

MINUTES

**JOINT WORK SESSION
PLANNING BOARD, HDC & EDC
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE

6:30 P.M.

JANUARY 9, 2014

PLANNING BOARD: John Rice, Vice Chairman, William Gladhill; Colby Gamester; Elizabeth Moreau; David Allen, Deputy City Manager; Richard Hopley, Building Inspector;

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION: Joe Almeida, Chairman; Tracy Kozak, Vice Chairman; Richard Katz; John Wyckoff; Reagan Ruedig; Esther Kennedy, City Council Representative; Dan Rawling, Alternate;

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION: Everett Eaton, Chairman; Robert Marchewka, Vice Chairman; Dana Levenson; John Pratt; Philip Cohen; John Bosen; Jack Thorsen, City Council Representative; M. Chris Dwyer, City Council Representative;

ALSO PRESENT: John P. Bohenko, City Manager; Rick Taintor, Planning Director; Nicholas Cracknell, Principal Planner; Nancy Carmer, Economic Development Manager

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I. WORK SESSION

A. The application of **Harborcorp, LLC, Owner**, for property located on **Russell Street, Deer Street and Maplewood Avenue**, requesting Planning Board Design Review under the Site Plan Review Regulations for a proposed 5-story mixed use development with a footprint of 72,680 ± s.f. and gross floor area of 390,831 ± s.f., including a hotel/event center with 141,781 s.f. of event center space and 98 hotel rooms, 14 residential condominiums, a 40,000 s.f. retail supermarket, and 660 parking spaces (490 spaces in a garage structure and 170 below-grade spaces serving the retail use). Said property is shown on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 21, Assessor Map 118 as Lot 28 and Assessor Map 124 as Lot 126 and lies within the Central Business B (CBB) District, the Downtown Overlay District (DOD) and the Historic District. .

Planning Board Vice Chairman John Rice confirmed this was a work session for the three Boards and there would not be any public comment however the public hearing will continue next Thursday night at the Planning Board meeting. He turned the meeting over to Planning Director Rick Taintor.

Mr. Taintor started off by giving a brief overview. First, he spoke about what the Planning Board review process is. He stated that the Planning Board amended its Site Plan Review Regulations in March 2013 to provide for pre-application review. At the beginning of December, Harborcorp, LLC submitted a request for design review and the public hearing was opened by the Planning Board at its

December 19th meeting. This was only the second project to request design review, the first being the project at 111 Maplewood Avenue. The third project at 30 Maplewood Avenue was the subject of a hearing on December 19th. Under the State Statute the design review phase is a chance for the Planning Board to discuss a project before it is fully designed and before a formal application for Site Plan Review is submitted. The NH Office of Energy and Planning describes the design review phase as follows: The objective of design review is to provide the Board with an opportunity to understand what is being proposed and for the applicant to understand the concerns of board members, abutters and general public. Design review is intended to insure that the essential characteristics of the site and specific requirements of local regulations are thoroughly reviewed and understood before the final design is prepared. The design review phase is non binding on both the applicant and the Planning Board. It is important to emphasize that the design review is before any application is filed and that the Planning Board will not take any action on the proposed project until such time as an application is filed.

Mr. Taintor explained why they scheduled this work session. Last November Harborcorp indicated they would be submitting a request for design review for inclusion in the Planning Board's December 19th meeting agenda. Due to the scale of the proposed project and its potential impacts on the downtown area, Mr. Taintor recommended that the Planning Board establish a clear procedure for gathering input from other City boards and the public. This recommendation was made in his November 18th Staff Memorandum to the Planning Board and included the following five steps:

1. At the December 19th Planning Board meeting, open the design review public hearing. At this time the applicant would present the proposed development plan, Board members would ask preliminary questions and members of the public would have an initial opportunity to comment on the proposal. That public hearing has already happened.
2. Vote to continue the public hearing to the Board's next scheduled meeting on January 16th and also vote to schedule a work session for January 9th and to invited the Historic District Commission and the Economic Development Commission to participate in the work session.
3. Hold the January 9th Work Session with the participation of the Planning Board, HDC and EDC. While the Planning Board's design review phase is intended to focus on site design issues, it is regulated by the Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations, the Work Session would also provide an early opportunity for discussion of building design issues which will subsequently be addressed by the HDC review process.
4. Re-Open the public hearing at the Planning Board's January 16th meeting. At this meeting, members of the public will be able to make further comments based on any additional information provided at the Work Session and the Planning Board will be able to give non-bind recommendations on the general design issues and specific engineering details.
5. If Planning Board members feel that the Work Session and public hearing have provided sufficient opportunity to identify issues that need to be addressed, the Board can vote to determine that the design review phase has ended, allowing the applicant to pursue a formal application.

