

MINUTES

SITE REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

2:00 PM

MARCH 4, 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; Nick Cracknell, Principal Planner; Peter Rice, Director, Public Works; Raymond Pezzullo, Assistant City Engineer; David Desfosses, Engineering Technician; Eric Eby, Parking & Transportation Engineer; Carl Roediger, Deputy Fire Chief; and Michael Schwartz, Portsmouth Police Department

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I. OLD BUSINESS

A. The application of **Harborcorp, LLC, Owner**, for property located on **Russell Street, Deer Street and Maplewood Avenue**, requesting Site Plan Approval for a proposed 5-story mixed use development with a footprint of 63,000 ± s.f. and gross floor area of 327,900 ± s.f., including a hotel/event center with 103,700 s.f. of event center space and 96 hotel rooms, 14 residential condominiums, a 40,000 s.f. retail supermarket, and 540 parking spaces (390 spaces in a garage structure and 150 below-grade spaces serving the retail use); with related paving, lighting, utilities, landscaping, drainage and associated site improvements. 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. (This application was postponed at the February 4 TAC meeting.)

The Chair read the notice into the record.

SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION:

Chris Thompson with Harborcorp, LLC and Cliff Greim with Harriman Architects and Engineers were present to speak to the application. Mr. Thompson thanked the staff for their thorough review of the application. The entire project team was also present to address any issues and answer any questions. Mr. Greim took the Committee through an outline of revisions step by step as requested by TAC at the last meeting.

Mr. Taintor stated that since it is such a detailed plan as the applicant describes revisions and changes to Plans/Sheets, TAC will interject questions and clarify issues.

Mr. Greim described revisions and went through the Sheet Details as follows:

Sheet C1.0 – Changes on this Sheet have been made as requested.

Demolition and Removal Plans – TAC requested a narrative and commitment to the pre and post blasting inspection, and a contingency plan for the potential sewer main. The applicant has accommodated both requests. There are other items on this plan regarding the sewer main and Deer Street, but the former were the salient points.

Mr. Rice gave a summary of the blasting procedure. An application for a Blasting Permit is submitted. The business to perform the blasting must provide documentation that they are licensed and in good stead with the state. A pre-blast survey within a 500' radius must be completed with proof of notice to all properties within that radius. The Police and Fire Departments must be contacted as well as City Managers, and Mr. Rice. A very formulaic and detailed approach must be put together for this process. Once they've completed these requirements, Mr. Rice as Director of DPW, will issue a blasting permit which gets noticed to the Police and Fire Departments, and the City Manager. Post-blast surveys are conducted only when there are claims of damage. However, a pre-blast survey company is typically hired. They take videos of the structures in order to document existing conditions and to ensure the foundation is secure and that there are no cracks, etc. prior to blasting. The applicant is also required to have vibration monitoring in sensitive areas, such as those with historic buildings.

Sheet C2.3 Land Transfers and Easement Plan– Nothing additional had been requested from TAC on this sheet.

Site Layout – As of the last discussion regarding Site Layout, the applicant did not have the peer review on site storm drainage. They have since received this and have responded to comments. A more detailed discussion on drainage will occur later in the meeting.

Sheet C3.0 - (at the Maplewood and Deer Street intersection) – The dimensions and configuration of a minimum sidewalk width are shown on the plan. Mr. Thompson asked if there were any questions, or any further discussion needed regarding the sidewalk as there were a number of concerns and issues around this topic.

Mr. Taintor clarified that the applicant is showing an 11.4' sidewalk width and inquired what the width would be from the tip down to the edge of the easement.

Mr. Rice stated that he sees the current pinch points on the sidewalk as being 8.8' clear.

Mr. Taintor stated that he sees 11.4' clear at the corner of Maplewood and Deer Streets, but the area that is public is not clear.

Mr. Thompson stated that the easement is 5.5'.

Mr. Taintor stated that the idea was to do something similar to the layout at the corner of Raynes and Maplewood Avenue. The decision had been made to "T" this intersection as much as possible while leaving the cobblestone edge that trucks could go over but that it would not be designed for trucks. It still seems as if it is designed for trucks.

Mr. Thompson stated that they have narrowed this area as much as possible. The island in the middle was not needed anymore. The width across the short lane of the crossing is now about 40'.

