

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

SITE REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

2:00 PM

JANUARY 7, 2015

EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Taintor, Chairman, Planning Director; Peter Britz, Environmental Planner; Juliet Walker, Transportation Planner, Principal Planner; Peter Rice, Director, Public Works; David Desfosses, Engineering Technician; Eric Eby, Parking and Transportation Engineer; Carl Roediger, Deputy Fire Chief; Ray Pezzullo, Assistant City Engineer; Eric Eby Parking and Transportation Engineer

.....

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. The application of **The Aphrodite Georgopolous Revocable Trust of 1999, Owner, and Seacoast Trust, LLP, Applicant**, for property located at **1900 Lafayette Road**, requesting Site Plan approval to construct two medical office buildings: (1) a 2-story building with a footprint of 12,150 s.f. and gross floor area of 21,000 s.f. plus a 10' x 60' MRI coach, and a proposed 2,050 s.f. future MRI addition to the building; and (2) a 2-story building with a footprint of 10,000 s.f. and gross floor area of 20,000 s.f., with related paving, lighting, utilities, landscaping, drainage and associated site improvements. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 267 as Lot 8 and lies within the Office Research (OR) District. (This application was postponed at the December 30, 2014 TAC meeting.)

The Chair read the notice into the record.

SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION:

Peter Weeks, of Weeks, Whalen and Gamester Real Estate was present on behalf of Seacoast Trust, LLC. Also present were John Lorden and Dennis Moulton of MSC Civil Engineers and Land Surveyors, Inc. to answer technical questions. The applicant has taken the comments made at the December 2nd TAC meeting and has provided a reference sheet to the Committee today. All changes requested have been made, and all issues brought forth have been addressed. They are present today to show the Committee those changes. Given that the changes have been listed on the plan set with the sheet number (dated January 7th, 2015), they will not go through each one in detail. One outstanding issue remained (from Altus Engineering regarding the drainage plan), which after meeting with Mr. Desfosses on Monday of this week, has been resolved. There will be a final response to those questions when the final Site Plans are submitted. He felt that all issues have been, or are, resolvable to the satisfaction of the TAC Committee.

Mr. Roediger stated that on some drawings the yard hydrant (in one of the landscaped islands towards the second island) is marked as Phase 2.

Mr. Weeks clarified that it will be part of the initial design and that will be detailed in the phasing notes for that sheet.

Mr. Taintor stated that the plans and phasing are not clear enough and are hard to understand. He recommends showing two distinct sets of plans; one that shows the completion of Phase 1 and one that shows the completion of Phase 2. That will be much better for the Planning Board to understand.

Mr. Weeks posed the possibility of doing this in narrative form, but Mr. Taintor felt that wouldn't work.

Mr. Rice recommends extending the Box on C5 and C6 to be consistent with the other boxes.

Mr. Weeks stated that this won't work because they are bringing the utilities within 15 feet of the building so if they extended the line down (on those boxes), it would seem as if those utilities are not getting completed when they will be.

Mr. Taintor reiterated that two sets of plans would be highly recommended.

Mr. Weeks stated that they will look at doing that.

Mr. Roediger is concerned about having the hydrant in the middle of a grassy area and asked that it be moved to the lower island that will be completed in Phase 1 (within the paved area). If it is a year or two before the completion of phase 2 the hydrant, as part of Phase 1, will be completed and accessible.

Mr. Moulton agreed to that change.

Mr. Britz requested that the applicant make a note on the plan regarding the loam and seed for the detention basin.

Mr. Eby asked if it is feasible to use a scored concrete surface rather than paint on the right turn out of the driveway.

The Committee is fine with that.

Mr. Desfosses noted on sheet C2, the right turn only sign "B" (specified as 30x36) seems rather large, and the sign next to that, the "No Parking" sign "F", is 18x24. They both should be 18 x 24. The text is acceptable as long as it is a large enough font to be readable. Regarding the sidewalk out to Lafayette Road, Mr. Desfosses asked that the applicant provide an apron that touches the asphalt so the sidewalk can be accessed at the end of the esplanade. A stop bar should be provided at the end of the access road for connection to West Road (sheet C10). A final report, perhaps a meeting with Altus, is needed before sending it to the Planning Board.

Mr. Weeks inquired if the DPW will be sending a memo to the Planning Board indicating that the completion of this road is a joint venture to avoid confusion amongst abutters.

Mr. Rice stated that would be fine within the context of consultation with Altus and their review, but that a separate memo from the Planning Board would not be written. The intent is that Altus will be conducting the engineering for this project.

