

**MINUTES
OF THE
SITE REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

2:00 P.M.

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

JULY 12, 2005

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Holden, Director, Planning Department, Chairman; David Allen, Deputy Public Works Director; Peter Britz, Environmental Planner; David Desfosses, Engineering Technician; Steve Parkinson, Director of Public Works; Steve Griswold, Deputy Fire Chief and Janet Champlin, Police Department

ALSO PRESENT: Lucy Tillman, Planner

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I. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. The application of **Deer Street Associates, Owner, and Centrix Bank & Trust, Applicant**, for property located at **165 Deer Street**, wherein site plan approval is requested for the addition of a covered entrance and porte-cochere with a teller window, with related paving, utilities, landscaping, drainage and associated site improvements. Said property is shown on Assessor Plan 125 as Lots 17 & 18 and lies within a Central Business B District, the Downtown Overlay District and Historic District A.

The Chair read the notice into the record.

Mr. Allen made a motion to take the application off of the table. Deputy Fire Chief Griswold seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION:

John Chagnon, from Ambit Engineering, appeared on behalf of Centrix Bank. Also present was Joe Riley, CEO of Centrix Bank, Holly Malloy of Deer Street Associates and Julie McDonald of DeStefano Architects.

Mr. Chagnon indicated that one week ago, TAC listed out stipulations and he went through the list, showing how they have addressed them.

1) That a revised parking layout on the left side of the current Gary's Beverage be provided;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that they redesigned the whole site parking based on the current ordinance. On the northeast side on Maplewood Avenue, they have the angled spots, showing the aisle width. In order to make this more user-friendly parking, they are using a 9' wide stall in most locations. They are going above the ordinance. There are 16 spaces counted but there are actually 18 striped and will accomplish the maintenance of the aisle by adding some pavement on the west side of that area. Between the two buildings they created 6 spaces to each side with a two-way aisle between them. The two handicapped spots that are currently striped on the southwest corner of #157 will remain. They are putting perpendicular parking on either side of the aisle.

To the southwest of the 165 building they realigned the parking field perpendicular to its current orientation. They will landscape to separate the parking from the exit aisle, but for a break for access from the handicapped parking space to the walkway in front of bank. That break will also allow run off to come through and into the catch basin on Deer Street. There was an area next to the pole in the middle of the parking area with an existing island. They are removing that and will propose to put in striping to delineate that aisle and safely allow for parking around the pole.

Mr. Chagnon continued on further to the southwest to Gary's Beverage where they have put in conforming parking, including a handicapped space along the face of the building. Along the northwest side, they will have 8 ½' spaces. Those spaces are jugged out to provide access to doorways. When the aisle gets too narrow, they come closer to the building.

The southeast corner of the site shows 12 parking spaces and areas for snow storage.

2) That the applicant work with the City to add some landscaping along the sidewalk;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that they were not able to get the landscape designer to do a detailed design on such short notice but on Sheet C-3 they outlined a new view and showed the two areas that are now available for landscaping since the City has relocated the entrance to the property. There is note #4 on the drawings that says that area will be landscaped in a manner similar to Landscape Area B, which is a detail area in front of the bank. They hope to go forward to the Planning Board with the understanding that they would get that completed and reviewed by the Department at a later date.

They want to avoid any trees cutting down site visibility at the entrance so they will probably work with low vegetation at the entrance.

3) That the parking calculation be added to the Site Plans;

Mr. Chagnon stated that Note 7 on Sheet C-2 identifies all existing square footage and uses on the property as of the time it was converted to Central Business B, which was before this application. They have a financial institution at 157, an art gallery and a medical office. At 165 they have the Genip tree and Yoga East. At the other 165 they have Gary's Beverage with a mezzanine for storage, a pizza restaurant, and a railroad office and there is a 3300 s.f. storage building in back. The total parking threshold is 110 spaces. With the proposed change in use, the 3,000 s.f. bank will requires 7 ½ spaces. The Genip Tree was at 23.75 so they have a net 16.25 spaces available for future development. Therefore they do not have an unmet parking need or an impact fee. The parking which is provided will be 88 spaces, 4 of which are handicapped.