Mr. Eby stated that on Sheet C11 and Sheet C11.1 where trucks would be turning could be tightened up some more; there is still a bit of extra width there. He stated that the most important thing in this area is traffic control. It is shown as a 3-way stop which is what the City previously requested. TAC would like to see a single stop on the Russell Street approach leaving Deer Street without stop signs. He feels this would be safe and simple. If future conditions warrant more than this, it could be changed.

Mr. Thompson stated that the applicant will accommodate this change.

Sheet C3.1 – There had been a lot of discussion and comments on pavement markings and signage. The applicant tried to accommodate all comments from TAC.

Mr. Eby stated that there are only minor dimensional issues on signs. On the entrance to Russell Street from Deer Street, the number 4 sign should actually be number 23 (to match sign number 23 closer to the Sheraton driveway). Stop sign 20 should be 24" X 30". The number 6 sign should be 30" X 30"; it is acceptable to have a 24" X 24" internal sign. Anything out on street should be 30" X 30". Number 20 stop sign should be 24" X 36" not 36" X 36". The "No Turn on Red", sign number 21, should be on the mast arm and the size should be 36" X 48". The number 17 sign should be removed as it no longer exists. Bus stop signs should be 12" X 18". The pedestrian warning sign number 5 should be 30" X 30" not 24" X 24". He inquired about the LED traffic control sign number 24 and what the message will say.

Mr. Thompson stated it will say "Full" or "Open". This will only be for the upper garage. It will not apply to the basement.

Mr. Eby stated that someone may assume if they see "Full" that the entire garage is closed.

Mr. Thompson would not like to place signs on the high turnover areas of the garage. The upper garage is a more steady state and would need signage informing people of whether it is open or full. He would like the lower access in the garage to be unfettered with signage.

Mr. Taintor stated that if the signs are removed and someone enters at the lower level and circulates through to the upper level, they would only see the back of the sign indicating full or open.

Mr. Eby stated that the striping on Maplewood Avenue on the north side of the railroad tracks does not tie into what is there today. The parking lane needs to be delineated so that a parking lane, bike lane and one travel lane are clearly demarcated.

Mr. Rice suggested putting a note in the plans that the applicant will work with DPW to coordinate the final delineation of this area.

Sheet C3.2 Enlargement Plan – The applicant tried to accommodate all comments from TAC. There were no questions from TAC.

Sheet C4.0 Grading and Drainage – The applicant worked on details regarding manhole covers, sidewalk curbing, driveway crossings as recommended by TAC at the last meeting. There were also some questions regarding the TDC drainage review (this will be addressed later).

Mr. Desfosses stated that the applicant is still showing new grades for Deer Street and Russell Street. This will cause problems. This was discussed at the last meeting.

Mr. Thompson stated the curb line will remain in place and they will repave the full width side to side. They tried to match all contours.

Mr. Desfosses stated that unless the grading is going to change/elevation of the street is changing, new contour lines should not be shown.

Mr. Thompson stated that they are not changing the elevation of the street.

Mr. Desfosses then stated that the applicant should remove all contours.

Sheet C5.0 Erosion and Sediment Plan – The applicant needed to coordinate with DPW as part of the approval process. The applicant will do so.

Sheet C6.0 Site Utility Plan – There was a request to move the fire hydrant connection to the front of the building. The applicant has done so. They have also moved the gas main away from the sidewalk.

Mr. Desfosses stated that the sewer run from proposed sewer manhole 6 to proposed sewer manhole 7 is an existing line and should be relabeled. It will be PVC instead of asbestos. There is still a conflict where the gas line on Russell Street is shown -- it is on top of the sewer line. The applicant may need to move sewer manhole 6 to the south to gain clearance for the gas line. There will need to be a minimum of 3' of clearance.

Sheet C8.0 Site Detail Plan – The applicant tried to reduce duplication of details down to one. There were also some terminology changes. Hopefully, the changes are to the satisfaction of TAC.

Mr. Desfosses stated that under the architect details, the applicant shows the sand/cement ratio as 6 parts sand to 1 part concrete whereas 3 to 1 is the standard.

Ms. Walker asked that the applicant clarify on Sheet 8.0 Detail G whether the striping depicted would be in addition to, or a replacement for, the flush granite borders. The recommendation of TAC is flush granite borders. This is where the raised sidewalk (cars travel over this area while going into the garage) is located. In the subsequent detail sheet she also recommended that the flush curbing (adjacent to crosswalks) be shown in Plan View (Detail Sheet 8.6).