The Chair asked if anyone was present from the public wishing to speak to, for or against the petition. Seeing no one rise, the Chair closed the public hearing.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr. Desfosses made a motion to recommend Site Plan approval and forward it to the Planning Board with the stipulations discussed. Mr. Britz seconded the motion.

The motion to recommend Site Plan approval with the following stipulations passed unanimously:

1. Relocate the yard hydrant from the “future phase” area to the “initial phase” area (Sheet C-6).
2. Specify that planting in the detention basin area shall be loam and seed.
3. Change lane delineation in the exit onto Lafayette Road from paint to scored concrete (Sheet C-3).
4. Provide an apron connecting to Lafayette Road at the end of the sidewalk (Sheet C-3).
5. Add a stop sign and stop bar at the end of the access road at West Road (Sheet C-9).
6. Review and adjust the sizes of sign B and sign F (Sheet C-2).
7. Revise the plan set to clarify the site conditions at the completion of the initial phase.
8. Provide a final response to the Altus Engineering drainage review with the submission to the Planning Board.

.....

B. The application of **Thirty Maplewood, LLC, Owner**, for property located at **46-64 Maplewood Avenue** (previously 30 Maplewood Avenue), requesting Site Plan Approval for a proposed 5-story mixed-use building with a footprint of 17,410 ± s.f. and gross floor area of 53,245 ± s.f., including 22 dwelling units and 13,745 ± s.f. of retail use, with related paving, lighting, utilities, landscaping, drainage and associated site improvements. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 2 and lies within Character District 4 (CD4), the Downtown Overlay District (DOD) and the Historic District. (This application was postponed at the December 30, 2014 TAC meeting.)

SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION:

John Chagnon of Ambit Engineering was present to speak to the application. Mr. Chagnon submitted a waiver request to the Committee to ask for relief from the Site Review Regulations, Section 3323, which allows only one access/lot. In this particular project, the property encompasses an entire block. The applicant would like to have two entrances to the property; one from Deer Street to the lower level of parking (C4), and a second driveway from Bridge Street to the surface level and garage. They need the second driveway (due to the grading of the building and the separation in the floor elevations) in order to make the two separate and distinct parking areas work.

Mr. Chagnon went through the changes (in the Existing Conditions Plan) decided upon in the meeting last week. They made some changes to the pipes. Light locations are shown. A revision has been made to note 6 to state “vested to the old zoning”. The demolition plan clarified the note for light removal. There are 6 lights that will be removed (to be coordinated with DPW). There are 2 lights that are part of Phase 1. In all, there will a total of 8 lights removed. Note 5 regarding off-site work has been added.

Some pavement removal is desired and that will require coordination with the adjacent property owner. On Sheet C3, some standard conditions have been added; a note about the waiver request, the open space calculation has been added as well as note 7 that the parking on Deer Street may have a kiosk. However, at the discretion of the City, there may be parking meters. They have also pulled the planters back from the curb 8" and have widened them to make the planters 4' x 6'. On C4, changes include adding some dimensioning to the ADA space so the first space has the full 8' van space. Some changes have been made to the water quality unit detail.

On the basement level, they will be installing a dewatering system (prior to construction, the plan will be submitted to DPW for review and approval). On Sheet C5, they've added the approval notes relative to landscaping (move the tree wells off the curb, removal of a tree on Deer Street that would be in the middle of the drainage, water and sewer infrastructure). On Sheet C6, Note 11 has been added (a fire hydrant has been moved that did not blend in with the parking spaces to be created so a relocated hydrant is depicted). They have added model numbers to the LED lights that will be installed at the mast arms at the intersection. Some miscellaneous changes have been made to the drainage by adding inverts and showing a roof drain connection coming out to Deer Street. On Sheet D1, there is no change. On Sheet D2, the tree well detail has been revised to show 8" of brick between the curb of the street and the curb of the tree well. On Sheet D3 and D4, there are no changes. The Architectural Plan has been revised so that the pedestrian way between phase 1 and 2 (the view) was scaled up properly. A change has been made to the proposed light pole. They will be moving a base back so that Bridge Street and the walkway will be lit up better. The driveway entrance on Deer Street will be asphalt all the way up to the cobbles. The corners on the planters have been rounded as requested.

Ms. Walker asked if a variance is needed for two driveways on one lot.

Mr. Taintor responded if the Planning Board granted a waiver, it will then be in compliance.

Mr. Eby inquired as to whether the handicap space had been enlarged.

Mr. Chagnon stated that it has been enlarged and is now 8' wide.