The Planning Board agreed to this recommended procedure by consensus and they are not at step 3, a joint work session. He recommended that the Planning Board invite the HDC and the EDC to participate because all three Boards have a responsibility relative to the development in the downtown area. Through the Site Plan Review process, the Planning Board focuses on the layout of buildings, structures, vehicular areas and open spaces, the provision of adequate utilities, parking, lighting and other support services. The Planning Board is also concerned with impacts to municipal

infrastructures such as water, sewer and stormwater drainage, traffic impacts on the surrounding street system and other off site impacts such as noise and light.

The HDC is responsible for evaluating the extent to which a project does or does not fit into the historic context of the Historic District. With respect to a new building, the Zoning Ordinance charges that the HDC with insuring that the building compliments and enhances the City's architectural and historical character and contributes to its sense of place.

Unlike the Planning Board and the HDC, the Economic Development Commission is not a land use board and does not have a regulatory function. However the EDC is concerned with maintaining and enhancing the economic vitality and sustainability of the central business district as well as other areas of the City. The EDC can best offer valuable input to land use boards and to the developer regarding the proposed project's economic impacts, both positive and negative, on surrounding businesses and the downtown area and the City as a whole.

Mr. Taintor explained tonight's procedure. Although the Planning Board has received a full set of plans and heard a lengthy presentation at the December 19th public hearing, neither the HDC nor the EDC has had any formal presentation on this project. Therefore, he asked the owner to provide a brief over-view of the proposed project, outlining the key issues, which are the site issues that will be reviewed by the Planning Board, the scale, massing and design features that will be of concern to the HDC and the economic impacts that the EDC will need to weigh in on. This presentation will be strictly limited to 20 minutes and he will give a 5 minute warning. Following the presentation there will be an open discussion by members of the Planning Department, HDC and EDC, moderated by Mr. Rice. Board and Commission members may ask questions of the development team but they are not obligated to do so. The intent is to have the Work Session wrap up by 8:30 pm. For the members of the public who were in attendance, he reminded them that the public hearing will resume next Thursday at the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Taintor reiterated that the Planning Board will not be taking any action on this project until a formal application for Site Plan Review has been submitted.

Carla Goodnight, of CJ Architects, stated she recently joined the development team to advise them relative to what the Boards are generally concerned with, focusing primarily on the HDC. Her advice was to prepare a full and comprehensive package for the members present tonight to review to help them gain an understanding of how they came to this point in the process. They will present a complete overview of how they arrived at this place. That is key to moving forward and working together as a team and incorporating everyone's feedback as they shape this project. She has not personally provided any design development yet and is waiting for feedback before doing so.

Chris Thompson will have a quick opening comment, followed by Sherry Young who will speak to the evolution of the program. Steve Bushey, Civil Engineer, and Pat Carroll, Landscape Architect, will review the site analysis. Travis Nadeau will speak about the parking strategy and capacity and then Chris Thompson will present the elevations which were previously prepared for comment from the HDC. If time allows she would like to make some closing remarks.

Chris Thompson, with Harborcorp, stated that they are excited to be at this place. They submitted for Design Review and received significant and helpful feedback from staff and the public. They worked in earnest to pull together some supplemental materials to address some of that feedback. Tonight they want to give a sense of this very complex inter-dependent set of uses that function dynamically together. They think this will be a very dynamic hub of activity. They are looking for feedback tonight from the different board members.

Sherry Young, of Harborcorp, indicated that this site has been a surface parking lot for 26 years for the Sheraton Hotel and the Market Wharf Condominium Association and they feel the time has arrived to integrate this land, to create a place in the neighborhood complimenting old and new around it. They believe it is time to build something of greater value than an unattractive surface parking lot and to build for the future of the new north end neighborhood that continues to evolve around them. They hope to complement their property at 250 Market Street. They continue to ask and welcome constructive feedback in how to make this program work, including planned meetings with Portsmouth Advocates and Islington Creek Neighborhood Association, as well as an ongoing dialogue with their immediate neighbors. They have commissioned numerous feasibility studies and an economic impact study, to determine the best way to develop this property. The result is the proposal they have made which addressed immediate needs, a larger capacity event space with parking, downtown grocery store and it is done in a way to integrate with existing and new buildings that will surround it. This project sits on a City block, surrounded by City streets and like other blocks in the City will have multiple components. It will create property value which will result in a substantial annual tax payment. They have listened to the needs to have a gathering space for more than 300 people, particularly from September to April. Since the Sheraton opened, they have always recognized that a larger gathering space would be a great benefit to the community as a whole. Locally, base businesses and non-profit businesses alike support this use as well as recognizing the economic boom it promises for the downtown business community. Since the closing of Yokens, in 2003, the community has been without a facility to host events of any magnitude. The facility they propose to build will feature a 10,000 s.f. ballroom suitable to a dinner event of 750 people but will most commonly be used for a smaller conference groups between 350 – 400 people.