Sheet C8.3 – Some detail for the fencing on top of the retaining wall has been added.

Mr. Eby stated that this is a tight area for trucks making deliveries and has concerns that they may hit the fence. The recommendation is to have something more crashworthy than the fence.

The applicant stated that a heavy grade industrial steel will be used for the fencing.

Ms. Walker stated that the Fire Department may run into problems trying to make a turn in this area. It is something that the applicant should think about.

Deputy Fire Chief Roediger noted that on Sheet 3.0, detail "I" is referred to but "I" does not exist.

Sheet C10.1 Site Electrical Plan – The project Electrical Engineer was not present to speak to the changes. However, he did try to address all prior concerns from TAC. An easement must be obtained for the bridge mounted light fixture.

Mr. Taintor stated that the bridge light is not yet shown on this plan. If lighting connections are shown, the fixture should be shown.

Mr. Thompson stated that simplest way to handle this is for the Sheraton to own the bridge and maintain the lights.

Mr. Rice stated that the Sheraton would then need to get a license and it would need to specify responsibility for maintenance and operation of that light. If anything happened, the owner would be responsible for fixing the light within a certain amount of time.

Mr. Taintor clarified that the Sheraton, as owner, would need to request an easement from the City for this. There are some outstanding things that need to be reconciled about this issue.

Landscape Plan – Pat Carroll with Carroll Associates Landscape was present to speak to the Landscape Plan. Out of the meeting with the Trees and Greenery Committee, there were a couple of recommendations. The Committee had some issues with the Ginkgo trees the applicant proposed. The applicant had proposed these trees because the sidewalk is narrow, buses will be in and out of this area and these trees are tall and columnar in habit. The Trees and Greenery Committee recommended English Oak or Maple trees. The applicant is proposing to keep 2 Ginkgo trees and will plant the rest in Oak or Maple. The Greenery Committee is recommending Armstrong Maples or another type of upright Maple tree. In addition, there will be three evergreen (White Spruce) trees at the corner of Maplewood Avenue and Vaughn Street. With the recommendation from the Trees and Greenery Committee, they will be changing this detail to Serbian Spruce trees instead. They are a narrower and smaller tree and should fit well in this space. Another recommendation from the Trees and Greenery Committee (Detail Sheet L2.0) is to add Silva cells. They allow for better root growth and aeration of trees. They included a detail on the plan for this.

Ms. Walker stated that she appreciates the area (16 racks) reserved for long term bike storage in the garage on the Landscape Plan. She requested that more detail be provided regarding this.

Mr. Thompson stated that they are aware that there are requirements for filing around the recording of plans. The applicant will follow these requirements.

Stormwater Drainage Plan – Mr. Desfosses stated that DPW met with the applicant last week and held a work session that was very beneficial to both parties. They are awaiting the final review from TEC. He feels they are in a much better position now. Flow is matching and they are holding much more volume onsite. The applicant has agreed to replace one of the main drain pipes on Deer Street that runs from Gary's Beverage up to the site. This will mitigate any volumetric increases and will provide more underground storage for stormwater from other streets in the area. They are pleased with the drainage at this point pending the TEC report.

Deputy Fire Chief Roediger asked for clarification on Sheet C11 on vehicles leaving Deer Street turning onto Maplewood Avenue. It seems that the back of a trailer could end up on the sidewalk or close to the curb line.

Mr. Thompson stated that it would be very close, but the turn can be done and this is the consequence of narrowing up the lanes as they have been asked to do.

Deputy Fire Chief Roediger stated that behind the building on the service road, it seems that the driver's side of the truck would be running into the fence. He sees an issue particularly in winter (unless snow removal is perfect) in that trucks will be getting stuck. Furthermore, no snow would be able to be stored in this area.

Mr. Thompson stated that they have kept a 14' width throughout the service drive. Whole Foods will be getting most of their deliveries (two/day) in WB67's rather than WB50's. Other deliveries will be in smaller box trucks from local area businesses. WB67 will be the largest truck they receive.

Mr. Rice requested that the applicant put together a narrative on how they intend to deal with snow removal.