Mr. Taintor posed some questions regarding the architectural in relation to the site plan and the building exits. The archway area now seems to work. Looking at the architectural, it seems that there is not room to put the door on the right hand side rather than the left. On the section of wall closest to Maplewood, there is one double door on the architectural and two single doors on the site plan. There may have to be minor changes to the Site Plan after HDC corrections. Mr. Taintor pointed out that on the drawings, the vesting to 60' building height should be made (and this requires a Conditional Use permit to go above 45 feet, or 3 ½ stories).

Mr. Desfosses asked if it states anywhere that the curbing will be reset all the way around the site.

Mr. Chagnon referred him to Sheet C2, the Demolition Plan.

Mr. Desfosses asked the applicant to coordinate with DPW in order to avoid junk curbing. He asked that another note be added to the Demolition Plan that the timing of the street lighting be changed in order to accommodate temporary lighting to avoid a time period longer than 30 days without lighting. He also inquired where the fire service for the building is located.

Mr. Chagnon said there is a note that there will be separate fire services. He pointed out where the hydrant is located.

Mr. Roediger asked what else will be going in that spot.

Mr. Chagnon said it will be amongst 5' high inkberry bushes.

Mr. Rice asked if the planted area could be reduced and some pavers put in around the hydrant. For pedestrian flow, an 8' sidewalk should be maintained. In some areas the sidewalk is 8', while in others it is 6' or even 5' in areas. He wondered if the pedestrian lights should be revisited (problematic for snowplowing) and asked if they could protect the trees with a steel flush grate rather than planters.

Mr. Chagnon felt that 2' can be added to the sidewalk.

Ms. Walker stated that the wider the sidewalk, the better. They have reduced planters and they have done what the Planning Department asked in terms of pushing the planters back. She agrees that 6' is narrow for a downtown sidewalk. This section of Maplewood is likely to go through a reconstruction.

Mr. Chagnon stated that they are happy to work on making the sidewalk wider in spots.

Mr. Taintor felt the real problem seems to be that the trees are lined up with the edge of the planters.

Mr. Britz is concerned that there were 8 or 9 trees in the existing conditions, now there are fewer trees.

Ms. Walker stated that there are flush grates in other areas of the city and asked why that same standard wouldn't be applied here in order to gain more sidewalk space.

Mr. Taintor feels the need for a clear and wide walking area. There are flags hanging from buildings and the flush tree grates do not really provide more sidewalk space/width. Walking next to a tree trunk (within the grate) makes it difficult to walk in that space.

Mr. Desfosses stated that trees do much better when there is raised granite curbing around the trees.

Site Plan Regulations require 30' for spacing of trees and these trees are at 60'.

Mr. Chagnon stated that this has not gone before the Trees and Greenery Committee although he attended the meeting when Harborcorp presented.

Site Plan Regulations state that trees shall be spaced at a minimum of 1 tree/30 linear feet, or more if necessary to accommodate the crown spread of the tree.

Mr. Roediger didn't see any other area where the hydrant could be put. He recommends removing two of the most westerly inkberries.

Mr. Chagnon stated that the connection is closer to Maplewood but that can be moved if that is preferable.

Mr. Roediger stated that an 8' or 9' area is needed.

Mr. Rice proposed a change in the plan in the interest of keeping the raised granite.

Mr. Chagnon stated that a patio has been added. He would like to keep as much greenery as possible.

The conclusion for today was that on the Maplewood side, the tree planters will be adjusted. On the Deer Street side, there will be 5' clear and 7' clear of width off the lights. The raised trees grates will be kept and one tree (Maplewood) added.

Mr. Rice asked if they have gotten the monitoring table on groundwater. They will need this as part of the Stormwater Discharge Permit noting the kind of dewatering that will be done and how.

The Chair asked if anyone was present from the public wishing to speak to, for or against the petition. Seeing no one rise, the Chair closed the public hearing.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:

This will need to go to Trees and Greenery as species must be chosen.

Mr. Taintor stated that on Sheet C3 abutter permission is needed. He requested that the note be changed to say that Planning Board and abutter permission approval is needed. The VFW does not need to be a co-applicant. Mr. Taintor will draft verbiage around a condition of concurrence.

The Planning Board can recommend waivers.

Mr. Rice made a motion to recommend approval of the Site Plan with conditions. Mr. Britz seconded the motion.

The motion to recommend Site Plan Approval passed unanimously with the following stipulations:

1. The perimeter landscaping shall be revised to provide for 7 feet of clear sidewalk width between the building landscaping and the street tree planters and street lights;
2. The revised plan shall be reviewed and approved by DPW prior to being submitted to the Planning Board;
3. Changes in the location of street light poles shall be coordinated with the City's wayfinding program.

.....
II. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 3:16pm was made and seconded and passed unanimously.

.....
Respectfully Submitted,



Toni McLellan
Acting Secretary for the Planning Board