Ms. Young indicated they are very excited that a Whole Foods market has selected Portsmouth and their site for their second store in New Hampshire. Since the A&P market closed in the early '90's, a downtown resource for residents and employees has been missing. A 98 branded boutique hotel and 14 residential condos will occupy the narrow northwest end of the parcel along Russell Street. This is a small hotel than originally planned in 2006 and that is reflective of their market study of what is needed to supplement their inventory at the Sheraton, as well as the immediate inventory of the three neighboring hotels at Portwalk.

Lastly, they recognize the important of providing adequate parking for their uses and the neighborhood. The garage responds to the concern that new developments provide their own parking. the garage replaces all of the parking spaces in the current surface lot, it addresses the zoning requirements for the new uses and it provides sub-surface parking to their tenant, Whole Food Market. The garage will compliment the existing 160 existing spaces at the Sheraton Hotel site where, through parking management and valet services, they have increased their capacity to 185 vehicles. The project is being designed for LEED Gold from US Green Building Council and will include public green space, pedestrian access and public art. They are working with a team of design, engineering and business professionals to perfect a design to meet all of the objectives that she just outlined. They want to appropriately complement their neighborhood. This included integrating public green space at the Market Street/Russell Street intersection to compliment the North Mill Pond Park planned with the gateway project. The economic impact is substantial, including hundreds of construction and full time jobs at completion and will contribute millions of dollars to the local economy annually. With an estimated assessed value of \$46 million, annual taxes will exceed \$75,000 million annually, which will fund important City services such as schools, parks and infrastructure upgrades.

Ms Young stated that they believe the proposal represents the type of smart growth that Portsmouth should encourage as a mixed use development. This north end project can serve as a hub of activity in the northern tier while addressing current needs such as public parking, a conference center and a downtown grocer while offering substantial long term benefits to the City.

Steve Bushey, the project civil engineer, reviewed the Site Plan set which included a cover sheet, a full survey that was completed for the project, demolition drawings, the preliminary site layout plan, as well as drainage, grading and utility drawings to provide some beginning formation of how the project would be pulled together. There also was a landscaping plan, floor plans and renderings. There were various detail sheets. Supplemental materials include some revisions to the building elevations. They also provided drawings showing access and circulation. Mr. Bushey's drawings were all civil in nature and technical drawings.

Pat Carroll, the project landscape architect, displayed a green space/landscape plan which was submitted in December. The opportunity for green space is restricted but they have maximized the green space as best they could. Their latest thinking is to pull back from any type of encroachment within the street right-of-ways. It allows a significant amount of pedestrian and open space along Russell Street and Deer Streets. They know there is a study underway now for Market Street and they are looking at a narrow strip of land and green space on the east side of Russell Street to be incorporated into a gateway park which ties in with the City's plans to create a gateway into the City.

Travis Nadeau, of Platz Associates, discussed the garage. He stated they are looking at a single threaded helix access on Deer Street, as well as from Maplewood and Russell. The basement has parking across the full floor plate and the upper levels would occupy vertically along Maplewood and Deer. Every space will be inter-connected and there is access throughout the garage and there currently is an excess of spaces per the requirements.

Chris Thompson spoke about the architecture. He reiterated that they began with effort to give skin to the form of the program. Many have pointed out that there is a lot of mass to deal with in this project. They have asked how they deal with this effectively and how do they create areas that lend themselves to being opened and there is an opportunity at the Russell Street entrance to the site to do something. He displayed renderings and pointed out that they have used feedback and their design team worked quickly to take those comments to heart. The railroad remains an obstacle on the back which they must work with. They are trying to demonstrate a good faith effort to use the feedback to improve their project. He stated they are looking to this group to help them shape the project.