Ms. Walker provided context for members of the public in attendance. The applicant conducted a traffic study with a version completed in September that has had subsequent iterations. The City hired an independent third party review of the study. TEC also conducted a peer review. There is a copy of the traffic study available at the Planning Department. The Peer Review is online. The applicant has made an effort to address all issues brought forth by staff and TEC. The applicant recognizes that with regard to parking management, there will be offsite needs and that they will need to do shuttling during events. She would like to see more specifics on where and how those accommodations will be provided.

Mr. Thompson stated that they are holding a meeting with the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee tomorrow morning.

Mr. Rice pointed out that the meeting tomorrow morning at 8am will be open to the public and will be held in Council Chambers.

Mr. Cracknell pointed out some corrections and posed questions regarding the building height analysis. On Sheet C1.1, the Zoning Analysis Table needs to be corrected. It shows the allowable building height at 60', which is what it used to be. It is now at 45'. He stated that Sheet A1.1 is well done. He stated that with regard to Sheet A1.2, what is lacking is the height of the building. He asked that the

applicant label this and add a call out box on the sheet for the *average* height of the building. On Sheet A1.3, 4 and 5, he suggests that the building height be defined from the perspective of the pedestrian. For example, note what a pedestrian standing 6' feet away from the building (at 5' increments around the 7 sections of the building) would visualize (perceived height) in terms of height. This type of depiction would be very helpful for the Conditional Use Permit. It would also be helpful to label each section of the building with the street name on all four sides of the building and to show the building in 3D, and then color code this (on Sheet A1.5). Back on Sheet A1.4, he requested that the applicant show the height of the skywalk both clear and top. Moving forward to HDC, he suggested adding another sheet that depicts all the corresponding offsetting mitigation for added height with a key to the building, and onsite and offsite improvements which would help facilitate approval on building height from HDC.

Mr. Thompson inquired as to whether the 3D graphic on the plan was helpful. Mr. Cracknell stated that it was very helpful, but that color coding would make it even better.

Mr. Cracknell inquired about using shorter fencing (Sheet 8.3, Section D). It shows as 4' in height now given there is a 1' reveal. He stated that it seems tight back there.

Mr. Desfosses stated that the fencing needs to be at least 42" tall (off the driveway).

Mr. Cracknell inquired about the location of the proposed bollards.

Mr. Thompson stated that the bollards are all in the back of the building.

Mr. Cracknell asked for clarification on where the doors at Whole Foods will be located. At the last meeting there was some confusion around this.

Mr. Thompson stated that both doors at the café will be "In" and "Out" and the public will be able to enter the store through the café. These entrances and exits will be noted on the plans. Whole Foods is in favor of this plan for the doors.

Mr. Rice provided clarification (for members of the public that were present) relative to the Construction Mitigation Management Plan that will be developed once all approvals are received. During this time, there will be additional requirements for the construction phase; traffic, materials coming in, staging for materials, constructing parking and de-watering, etc. While the process here today is very important, there are additional things that need to be done to ensure that the construction process proceeds smoothly. He added that regarding the Stormwater Discharge Permit, the final/permanent dewatering plan cannot really be determined until existing conditions are finalized and the static water level on the property is known. There will be a requirement during construction to establish this baseline. TAC is comfortable with all steps that applicant has taken to date.

Mr. Thompson stated that additional changes as discussed today could be made within the time frame of a week.

Ms. Walker stated that changes to the Site Plan should be noted when this application goes to the Planning Board.

Mr. Desfosses stated that the concrete on the back access way is currently shown past the right-of-way line so the concrete apron needs to be terminated at that line. Also, an asphalt apron leading up to the concrete apron needs to be provided until the road is widened. He also stated that the Drainage study and Drainage Plan needs final approval.

The Chairman opened the public hearing.

Joe Calderola of 170 Dennett Street spoke of conditions that he would like to see added to the plan although he does not necessarily think the conditions need to hold up approval. He acknowledges that Harborcorp is already planning to put some of what he is suggesting into place. Regarding parking, he is wondering whether a water contingency needs to be added. For example, if groundwater is encountered in the lower level, it must be pumped.

Mr. Rice stated that this is a standard requirement and is part of the dewatering plan. The applicant must maintain groundwater level during the construction phase.

Mr. Calderola inquired about the case of unexpected high water.

Mr. Rice stated that the applicant must obtain a Dewatering Permit; it is part of the Construction Mitigation Plan. After construction, they must obtain a Stormwater Discharge Permit. This is based on actual conditions after the fact.