4) That the plan should reflect that the sidewalk construction is completed;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that the plans reflect the constructed sidewalk.

5) That an easement for the City waterline be prepared for review and approval by the City Attorney;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that stipulation was appropriate to go forward with.

6) That the applicant and the City Attorney continue to finalize the cross easements showing travel access between the two parcels;

Mr. Chagnon indicated they would like to amend that stipulation to add “or the lots will be merged”. It is their inclination to simply merge the parcels into one lot which would eliminate any need for cross access easements.

7) That the parking spaces and travel aisles must conform to current zoning requirements and should all be uniform;

Mr. Chagnon believed the revised plan met that stipulation.

8) That Lot 18 does not have any egress and that issue must be resolved;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that with the new layout, Lot 18 now has egress. Cars can come in off of Maplewood and exit onto Deer Street.

9) That the row or parking spaces to the rear should be moved closer to the property line to create a wider travel aisle;

Mr. Chagnon felt that had been incorporated into the new layout.

10) That the area next to the plumbing store should be landscaped, “No Parking” signs should be added and the plans should reflect that this is a snow storage area;

Mr. Chagnon indicated that the plan reflects the snow storage area and they are not proposing any “No parking signs” as they feel the striping speaks for itself. They also feel that the landscaping along the street will be sufficient to improve the view of this property from the road.

Mr. Chagnon asked if there were any questions.

The Chair asked if there was anyone else present to speak to, for or against the application. There being none, the Chair declared the Public Hearing closed.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:

Deputy Fire Chief Griswold made a motion to approve as submitted with stipulations. Mr. Allen seconded.

Deputy Fire Chief Griswold asked for clarification on the parking calculations.

Mr. Chagnon indicated that they were in Central Business District B where there was no parking requirement. They do not have to meet any standard.

Ms. Tillman confirmed that they just have to pay for what they don’t meet. The parking calculation figures will be left open for further review and that will be a stipulation.

Mr. Holden suggested that as a condition, with the lot consolidation, the Department will work with the applicant to review the parking requirements for the uses.

Mr. Chagnon pointed out that the sidewalk easement was not covered in the original stipulations.

Mr. Holden asked is any fire boxes were required?

Deputy Fire Chief Griswold felt, as there were no major changes in the building, they can leave things as they are, although a Knox box is required.

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that the building is currently sprinklered.

Deputy Fire Chief Griswold indicated that to comply with the city ordinance, all sprinkler building are supervised and provide automatic notification of emergency forces. Any renovations would also require that the alarm system also automatically notify emergency forces in the event of an evacuation.

Mr. Holden requested that the lots be consolidated and that be reviewed by the Planning and Legal Department as to content and form. That is not meant to hinder getting before the Planning Board. It can happen afterwards.

Mr. Chagnon felt it would be either cross easements or lot consolidation.

Mr. Holden believed the applicant was going to go with the lot consolidation.

Mr. Allen addressed the new parking configuration. He asked about the space adjacent to where it showed a 13' width. He asked how that was going to egress once a vehicle was in there?

Mr. Chagnon explained that the travel way across the aisle is the travel way to the handicapped spot which allows them to back up a little further than you normally would.

Mr. Allen asked if that was ADA acceptable to use the handicapped access spot for that?

Mr. Chagnon has done this before and he believed it was legitimate.

Mr. Holden felt it was a question that should be resolved before it gets to the Planning Board as they will ask that same question.

Mr. Allen asked about the box with the arrow on the Maplewood entrance with no label on it. He asked what it was and asked to have it labeled.

Mr. Chagnon stated it was a square manhole.

Mr. Desfosses was fairly certain that was an underground utility hole.

Mr. Allen asked if they were going to add a painted arrow on the exit coming through the drive thru?

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that they would be adding the arrow.

Mr. Allen asked if the sidewalk had raised curb on both sides?

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that what is there now has curb on both sides and it will remain the same.

Mr. Allen asked if the dark line on the plans was indicating vertical granite curbing?

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that it was.

