less, in a generally easterly direction to the westerly sideline of Washington Drive, this being the entire road.

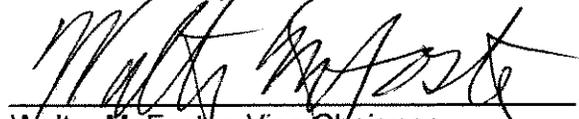
In the **GLENBROOKE RUN SUBDIVISION**

**MONROE DRIVE** - from the southerly sideline of Jackson Drive a distance of 500 feet, more or less, in a generally southerly direction to the end of a T-shaped turnaround, including the turnaround, this being the entire road.

and that this matter is now referred to the Planning Board for its recommendation.

No further action can be taken by the Board of Selectmen until the Planning Board has reported thereon, or has allowed forty-five days to elapse after such reference without submitting its report.

  
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Peter K. Ashton, Chairman

  
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Walter M. Foster, Vice Chairman

  
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F. Dore' Hunter, Clerk

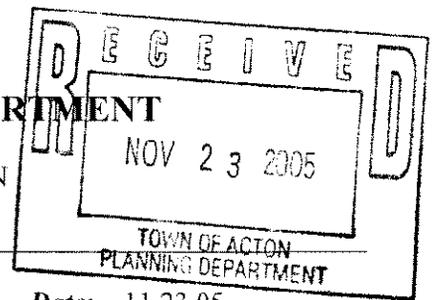
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Lauren Rosenzweig, Member

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Andrew Magee, Member

**ACTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**ACTON MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES DEPARTMENT**

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION



**To:** Corey York, Engineering Department

*Date:* 11.23.05

**From:** Dean A. Charter, Municipal Properties Director 

**Subject:** Street tree inspection, Jackson Drive Extension and Monroe Drive

Pursuant to your request, this morning I inspected the plantings on Jackson Drive Extension and Monroe Drive for compliance with the approved subdivision plans. My notes show that I last inspected this area in May, 2004, and that there were numerous problems at that time. It is too late in the season to address many of the issues noted below; replanting will have to wait until spring. I noticed the following issues, which should be rectified prior to acceptance of the roads and/or release of bonds:

**Washington Drive:**

Note #40 of the Subdivision Plan requires that a minimum of 10 plants, at least six feet high, be planted behind the sidewalk opposite Jackson Drive to provide a headlight buffer. Only five plants are there now that comply with the requirement, although there are a number of newly planted rhododendrons in this area. I have no record showing that the abutter agreed to this substitution.

The old Washington Drive cul-de-sac was to be removed and replanted. In my inspection I noted that 8 of the trees planted have extensive basal scarring, which will lead to death or structural failure of the trees. I marked the defective trees with orange paint, and all must be replaced. Additionally, I noted that one tree had been dug up, leaving a tree pit that was a tripping hazard. A new tree should be planted in this location.

**Jackson Drive from Washington Drive to #4 Jackson Drive:**

One maple tree (near the fire hydrant) has a basal scar, and must be replaced. It has been marked with orange paint.

One 8 inch DBH pine and two 8 inch DBH Black Birches, on the slope easement, are dead, and must be removed because they are hazards. These have been marked with orange paint.

**Monroe Drive:**

General note: the plan and the Subdivision Rules and Regulations require that street trees be at least 10 feet in height and 2 inches in caliper

Monroe Drive, second tree on the left as you enter the roadway, has a basal scar and must be replaced, it is marked in orange.

Monroe Drive at Jackson Drive, on the right, tree missing, mulch area left, must be replaced.

Monroe Drive plan shows 19 street trees, only 13 present (some are defective and/or substandard) there are a number of good planting sites that are devoid of trees. 6 additional trees should be provided, as well as replacements for the trees shown below.

Driveway to #12 Jackson Drive, the small double stem red Maple has substandard branch structure and is substandard in height and caliper. Must be replaced.

7 Monroe Drive, Kwanzan Cherry has extensive bark loss, must be replaced, marked in orange. Ornamental Pear is substandard in height and caliper, must be replaced, 2 Maples, improperly planted (mulch and soil piled up around base at least eight inches too high), mounds must be carefully removed, guarantee provided that trees will survive.

**Jackson Drive from Monroe Drive to round-about:**

General note: The plans and the Subdivision rules and regulations require that all street trees be at least ten feet in height and two inches in caliper.

5 Jackson Drive, two trees were improperly planted (mulch and soil piled up around base at least eight inches too high), mounds must be carefully removed, guarantee provided that trees will survive.

7 Jackson Drive, two ornamental pears are substandard in height and caliper, must be replaced.

9 Jackson Drive, dead/dying tree, marked in orange, must be replaced

11 Jackson Drive, tree with large basal scar, marked in orange, must be replaced.

16 Jackson Drive, a maple and a pear are both substandard in height and caliper, must be replaced.

Opposite driveway for 16 Jackson Drive, dead 6 inch DBH pine in slope easement must be removed, marked in orange.

Opposite driveway for 22 Jackson Drive, defective Oak stem, in slope easement, must be removed, marked in orange.

16 Jackson Drive, at the utility box, seedling poplars must be removed as they are too close to utilities, marked in orange.