Mr. Calderola stated that this next item is more of a long term consideration, but that now may be a good time to start thinking about rising sea levels and building considerations into plans for this. That might include consideration of such things as the location of future pumps. He would also like to see a condition requiring reciprocal parking easements between the Sheraton and Harborcorp. In addition, a condition addressing satellite parking referred to in the Traffic Study should be specified and approved. During construction, planning for offsite parking for construction workers should be addressed as well.

Mr. Taintor stated that offsite parking is typically taken into consideration as part of the Construction Management Mitigation Plan.

Mr. Calderola stated that publishing directions for Whole Foods could help mitigate the traffic/pedestrian impacts on Maplewood Avenue. Harborcorp has already designed a way for straight trucks to get to the back through a cut-through. They are not allowed on Maplewood Avenue. He supports this measure. His biggest concern is the tractor trailers. Public safety is at stake. On Sheet C11, trucks will be coming within inches of the curb, which is within inches of the left turn lane for opposing traffic. He can foresee the possibility of trucks going into oncoming lanes. In winter, this could be much worse. If there is a high traffic period with snow on the ground, which is typical in this region, the truck will be waiting for enough room to make the turn. While this meets the letter of the ordinance, he feels that it does not meet the intent of the ordinance and is not safe. He is asking the City to enforce a safer alternative.

John Gilberts of Thornton Street spoke to the application. He has lived in the City for 20 years. He walks down Dennett Street and Maplewood Avenue 5 times a week. With the bridge on Route 1 under construction, there is currently less traffic on Maplewood Avenue. However, that will change. Before the bridge was down, there were traffic backups at the traffic lights on Deer Street and Maplewood Avenue. This project has every opportunity to take traffic off Market Street. Turning in off Deer Street before the trucks reach Maplewood Avenue is an excellent idea. There are other projects going forward that will also affect Maplewood Avenue. This will make the traffic load on Maplewood Avenue heavier. These other projects do not have the opportunity like this one, to use Market Street. In addition, the parking is a problem. If there isn't enough parking, and cars go to the parking lot or to the valet lot, there is considerable traffic going into and coming out of this area and it will add to the traffic problem. He would like to see this addressed further.

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street spoke to the application. He sees traffic as the biggest problem with this project. A project across from this project, 30 Maplewood Avenue Phase II, has already been approved. More trucks are already going into and coming out of this area and he is very concerned that there will be more. The Traffic Study conducted for this project was the first time the City has conducted an independent study. While this is encouraging, he wondered whether that study took into account all the projects in this area. This project is a big deal to the City, the residents, and the community. His hope is that all projects will coincide and will do justice to traffic safety.

Dick Bagley of 213 Pleasant Street spoke to the application. He wondered whether the applicant has actually met requirements. He echoed that the traffic issue is at the Maplewood Avenue/Deer Street intersection. With Whole Foods, a conference center, hotel and retail businesses, there will be delivery traffic that far exceeds the capacity and the claim of 2-4 trucks/day. This is a poorly designed corner for safety, efficiency (for trucks entering and exiting), for pedestrians. In addition, he inquired whether consideration of things such as UPS trucks entering and exiting, deliveries for residents, people ordering a delivery from Whole Foods online as well as other traffic that adds an additional load has been taken into account. He has trouble reconciling that a 1,000 person conference and 5,000 vehicles during the week and 8,000 vehicles on the weekend with a garage that has a capacity of only 500. There is potential for a large back-up of traffic. Traffic volumes are denoted as current volumes of traffic, not future. Also on Russell Street, going from 3 stop signs to 1 will cause an enormous back-up. He felt that a higher fence, rather than a shorter one would be more appropriate. There are a lot of outstanding issues on the Maplewood Avenue side, not the least of which is the residential issue that Mr. Calderola addressed. There is a considerable amount of work to be done on this plan relating to traffic and safety. There are bike lanes, pedestrian lanes, a walkway, a railroad crossing (with a train that will potentially carry propane). It doesn't seem that the applicant has done what is necessary at this point to fulfill the traffic and safety requirements.

Patricia Bagley of 213 Pleasant Street spoke to the application and has two points to add. She feels that traffic volume and safety will be a problem. She would like TAC to take the narrow turn very seriously. It needs to be addressed for safety reasons. She attended Jeff Specks walkability session and wondered how the city would handle 5,000-8,000 additional cars coming in. She feels that the increased traffic load is in contrast to a more walkable and bicycle friendly city. Bigger cities handle these issues, but this will impact the entire city and the traffic will become a safety and quality of life issue. The expertise of TAC is supposed to handle this, but she just doesn't hear it being discussed other than the circulation around the immediate area of the project and this is the second issue.

