

WALPOLE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 17, 2022

A regular meeting of the Walpole Planning Board was held on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Main Meeting Room. The following members were present: John Conroy, Chair; John O'Leary, Vice Chair; Philip Czachorowski, Sarah Khatib, and Carl Balduf, Town Engineer (7:45 p.m.).

Mr. Conroy opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Minutes: Ms. Khatib moved to accept the minutes of February 3, 2022. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 4-0-0.

Roscommon Subdivision Bond: The applicant was represented by Atty. Chris Timson, Norwood, MA. He questioned the 25% amount being withheld on his bond reduction and Mr. Conroy explained it. Mr. Timson stated that the statute allows room for inflation and Mr. Conroy disagreed. Mr. Timson stated the paddock on GiGi's Way is not part of the bond and Mr. Conroy stated it is part of the bond. Mr. O'Leary stated the 25% retainage is addressed within our fee schedule found in the Table of Contents of our Rules and Regulations. Mr. Czachorowski stated it is different from Section 12.4 and feels this should be fixed. Ms. Khatib suggested we ask town counsel about the difference in our fee schedule and rules. Mr. Conroy agreed.

Mr. Conroy moved to forward Mr. Timson's letter to town counsel, along with our fee schedule and both the Definitive and Open Space decisions. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 4-0-0.

7:20 p.m. High Plain Street Holdings, 173 High Plain Street, Case No. 22-01 Site Plain Approval:

Mr. Conroy read the public hearing notice. The applicant was represented by Dan Merrikin, Legacy Engineering, Millis, MA.

Mr. Merrikin stated the property is zoned business and the applicant is proposing to build commercial on the first floor and ten apartments in total on the second and third floors. All parking will be in the rear of the building and shall be consistent with the Zoning Bylaw. The property will be landscaped, the dumpster will be in the corner and there will be a loading space. They will be connected to town sewer and water on High Plain Street and they did provide a utility plan. Mr. Merrikin stated there will be two 12' poles for the lighting. They will also be adding another commercial entrance per request of the Building Commissioner.

Mr. Conroy read comments from the Fire Department, Board of Health, Sewer and Water, Engineering, Police Department, and Pat Deschenes. Mr. Conroy asked that Mr. Merrikin resolve the issues presented by the Police Department, get an approval from the Board of Health and get the necessary information to the Fire Department. Mr. Conroy noted that they are also before the Zoning Board for a special permit. Mr. Merrikin stated he will talk with Carl Balduf, town engineer and also the neighbor to the south of the property regarding fencing as they will either replace the fence or do whatever the neighbor wants as this is not the applicant's fence.

Mr. O'Leary questioned the Traffic Impact Assessment, Sheet 3 in the plan set. He stated there are no dimensions for the rounding at the intersection. Mr. Merrikin stated he will add that to the plan. Mr. O'Leary also asked that the sight distance turning from Washington Street toward Route 1 be checked and Mr. Merrikin agreed. Mr. O'Leary questioned the speed limit on this road.

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Mr. Balduf arrived at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Czachorowski questioned the architectural plans and stated the name shown on them is Boston Fire Department which is incorrect. Mr. Merrikin stated he will make that correction. Mr. Czachorowski asked that the square footage be added to the plan and questioned a dumpster for recyclables, a snow removal plan, a second entrance to the building and landscaping in the parking area.

Ms. Khatib asked for an update on the Zoning Board hearing. Mr. Merrikin stated the neighbors questioned the traffic and wanted more detailed information. Ms. Khatib asked if the Zoning Board questioned the sight distance and Mr. Merrikin stated he will check on that and add it to the DIS. Ms. Khatib questioned the comments from the Fire Department. Mr. Merrikin stated the building will be sprinklered and he will discuss their other comments with them. Ms. Khatib questioned the location of the handicap spaces and also the architectural drawings. Mr. Merrikin showed the board a rendering of what is being proposed. Mr. Conroy asked when they are meeting with the Zoning Board again and Mr. Merrikin responded two weeks. Mr. Conroy stated they need ZBA approval before Planning Board and Mr. Merrikin agreed.