Ms. Goodknight summarized that the design team is aware that the program elements of this building are co-dependent on each other so they will have to work together. They understand that they will need a certain amount of parking and that there will be tradeoffs. The applicants are very open to suggestions from the Boards. She wanted to reinforce that they are here to gather information and move forward.

Vice Chairman Rice asked for discussion amongst the Board members. He reiterated that there will not be any type of vote at the end of the work session and their purpose is simply to provide the applicant with feedback and to ask questions.

William Gladhill noted that there have been two presentations showing a building over 45' in height before going to the HDC for any preliminary review to see if a conditional use permit would be granted. He has not heard anything from the applicant speaking to that issue.

Ms. Goodknight indicated that the building is an embodiment of the program to generate enough information to do the site analysis. As this is a civil undertaking at this point, they need not show less than is possible and have a site evaluated on less impact than could be approved. She also confirmed that the building needs a great deal of architectural scrutiny by the HDC.

Joseph Almeida stated that when he first saw these images he felt they would be appropriate for Portland's Historic District and noted that it is designed by some of Portland's finest design firms and civil engineers. He felt it was unfortunate that there wasn't more Portsmouth effort into the project. His first impression was that the building was way too big and was one giant mass working as a damn to the Northern Tier. He felt it was critical to penetrate this site at multiple locations with vehicles and pedestrians. They should not sense a "back of house" on any side yet he is seeing loading docks on Vaughan and Deer, facing new developments. Regarding the garage and accessing this building from all sides, he felt that parking garages generate a huge amount of noise. The concept of a wide open garage will look very carnival-like with lights turning and noises coming out of it constantly and it will create constant noise for residents surrounding the neighborhood. Also, some hotels downtown do not have the ability to take buses and deliveries off the street and it makes them seem twice as large as they are. Having trolleys, taxis and buses lined up on the street will make this building feel much bigger than it actually will end up being.

Mr. Taintor clarified that the Conditional Use Permit is only about increasing the height above 45' and it does not have anything to do with the items that Mr. Almeida was talking about. He believed what Mr. Gladhill was asking speaking to earlier was asking them to speak to the reasons that they are satisfying the criteria for granting a Conditional Use Permit as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Goodknight stated that was what they will work out and, in the end, it will be up to the Boards to determine whether the Conditional Use Permit is warranted.

Richard Katz was feeling a strong sense of deja vu when several years ago they spend a lot of time on this project. He felt that the atmosphere of this City is a bit more critical (not in a negative sense, but in providing constructive criticism) and one issue is the expanse of uninterrupted wall. Visual separation comes to mind and above street walkways was suggested in the prior project which was approved by all land use boards. He would like to see a lot more imagination. He had no doubt that when this project is completed, it will more than meet the stipulation of having provided a contribution to this City in a number of ways – taxes, economic engine and providing more vitality in the dead space next to the railroad tracks. Mr. Katz felt there were a lot of possibilities with this project and they just need to be worked on and realized.

John Wyckoff felt that this seems like a good project upfront. His problems have already been spoken about regarding the massing and breaking up the building. He went back to the previous project of 2007. He mentioned some of the ideas from that project. The end of the garage on Maplewood had brick and window type openings punched into it and it had a very nice canopy over the entrance to the garage. It had a little bit of retail space on the corner of Deer and Maplewood and was paying attention to Maplewood Avenue. He feels the openness of this design is an insult to all of the work they had done along Maplewood Avenue. Also, the 2007 Conference Center was only 2 stories high with a green space on the 3rd level with a pergola perched right on the edge and it was a nice break in the mass of the building. Also the hotel had a taller section in the middle, which probably wouldn't be appropriate now but was a very nice detail with brick gable ends and a slanted gable roof on the front. Heading down Russell Street, the building had more of a look like Market Street. The end of the

building was more significant but what they have proposed for the Russell Street end is better than it was. He felt that their idea of a park is very nice at the Market Street entrance.

Everett Eaton felt that the benefits of the project were well outlined a downtown conference center and the grocery store was well supported. His chief concern was parking as there is an acute shortage of parking in the City and he would hope that anything that this project does will not exacerbate the problem. He noted on the plan that they break down the parking requirements for each use but he doesn't see the requirements for the conference center and how they came up with it. He asked if there was any surplus for the public.