Mr. Taintor stated that TAC has been discussing the traffic situation for many months. The consulting engineer has also been reviewing the traffic.

Mr. Rice stated that future conditions were considered. He asked that Mr. Eby provide a summary of what goes into a traffic study.

Mr. Eby stated that a full traffic impact study was conducted by the project engineer, who is present and can fill in details as needed. The study was very thorough. The study looked at 10-12 intersections in the area. All traffic counts were done for peak hours in the morning, afternoon and evening as well as Saturdays. Traffic volumes were adjusted to future conditions for each of the intersections. Other projects in the area and their traffic impact have also been analyzed. He pointed out that there will not be 5,000 cars coming in all at one time. There is also a traffic signal timing improvement project on Maplewood Avenue to address the additional traffic coming in. The applicant has made many modifications to intersections and has agreed to do everything the City has requested.

Mr. Rice stated that he understands the concerns and stated that the City doesn't take impacts lightly. They are very cognizant of other projects going on. The challenges have been difficult to address, but they have worked hard to address everything. Also, at tomorrow's public parking, traffic and safety meeting, the consultant will be present to answer questions.

Ms. Walker echoed that the applicant has made improvements to intersections and roadways around the area in this project. The applicant has incorporated incentives for people to use bicycles and to make the area more pedestrian friendly. This was done to offset parking demand and traffic generation. These efforts are part of a holistic approach being taken towards City planning.

Rick Beckstead of 1395 Islington Street added that Portwalk has not yet fully opened for the season. It has not gone through a summer season. He is concerned if the projections for traffic will hold.

Mr. Rice stated that Mr. Beckstead has a great suggestion but is probably talking about two different things. One is confirming the projections of a project after it is completed. He feels this effort would be worthwhile. The second is taking into account the actual traffic impacts associated with this potential development. Mr. Rice stated that the DPW along with Ms. Walker is working on this as part of a traffic modeling and management program for the City that is taking a larger look at how traffic is impacting the City. This is being done in conjunction with an on-street parking utilization study which is conducted twice each year. Traffic flow is something that monies are dedicated to in the Capital Plan.

John Gilbert of Thornton Street inquired about the current volume of cars stating that the 5,000-8,000 traffic volume has been noted as a future condition.

Mr. Taintor stated that current volume is 11,000 (total 2-way traffic).

Mr. Gilbert inquired as to whether this wording means that the traffic volume will be increased over and above the current 11,000 cars by 5,000-8,000 cars.

Mr. Taintor, Ms. Walker and Mr. Cracknell echoed that it does not mean that. This volume is distributed throughout the area. At no one place are there 5,000-8,000 vehicles being added. It is distributed across all streets in the network. The report is available for viewing.

Mr. Thompson stated that the numbers show that there would be 5,000-9,000 cars. The upper end of that range would be on Saturdays. While these numbers do reflect a 24-hour cycle for traffic, half of that number in cars are coming in, half are going out. There is a portion that is new traffic and a portion of that is already out there. The applicant is open to changes and ideas that will make the traffic pattern even better. A year after they open, they will be on site on Maplewood Avenue looking at traffic to determine how they can improve the situation if need be. They looked at peak conditions during the two years they have been studying this area. They did not look at this time of year when traffic is lower. A lot has gone into this plan and they have made a lot of changes including improvements for pedestrians and bicycles.

The Chair asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak to, for or against the application. Seeing no one rise, the Chair closed the public hearing.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Ms. Walker made a motion to recommend Site Plan Approval with stipulations as noted. Mr. Rice seconded the motion.

Mr. Taintor stated that one of the big issues is drainage. It needs to have further refinement prior to DPW signing off on it.

Mr. Rice is comfortable with the work that has been done to date particularly with the upcoming TEC review. A drainage permit will need to be obtained. He would like to move forward.

Ms. Walker stated that all issues raised today can be addressed through tweaks and plan adjustments. However, an additional staff review might be appropriate prior to the application going to the Planning Board.

Mr. Rice stated that the Parking and Traffic Safety Committee will make recommendations to the Council. TEC, Staff and the Committee will also review and vote on this. There needs to be some further refining of how traffic issues will be addressed. It is appropriate to ask for a plan of action or narrative on how the traffic issues and challenges will be addressed. That will go a long way to addressing the concerns.