Mr. Allen referred to Sheet C-3, Note #1 where it reads, "Sidewalk paving: Remove and reset to new sidewalk layout .." Mr. Allen asked if that was excluding the existing sidewalk that is adjacent to the road? They should show some sort of work limit line on the plan for that.

Mr. Chagnon indicated that the city sidewalk is bituminous concrete. They will add a line on the plans.

Mr. Allen asked that the water line easement stipulation remain.

Ms. Tillman asked about the rectangle under the first two parking spaces, coming off of Maplewood Avenue.

Mr. Chagnon indicated that in a conveyance of properties to Deer Street Associates, the railroad deeded a piece based on the stationing of the track, and then deeded another piece, which they meant to be contiguous but they are not. So, that little rectangular piece is owned by the railroad. The area is paved and they are showing parking on it. They will not count it but will continue to use it.

Ms. Tillman asked them to label it as such.

Mr. Holden agreed with Mr. Tillman and further requested an explanatory note that it was not counted for parking and also that the City takes no position as to the ownership of the parcel and is not under review by the Site Review Committee. Mr. Holden indicated they would leave it up to the applicant to hash it out with B&M.

Mr. Holden asked that landscaping to be worked out with Ms. Tillman and DPW following Site Plan approval from the Planning Board.

Mr. Holden asked whether signs would be appropriate on the site for traffic movement?

Mr. Desfosses felt the painted arrows were more appropriate.

Mr. Holden asked if they were appropriate as shown?

Mr. Desfosses recommended adding a couple. He would add one sticking out towards the street at the drive thru exit off of Deer Street, which was previously discussed by Mr. Allen.

Mr. Desfosses asked if they checked the turn radii?

Mr. Chagnon indicated it was pretty much the same pattern that is there now.

Mr. Holden asked if he was correct in assuming that the arrows as shown are expected to be painted on the pavement?

Mr. Chagnon indicated that was correct. The plans should say "Painted arrow typical".

Mr. Desfosses felt the two arrows in the back of 165 are conflicting.

Mr. Chagnon stated that one shows a one-way aisle.

Mr. Desfosses felt it was the other arrow that was confusing.

Mr. Allen felt the second arrow was needed to help direct people.

Mr. Chagnon suggested eliminating that arrow and painting “do not enter” on the pavement and also putting it on a sign on the wall. He felt that might be more appropriate

Mr. Holden felt a lot of the lines are painted. He gave an example on the adjacent property where they had snow storage. He asked if painted lines were going to work in all instances or do they have concerns where they have to delineate the parking better?

Officer Champlin indicated she would like to see some signage.

Mr. Desfosses felt they should have some lawn in front for the drain water to go through and leave the site.

Mr. Holden was concerned that there would be a problem if people were used to parking in the snow storage area. Although the site plan shows it, the enforcement is not going to be with the City.

Mr. Parkinson was assuming that the pavement in the snow storage area was not being removed?

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Parkinson indicated that meant that they were going to have a mass of pavement out there with white lines showing the parking spaces.

Mr. Chagnon confirmed that those areas were going to be used for snow storage for the site.

Mr. Parkinson indicated that in most cases snow storage areas are on a grass material so that when the snow melts it goes into the ground. In this case, it will be run-off.

Mr. Holden asked if they should get rid of the pavement?

Mr. Parkinson agreed that would be a good idea.

Mr. Holden suggested a stipulation that the snow storage areas have the pavement removed and planted with grass. He felt if they were creating run-off then they had to treat it.

Mr. Chagnon stated that the lot exists now, as it is, so the run off currently exits and runs into the city collection system. What they could do was delineate it and provide areas dedicated to snow storage. Ripping up the pavement is problematic as far as plowing.

Mr. Holden felt they were asking them to delineate the parking and bring it into conformance and they are showing snow storage. Snow storage is not to be used for parking so the condition is well intentioned to address the issue.

Mr. Chagnon suggested that they shift the parking back to allow more maneuvering space and the rest will be ripped up.

Mr. Holden asked if he wanted them to table the matter until they did that?

Mr. Chagnon indicated that whatever was not parking, they would rip up the asphalt.

