

Stephanie Mercandetti

From: Stephanie Mercandetti
Sent: Tuesday, May 03, 2016 6:07 PM
To: Stephanie Mercandetti
Subject: REMINDER: Timber Crest Estates Comprehensive Permit Filing - Hearing set for May 4th

From: Armand Pires [mailto:apires@medwayschools.org]
Sent: Saturday, April 23, 2016 2:28 PM
To: Stephanie Mercandetti
Subject: Re: REMINDER: Timber Crest Estates Comprehensive Permit Filing - Hearing set for May 4th

Hello,

After looking at what the school department has sent previously, it looks like we would have no additional comments, but would ask that those be again included if appropriate.

Armand

On Fri, Apr 22, 2016 at 1:52 PM, Stephanie Mercandetti <smercandetti@townofmedway.org> wrote:

Good afternoon –

A reminder to please forward your board/department comments or issues pertaining to the proposal including opinions on the requested waivers to me by **Friday, April 29th**.

I have upload to both dropbox and the shared common folder the Timber Crest Plan Set dated March 2016. Apparently the electronic submission included the previous plan set pertaining to the Site Eligibility Application and some may recall that the four units closest to Ohlson Circle were eliminated through that process. So please review the March 2016 plan set for your comments. Please see my original email below for more detail.

Thank you,

Stephanie

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Armand Pires, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent of Schools

August 24, 2015

TO: Michael Boynton, Medway Town Administrator

FR: Armand Pires, Ph.D, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Diane Borgatti, JD, M.Ed., Chair, Medway School Committee

On behalf of the Medway School Committee and the Medway Public Schools, we wish to thank you for providing us with the opportunity to offer comments related to the Timber Crest Estates housing development proposal. As you know, the proposal includes building 192 units (76 single family homes; 116 condominiums) with 86% of the units with three or more bedrooms.

In order to identify potential concerns and questions regarding the project, we estimated that a project of this size may result in 225 or more additional school-aged children in Medway. This is a substantial number of students who may increase our total enrollment by nearly 10%.

As we consider the possible implications of an enrollment increase of this magnitude, there are three broad areas of concern, including: student safety and bus transportation, physical space in our school facilities, and fiscal concerns. We have provided a summary of each below.

Student Safety and Bus Transportation

The Medway School Committee has adopted a Student Transportation Policy (#24). This policy states in part, "Bus routes and designated stops will be designed for main roads (class #1 streets). Exceptions may be made by the Transportation Committee for a special needs bus, areas where a bus must turn around and areas where students would otherwise be required to walk more than one (1) mile to a designated stop."

Our understanding is that the streets within this development will be narrower than typical streets. It is also our understanding that the students who reside within the development would not be walking more than one mile to a bus stop located at the entry points of the development. Since the development roads would not be designated as "main roads" and unless an exception is made, school buses would not travel into the development. This presents safety concerns with students waiting at the entrance roads to the development to take the bus because of the configuration of the main roads abutting the development's roadways. Given the potential number of students in the development, we are concerned that there is an inadequate amount of space to provide a safe location for a bus stop.

If an exception to the policy is made by the Medway School Committee, our concern is related to the ability for school buses to safely pass down these streets. On-street parking, inclement

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weather and the accumulation of snow on the sides of roads become possible impediments to buses travelling safely through the development. In addition, in those areas of the development that include cul-de-sacs, we would want assurance that the cul-de-sacs would have a sufficient turning radius to accommodate a full size bus. We cannot be in a situation where a bus would need to back-up to turn around to exit the development. This would create a significant safety risk to students.

We are also concerned about student safety as they travel from their homes to the bus stops, whether designated inside or outside of the development. It is our understanding that the submitted plans call for sidewalks on one side of the street. Depending on their location, the design may result in students crossing the street and waiting for the arrival of the bus in an area that does not provide a safe and adequate space for a bus stop.

Physical Space

We are fortunate to have space available in both our middle school and high school that would allow us to effectively accommodate additional classrooms. We are, however, limited in our ability to "open" additional classrooms at McGovern Elementary School and Burke/Memorial Elementary School without impacting current programming. At both McGovern and Burke/Memorial Elementary Schools, we believe that we could open up to two additional classrooms without negatively impacting educational programming.

Assuming that the district maintains the current average class size levels, which has been a focused goal of both the school committee and school leadership, the need to open additional classrooms beyond the two would begin to negatively impact school programming. The results of these additional classrooms would be to remove allied arts programs (e.g., art, music) from dedicated spaces and require teachers to travel to students to conduct classes. This scenario would limit learning experiences and, potentially, learning time with students.

A significant increase in student enrollment and the need to open more than four classrooms in a school would jeopardize our current school configuration. Currently, McGovern School serves as our PreK-1 school and Burke/Memorial School serves our grade 2-4 students. The cluster of grades at each building was identified as the most educationally supporting structure to support our students and their learning. With the very limited space at McGovern School, a significant enrollment increase, and the need to open up four or more classrooms would result in the need to reconfigure grade levels and move grades to other schools. This would move the district away from what we have identified as the educationally ideal grade clustering.

In addition, the need to open additional classrooms would result in our need to reclaim space that is used by supporting organizations. This would limit the availability of parallel services (e.g., before and after school care) as well as result in a reduction of revenue to the district.

Fiscal Concerns

A rapid and significant increase in student enrollment will present a challenge to our district. As you know, we have been fortunate to provide a very high quality educational program for our students. We have been able to accomplish this on a very limited budget with minimal annual increases to the budget from town appropriations. When the project is completed, we have estimated an additional 225 students. This potential increase in enrollment would result in an increase in costs of \$2.8 million, based upon current per pupil expenditures. Based on 225 students, the increase in Chapter 70 funding, along with a share of the new tax revenues from this project, would result in an estimated \$1 million shortfall in funding.