Mr. Taintor pointed out, for the benefit of members of the public present, that if this process moves forward as a recommendation of the Planning Board, the process will still take another 2-3 months so there is plenty of time yet to review the plan and comment. It has to go to the Planning Board and it must go through the Historic District Commission for a Conditional Use Permit. The earliest time that the Planning Board would vote on this is the third Thursday in May. Mr. Taintor also pointed out that City Council is crucial to this project as they need to grant easements and licenses, right-of-way, land transfers and so forth.

Mr. Taintor listed each specific concern and also stated that some items are implicit and must be included so they need not be recorded as stipulations but they do warrant mentioning. These items include pumping and groundwater studies, and pre and post blast surveys.

- 1) Show specific building heights
- 2) Depict milling of the street (no contour lines)
- 3) Show traffic signal for Maplewood Avenue and Deer Street
- 4) Conduct post-construction analysis of traffic
- 5) Confirm parking easements with Sheraton and Harborcorp
- 6) Depict how traffic will be directed for deliveries and how this information is to be conveyed
- 7) Obtain temporary construction easement regarding the roundabout

Mr. Taintor will draft a set of stipulations for review by the TAC members prior to finalizing.

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

A. Plan Revisions

C-1.1 – General Notes

1. Under “Property Notes”, correct item 5, Zoning Requirements regarding building height, to indicate that the maximum structure height is 45 feet or 3½ stories, whichever is less, but may be increased to 60 feet through the granting of a conditional use permit.

C-2.3 – Land Transfer and Easement Plan

2. Clarify ownership of proposed aerial connector, i.e., whether Sheraton parcel or new project parcel will require the easement from the City.

C-3.0 – Site Layout Plan

3. Further revise the intersection of Green and Russell Streets to make the intersection more of a “T” for cars and to make the pedestrian crossing distance narrower. The design intent is to accommodate the periodic use by large WB-67 trucks leaving the site while maintaining an intersection configuration that is appropriately scaled for pedestrians, bicyclists and the majority of vehicles that will be moving through the intersection. The applicant shall work with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to develop a design that achieves these objectives.
4. Terminate the concrete driveway apron behind the building behind the right-of-way line both at Green St and Maplewood Ave.
5. Change the reference to Detail “I” to Detail “G” for the raised concrete paver crossings at Deer St and Russell St parking garage and Sheraton entrances.

C-3.1 – Pavement Marking and Signage Plan

6. At the intersection of Deer and Russell Streets, change the 3-way stop to a 1-way stop on the Russell Street approach. The applicant shall conduct a post-occupancy review at this intersection and monitor the traffic conditions for one year after the full operation of the project to determine if the intersection should be migrated to an all-way stop condition.

During construction, a small formed opening shall be created for the other two stop signs should those need to be added in the future.

7. On Russell Street north of Deer Street intersection, change sign #4 (R3-8) to #23 (R3-8L Modified)
8. Revise the sign table as follows:
 - a. Signs #2 (R1-1), #5 (W11-2) and #6 (R5-1_ – change to 30”x30” when placed on the street (when on private property, may be 24”x24” as shown).
 - b. Sign #14 (R10-6) – change to 24”x36”.
 - c. Sign #17 (R1-5) –delete from table.
 - d. Sign #19 (R7-107) – change to 12”x18”.
 - e. Sign #21 (R10-11A) – change to 36”x48”, and place on the mast arm for visibility.
9. Remove sign #24 (LED Traffic Controller) from the Deer Street and Maplewood Avenue garage entrances and relocate sign #24 at the Russell Street entrance back into the ramp so that it is clear that it applies only to the upper garage and so that vehicles exiting the lower garage will be able to see it.
10. Tie the proposed lane striping for the project on Maplewood Avenue to the existing conditions outside of the limit-of-work boundary and make the following off-site modifications to the existing lane striping: eliminate the centerline within the intersection of Maplewood/Vaughan for approximately 30 feet; modify the centerline to provide positive guidance for the through movement and definition for the left-turn lane; add railroad pavement markings and static signs on the northwest side of the tracks, similar to what is proposed to the southeast. Add a note regarding coordination with the City.
11. In the bus spaces on Russell Street, delete the painted lines shown on the plans at the ends of the pulloffs adjacent to the transition curbing.