14 Jackson Drive, at the utility box, seedling poplars must be removed as they are too close to utilities.

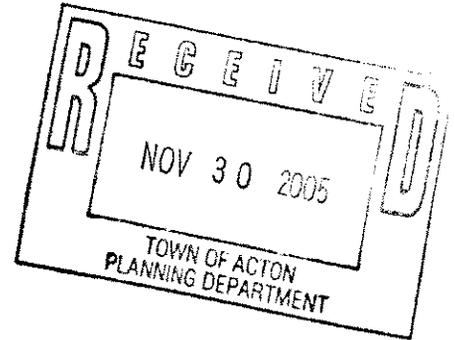
**Jackson Drive round-about:**

One ornamental pear has extensive bark loss, must be replaced, marked in orange

One ornamental pear is planted directly under the overhead wires, will be in contact with the wires in less than one year. This is not the location shown on the plans, nor did the developer consult with the Tree Warden. Tree must be relocated.

cc: Planning Department

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Engineering Department

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**INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

**To: Planning Department**

**Date: November 29, 2005**

**From: Engineering Department**

**Subject: Semi-Final Inspection - Jackson Drive Extension and Monroe Drive**

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R& D Homes has petitioned for acceptance of Jackson Drive Extension and Monroe Drive as town ways at the Annual Town Meeting in 2006. We have conducted a semi-final inspection of the roads and found the following items that will need to be completed prior to acceptance:

1. After the construction-related items are completed for the subdivision, the registered professional engineer should submit a letter certifying that all of the proposed site work has been completed according to the approved plans.
2. During our field inspection, we spot checked a few stone bound locations on Jackson Drive and Monroe Drive and noticed that some of these stone bounds were not fully compacted. The land surveyor will need to reinspect the stone bounds in order to make sure that these monuments are firmly set in their correct locations.
3. Submit paper copies as well as an electronic file of the legal description by metes and bounds and the proposed deed conveying the fee in the streets plus the associated easements. The applicant should also provide the legal evidence that the fee in the streets has not been inadvertently conveyed to abutting lot owners. The electronic files should be compatible with Microsoft Word. These legal documents need to be submitted as soon as possible so that the Town can start our review and prepare the Order of Street Layout.
4. Submit a final written certification by the Acton Water District that the water supply system has been approved.
5. Submit a final written certification by the Acton Fire Department that the fire alarm system and fire hydrants have been approved. The approved plans show a fire alarm call box on Jackson Drive opposite Monroe Drive. This fire alarm call box has not been installed at this location.
6. Submit a final written certification by the Acton Tree Warden that the required tree plantings have been approved.

7. Submit written evidence from the Town Treasurer stating that all property taxes owed to the Town for the land contained within the subdivision that is owned by the applicant has been paid.
8. The developer will be required to sweep the roads and cleanout the catch basin sumps in the spring of 2006 prior to accepting the roads as Town ways.

## Jackson Drive

### 9. Drain manholes

- Mortar around the pipe in DMH # 9

### 10. Catch Basins

- The sumps in the double catch basins (CB #2 & CB #5) are full of debris (dirt and pavement) and must be cleaned prior to winter.

### 11. Infiltration Basin #2

- The top of the berm along the backside of infiltration basin #2 adjacent to #5 Jackson Drive was reconstructed and still needs to be loamed and seeded so that the soil is stabilized.

### 12. Detention Basin #2

- The emergency overflow for detention basin #2 needs to be shown on the as-built plan.
- The proposed gate for the access to detention basin #2 needs to be installed.
- There is a pile of gravel material on the backside of detention basin #2 that needs to be removed or spread and covered with loam and seed to stabilize the slope with vegetation.

### 13. Erosion Control Structures

- After the Conservation Commission approves the site work, the developer needs to remove the temporary erosion control devices (ex. staked hay bales and silt fences).

### 14. Signs & Pavement Markings

- The Jackson Drive street sign at the intersection with Washington Drive has been damaged and needs to be replaced.
- The stop line on Jackson Drive at the intersection with Washington Drive should be shown on the as-built plan.

- Install the “Roundabout Ahead” signs approximately 100 feet on each side of the new roundabout on Jackson Drive.

#### 15. Sidewalk

- The developer needs to pave the handicap accessible ramp from the existing sidewalk on Washington Drive to the new crosswalk by the intersection with Jackson Drive.
- Show the painted crosswalk on Washington Drive by Jackson Drive on the as-built plan.
- The developer also needs to make sure the ends of the existing cape cod berm at the new sidewalk ramp are cut at an angle to prevent the curb from being damaged by the snow plows or becoming a potential tripping hazard for pedestrians.

#### 16. Miscellaneous

- There are some construction markers still in the road shoulders of Jackson Drive such as wood stakes or yellow plastic pipes that need to be removed. I believe that these markers indicate the locations for the water and gas service shut-off valves.

### Monroe Drive

#### 17. Catch Basins

- The sump of the double catch basin (CB #102) is full of debris and must be cleaned prior to the winter months.

#### 18. Miscellaneous

- There are some construction markers still in the road shoulders of Jackson Drive such as wood stakes or yellow plastic pipes that need to be removed. I believe that these markers indicate the locations for the water and gas service shut-off valves.

### Musket Drive

#### 20. Sidewalk

- The developer needs to make sure the ends of the existing cape cod berm at the sidewalk ramps are cut at an angle to prevent the curb from being damaged by the snow plows or becoming a potential tripping hazard for pedestrians.
- Install the crosswalk on Musket Drive at the intersection with John Swift Road.