Holly Malloy, of Deer Street Associates, expressed her concerns over ripping up the asphalt. Her experience with a Wal-mart center in Falmouth, where large amounts of snow start melting, they have trouble with snow removal equipment getting stuck in mud and getting stuck. That creates ruts which makes it almost impossible to re-seed it and have it look anywhere near aesthetic. They have no problem with creating more landscaping in the areas. However, along the Redlon & Johnson building in particular, it would be a huge mistake to rip up the asphalt and put in a grassy area.

Mr. Holden asked why vehicles would be traversing it anyway?

Ms. Malloy stated for snow removal equipment. They would be taking snow from other areas of the lot with loaders.

Mr. Parkinson asked if they were leaving the snow there or were they trucking it off?

Ms. Malloy confirmed that they would be trucking the snow from other areas of the lot and putting it in the snow storage area. She felt that if they had a big grassy area, it was a problem.

Mr. Britz didn't think it was that that big of an area.

Mr. Chagnon stated that another reason why they wanted to keep that area paved was for easy access around the building. It never hurts to add a little more maneuvering room.

Ms. Malloy felt the real problem was doing something in the snow storage area and creating a grassy/landscaped area up and along Deer Street. Especially because Redlon and Johnson rents their warehouse in the rear and they have vehicles going back and forth all the time. She asked them to really consider that this would not be an improvement.

Mr. Desfosses felt it was a good idea that they have one snow dump and the other area in the front on Deer Street could be landscaped. That is where the stormwater is going to go. Any grass planted there will filter through before it leaves the site so he believes it is a good solution. The area in the back, next to Redlon and Johnson could stay pavement.

Ms. Tillman asked if Redlon and Johnson had access to the back of the site through site through the property.

Ms. Malloy was not sure but they rent storage in the rear of her property. She felt the pavement next to Redlon and Johnson should stay.

Mr. Holden indicated that he would change his stipulation to be that the snow storage area off of Bridge Street would be plantings and grassed over and the pavement would be removed, and the second snow storage area next to Redlon and Johnson would remain in its present condition.

Mr. Holden asked if anyone felt they needed curbing anywhere else? Receiving no response, he stated that the curbing was fine.

Mr. Holden asked if all powers would be brought on site underground?

Mr. Desfosses indicated that it might not be possible to run the fire line to the site without ripping up the new pavement.

Mr. Holden indicated they would not get into that then. He indicated that, assuming the motion passed, this matter would go on the July 21st Planning Board Agenda and revised plans would be due by Friday, July 15th at noontime.

The motion to approve with the following stipulations passed unanimously.

- 1) That the Planning Department will work with the applicant to review the parking requirement based on the proposed uses;
- 2) That a sidewalk easement be prepared for review and approval by the City Legal Department;
- 3) That as this building has a sprinkler system, the building must be supervised and provide automatic notification of emergency forces. It would also require that the alarm system also automatically notify emergency forces in the event of an evacuation;
- 4) That the lots shall be consolidated and that the documentation be reviewed by the Planning and Legal Department as to content and form.
- 5) That an additional directional arrow be painted on the pavement at the exit coming out the drive-thru;
- 6) That a work limit line for the sidewalks be added to the plans;
- 7) That an easement for the City waterline be prepared for review and approval by the City Legal Department;
- 8) That the rectangular area under the first two parking spaces, coming off of Maplewood Avenue, be labeled as property of the railroad with an explanatory note that it was not counted for parking and also that the City takes no position as to the ownership of the parcel and is not under review by the Site Review Committee;
- 9) That landscaping to be worked out with Lucy Tillman and DPW following Site Plan approval from the Planning Board;
- 10) That the directional arrow behind the proposed bank building be eliminated replaced with the wording "Do Not Enter"; also, a sign be added to the building that says "Do Not Enter";
- 11) That the snow storage area off of Bridge Street would be plantings and grass and the pavement would be removed, and the second snow storage area next to Redlon and Johnson would remain in its present condition;

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II. ADJOURNMENT was had at approximately 2:40 p.m.

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