Travis Nadeau, of Platz Associates, explained that the Zoning Ordinance is one arm of the equation. They are also in an overlay district which only addresses residential uses. Looking at those requirements they are at 95 vehicles with 221 vehicles coming from the Sheraton, for a total parking demand of 316 vehicles. They have several different reverberations of the scheme. The primary is 646 vehicles being provided, allocating 200 vehicles for Whole Food (170 for customers, 30 for staff) and an there is an opportunity for additional spaces due to active management, i.e. valet parking. A different scenario would be a big conference on a summer day where the zoning standard for convention space would be based on 1 vehicle per 100 sq. ft of space. They meet those requirements and, on top of that, they have a breakdown where they take a look at a peak parking assessment which looks at the Sheraton, the new hotel, both staffs, conference center and attendees, their staff, the Market Wharf Condos, the new condos, Whole Foods shoppers and staff, off-set by the existing Sheraton lot and the shared active management that will be used, the total parking demand with the hotels being calculated at 100% occupancy, they have a total parking demand of 541 spaces. That will vary a little depending on the type of event at the conference space. They will be providing 346 spaces and a clear excess of not only the zoning requirements but also their peak parking assessment. That is without the active management which would add more spaces. That would leave over 100 parking spaces for the City on a continuous basis.

Councilor Thorsen stated that he has seen some calculations that suggest that there is not enough parking and he wondered if the discrepancy is related to the calculation of one space for 100 s.f. versus another standard that is often used for convention centers which is one spot per two people in attendance or whatever is the capacity of the convention center is. He felt it will be very important to understand where the parking calculations are drawn from and which standards are being used. He also noted that the convention center will be in proximity to the Sheraton and he had questions about the activity between the two, such as traffic flow and foot traffic flow. He was expecting to see a second floor walkway between the two, although he is not sure whether that would be a good design or not. He wanted to understand the relationship between the two buildings in order to really understand what is going on in terms of usage. Finally, he wanted to make the point that he was glad to see a project that has this amount of diversity. Normally they see shops on the bottom and condos on the top and that is getting very boring.

Mr. Thompson responded that they are proposing an upper pedestrian connection, much like they did with the previous project, to take advantage of the additional space that the Sheraton would have to offer for conferences.

Ms. Young indicated that the walkway is depicted in one of the elevations and stated that the walkway was very important for the marketability.

Councilor Dwyer asked about the 185 spaces on the Sheraton property and she was unsure how existing spaces that are underneath the building interact with that amount.

Ms. Young confirmed that those spaces are beyond the 646, which only represents the new garage. The 160 represent what are actually at 250 Market Street, which include 106 in the garage under the hotel and 54 spots on the surface courtyard and entrance to the hotel. Through active parking management, they are now able to accommodate 185 vehicles.

Councilor Dwyer referred to Mr. Almeida's point regarding the "back of house" view. She noted there is hardly any landscaping at all on the whole back side. She wanted to address what may be happening for landscaping to mitigate that feeling.

Dan Rawling supported the comments previously made and he wanted to address some of the preliminary architectural components of the project. Starting at Maplewood and Deer Street, he felt that was a significant entrance to the City and as such the architecture should reflect that. He had a lot of concerns about the Deer Street elevations and street level activity with the lack of doors or retail or activity along the entire street and around the corner to Maplewood Avenue. That was a significant part of the previous project, requiring retail on the street level. He also comments on the forms of the building. They have been overwhelmed by flat topped, box buildings and the overall impression of this building built to a certain height limit and then cut off. He felt that is one of the incentive pieces of the zoning re-write, to get three dimensional buildings with form.

Ms. Goodknight was relieved that there was a portion of the HDC that has already give extensive review to the previous project at this site and that will be extremely beneficial.

Reagan Ruedig also agreed with her fellow commissioners and their comments. She felt it was important to have pedestrian penetration through the big buildings rather than walling off all of the redevelopment and growth on the other side of the railroad tracks. She stated that density is not necessarily a bad thing in an urban area but she wanted to remind the design team that they are trying to push a new way of looking at these big projects. In terms of stylistic ideas, she asked them to make it very simple at the beginning to make it a quicker process.

Dan Carroll wanted to add a comment to an earlier concern about landscaping on the back side. He agreed that they were very constrained on the back side. Their building footprint is very close to the property line. They understand this building cannot have a back side but are hopeful that as the building mass gets refined they can find ways to provide green screens and other landscaping on the back side. They are aware of that and it is part of their objective.

Beth Moreau indicated that during their Form Based Zoning discussions, they reviewed where parking garages should be located and one idea was to have them within behind the buildings which would make it more pedestrian friendly outside of the building. She felt they could possibly take that into consideration. She liked how the building is brought back on Russell Street and made is more pedestrian friendly. She asked if they have thought about having the loading areas underground on the back side so it wouldn't ever be seen. She mentioned the idea of having a atrium with benches and doors that could be wide open in the summer.