C-4.0 – Grading and Drainage Plan

12. Revise drainage plan per discussions with the DPW. The revised plan shall be subject to review and approval by DPW and the City’s independent peer reviewer prior to Planning Board action on the application.
13. Remove all contours in the street except where the existing grade is proposed to be changed.
14. Add a new pavement plan showing the limits of paving vs. milling/overlay. Include note that all areas of utility and drainage work shall be milled/overlayed.

C-6.0 – Utility Plan

15. Revise proposed 8” sewer connection between PSMH6 and PSMH7 to be PVC (not AC) and adjust PSMH6 so that there is a minimum 3’ separation between the sewer line and the gas line.
16. Final Utility plans shall be approved by DPW prior to Planning Board action on the application.

C-8.0 – Details

17. In the Raised Crossing detail (G), change the painted white borders to flush granite borders.

C-8.3 – Details

18. Consider reducing the overall fence height (needs to be at least 42” above the service drive) and replacing with a more crashworthy design.

C-8.6 – Details

19. Add a plan view of the Deer Street & Russell Street Paver Crosswalk (detail C).

A-1.2 – Average Grade Plan Analysis

20. Add a note stating average building height per the Zoning Ordinance.

A-1.3 – A.1.4

21. Show actual height from sidewalk grade to the cornice line indicating height as perceived by pedestrians to assist Planning Board in making its report to Historic District Commission relative to the conditional use permit for building height.
22. Label the street names and add a key plan showing the location of each section.

A-1.5

23. Provide additional views as necessary to show all sides of the project.
24. Modify the illustration (by color banding or other method) to indicate the height at 45 feet above average grade and at 5-foot intervals up to 60 feet to assist the Planning Board and the HDC in understanding the proposed conditional use permit.

B. Additional Information To Be Provided for Review by the City

Parking

1. The applicant shall provide further detail regarding off-site parking provisions for major events, including locations where off-site parking will be provided, shuttling methods for employees, and agreements or commitments demonstrating the long-term availability of the sites.
2. The applicant shall provide documentation regarding the parking easements on the site benefitting the Sheraton hotel and the Deer Street condominiums.

Traffic

3. The applicant shall provide a traffic signal design plan for the intersection of Maplewood Avenue and Deer Street and coordination timing plan for the Maplewood Avenue system for DPW review and approval prior to construction.
4. The applicant shall provide a plan for communicating recommended routes for delivery vehicles and patrons to access the site, emphasizing access via Market Street rather than Maplewood Avenue.
5. The applicant shall be responsible for a post-occupancy analysis of traffic, intersections, and traffic signal operations, to be conducted after one year of full operations including, at a minimum, each of the signalized intersections on Maplewood and the unsignalized intersection at Deer St and Russell St.
6. The applicant shall provide more detail about the types of facilities being proposed for the long-term enclosed bicycle parking in the parking garage as well as an explanation of the intended users and how those areas will be managed as part of the overall traffic demand management program for this project.

Other

- 7. The applicant shall provide a narrative describing how snow removal will be accomplished in the service road area.
- 8. All land and easement transfers shall happen prior to the issuance of a building permit.

C. Recording of Plans

The following plans shall be recorded at the Registry of Deeds by the City or as determined appropriate by the Planning Department:

- 1. Sheet C-2.3 – Land Transfer and Easement Plan
- 2. Sheet C-2.4 – Lot Consolidation Plan
- 3. Sheet C-3.0 – Site Layout Plan
- 4. Sheet L1.0 – Landscape Plan

D. Off-Site Traffic Mitigation

- 1. The applicant shall make a \$50,000 fair share contribution to the Russell St / Market St intersection off-site improvements as stated in the applicant’s letter “Response to TEC Traffic & Parking Engineering Peer Review Comments” dated February 17, 2015 in addition to the required land transfer / easements as shown on the site plan.
- 2. The applicant shall make a \$25,000 fair share contribution for future improvements at the Maplewood Ave railroad crossing to be done by the City and PanAm as stated in the applicant’s letter “Response to TEC Traffic & Parking Engineering Peer Review Comments” dated February 17, 2015.

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III. ADJOURNMENT was had at approximately 4:00pm, was seconded and passed unanimously.

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Respectfully submitted,

Toni McLellan
 Acting Secretary for the Technical Advisory Committee