

Local

Perryville considers letting developer off the hook, for now

Town officials weigh options for promised sewer line

By Jane Bellmyer

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A developer who plans to build a mixed-use community in Perryville could be temporarily excused from his promise to build a new sewer line until he's lined up interested buyers.

Perryville's mayor and town commissioners agreed Tuesday night to draft an amended public works agreement with developer Doug Hill so he can proceed with the first phase of his Woodlands community.

Hill approached the board in May asking for an exemption to an existing deal with the town in which he agreed to build a new sewer line for his development along Coudon Boulevard to Route 7. The town, meanwhile, was planning to use the new line to provide sewer service to a separate development off Cedar Corner Road.

In May, however, Hill argued that the recession is impacting his ability to attract tenants for the new construction, thereby limiting his ability to fund the construction of the new sewer line.

To get around the problem, Hill sought to temporarily use an existing sewer line from a now-defunct mobile home park on Route 40 to service his development until he could afford to install the new line he had promised the town.

On Tuesday, Town Planner Mary Ann

Skilling presented a draft of a new public works agreement to the board that would allow Hill to tap the existing sewer line so long as he begins construction on the new line within 18 months of completing of the first phase of construction.

"We're trying to come up with a solution," she said.

Hill said he believes the proposed public works agreement would allow him to meet his obligation to the town.

"We feel like within 18 months we'll have enough support to build the line on Coudon Boulevard," he said. "We will complete phase one and the utility improvements in 36 months. If we don't have compliance, the town can say no certificate of occupancy."

Skilling also offered the town board a second option.

"We would agree to create a special taxing district for lands east of Coudon Boulevard," she said. "The town would issue a bond and the proceeds are released by the town. Construction (of the line) could begin in December."

Town Administrator Denise Breder said the second option could be a useful approach for other projects, but not one as small as Hill's Woodlands community.

"Maybe we can look at this kind of project for the I-95 corridor," Skilling said.

The town board is expected to vote on which option to pursue at its July 7 meeting.

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