Deputy City Manager Dave Allen felt that the latest concept plans which were presented tonight are an improvement. The narrow sidewalks along Deer Street concerned him but they are much wider now. He asked them to think about intersection at Green/Russell and Russell into Market Street, they have

T'ded that intersection up anything they can do to improve that and possibly make a better connection would be important.

Eric Gregg stated this was an interesting project. He felt one of the biggest choke point coming into the City is coming down Market Street where it sometimes is backed up before Russell Street. The dynamics of this project is that a lot more people will drive down Russell Street, especially if there is signage and wayfinding for parking. He felt that would help the flow into the City and alleviate back up on Market Street.

Mr. Almeida asked about vehicular traffic stacking up outside the conference center and felt they should look at what would happen if four buses arrived at the same time and whether they be able to accommodate that. Mr. Almeida also asked if there had been any consideration for going deeper into the ground with subsurface parking and that the feasibility would be for doing that. He wanted to reinforce a comment made by Mr. Rawlings and he felt that Maplewood Avenue was very deserving of gateway status and they should develop that a little more. Referring to a comment by Ms. Ruedig, he knows the HDC will require a significant amount of material so he asked them to plan on lots of graphic and models to show all dimensions. He asked about the artisan space that has been mentioned.

Mr. Thompson confirmed they have been talking with an individual who runs a local art organization.

Ms. Almeida mentioned that the HDC will want to see material regarding abutting properties and how they relate to the project. Lastly, if Whole Foods does not become a tenant, he did not believe there was anything that would prevent this space from being used for something else and they need to be cognizant of that.

Mr. Gladhill referred to the Conceptual Site Plan, and asked if they are proposing a traffic light at Russell/Market and wondered how safe it will be to exit onto Market Street.

Giles Ham, project traffic engineer, with Vanesse & Associates, stated that he is a local seacoast resident and was very excited about working on this project. Part of the prior proposal included a traffic signal so that will certainly be a consideration. They are also interested in the corridor studies to see what else they may propose. Mr. Ham felt, at a minimum, there will be a traffic signal there to make that a safer intersection and to eliminate back ups.

Councilor Dwyer added that the prior project also included changing Deer Street to one way because of the truck traffic coming out of the port. She asked if that was also part of this project.

Mr. Thompson confirmed they have not proposed that. They had planned for a land swap that would reconfigure Russell/Deer into a T shaped intersection and have lower Deer Street go one way. They don't think the current plan suggests that they need that. However, if staff and the Boards feel they should go in that direction then they certainly reconsider it.

Mr. Wyckoff asked them to locate the 2nd story pedestrian bridge. Mr. Thompson pointed it out on the drawing. He explained that Whole Foods will be a 2 story level and the connection would be at the 3rd floor level, close to where they previously proposed it.

Mr. Taintor mentioned some items that he felt were very important. There had been a lot of discussion about flipping the parking garage and whole foods. As long as they have the parking garage where it is, it is always going to feel like the back of the development and they do not want to have the entrance

to the City from Maplewood Avenue feel like the back of the development. He urged them to look into that. Another item is that the Green Street side needs to be greatly improved. They are going to have to take some responsibility for improving that connection and maybe get rid of the multiple turning movements between Green to Russell to Market and make it something better designed. His last item was the importance of having an activated streetscape and not having a blank, inactive wall at the street level.

Ms. Moreau noted that they heard a lot about the connection with Vaughan Street but it hasn't come up tonight. She felt that was important as they are currently cutting off the neighborhood.

Mr. Thompson felt that was a good comment. With the previous project they had a thoroughfare through the building. They get stymied somewhat by the rail corridor but it is definitely something they will be looking at.

Mr. Almeida asked if they could collectively, as a community, decide how much reference they are going to give to the Northern Tier Study which was done in 1999. It was generated and made available to the community in 1999 and a lot of the information still applies but they need to have a discussion about whether this document should be referenced, if it is still of any value and whether it still applies.

Vice Chairman Rice felt a lot of ideas and thoughts were shared with the applicants. The public will be able to speak next week at the Planning Board public hearing.

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II. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Moreau made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gladhill seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn at 7:55 pm passed unanimously.

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Respectfully submitted,



Jane M. Shouse
Acting Secretary for the Planning Board

These minutes were approved at the May 15, 2014 Planning Board meeting.