M. Conroy stated the decks shown on the plan need to meet zoning and will have to be counted as part of the residential space. Mr. Merrikin stated he will check that out with the Building Department. Mr. Conroy asked if the dimensions meet the setbacks and do they have any leeway. Mr. Merrikin stated that if the decks are in the setback area, he will tweak them.

Mr. Conroy asked for public comments.

Marjorie Ouellette, 7 Victoria Circle questioned the number of businesses that will be there as she thought it was previously stated there would be five businesses and ten apartments, but tonight Mr. Merrikin said there would be two businesses and ten apartments. Mr. Merrikin stated they have to put businesses there, although they would really like to only do the apartments. Mr. Conroy stated the money is in the upstairs in the apartments, not downstairs in the business portion. This is like spot zoning. Across the street was originally zoned business. Mr. Merrikin stated the zone was changed back in the 1990's. Ms. Ouellette stated their biggest concern is the business part. They would prefer just apartments. She also questioned the parking and the traffic. Mr. Merrikin addressed her concerns.

Ms. Giampietro, 3 Holland Way read a letter on behalf of a neighbor, Bridget _____, Lorraine Road, that couldn't attend tonight's meeting. She stated there is increased traffic and no crossing guard so the kids have to rely on traffic lights. Ms. Giampietro feels more people should be made aware of the traffic issues and asks that the board investigate this situation further. Mr. Conroy stated that a school entrance was added on East Street so traffic will remain the way it is now even with a new school. Ms. Giampietro questioned possible "for rent" signs on the new building. Mr. Conroy stated the building shouldn't look like a commercial enterprise.

Eduardo Lazri, 184 High Plain Street, stated nothing in the area is more than two floors. His daughters take the bus and he questioned 31 more cars here. He feels this will create a bigger problem at the end of the day. There used to be only two people that lived here and now there will be 31 more cars. He stated these guys should not be allowed to do this. There should only be two houses built here. He questioned safety, pollution, snow space, garbage pickup, 31 cars, UPS trucks and kids walking by.

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He asked how can you have a business when everyone else is residential or have three floors when no one else does. Mr. Conroy stated this is an allowed use. Mr. Calvey stated they are looking for special permission so just say no. Mr. Conroy stated the special permits are granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. He explained the process and stated this is allowed by right. Mr. Calvey asked whose right? Mr. Conroy stated that you live on Route 27 and there is a lot of traffic there now. We have to go by the rules. This property is zoned Commercial. Mr. Conroy stated his realtor should have disclosed to him about the zoning being different for this property.

Ms. Giampietro asked if this will be an affordable housing project and Mr. Merrikin stated there may be one affordable housing unit.

Mr. Conroy moved to accept an extension of time up to and including March 31, 2022. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 4-0-0. Mr. Conroy continued this hearing to March 17, 2022 at 7:15 p.m.

Dan Aluigi, 8 Holland Way stated he is the fence owner in the back and asked whether or not a two-family could be built here. He is also concerned with the traffic and safety. He stated there is a cop in the area between 7:30-9:00 a.m. every morning. Mr. Conroy stated that houses cannot be built on this site as it is zoned business.

8:36 p.m. Ironwood, 455 South Street, Case No. 21-07 Continued Hearing: The applicant is represented by Atty. Philip Macchi, 1256 Washington Street, Norwood. He stated that the firetrucks can completely turnaround now and they also have added a fire hydrant about 500' up the road as requested. Mr. Balduf stated he would like the insurance form adjusted with the solar submission. He stated we also need a revised estimate.

Mr. Macchi stated they will continue this hearing tonight if Mr. Balduf adding his requested changes as conditions of approval. He stated the plan is stamped, but not by a MA engineer or land surveyor. This is also an existing land court lot. Mr. Conroy stated we need to hear from the fire chief and also an updated insurance form needs to be submitted. Mr. Macchi stated he is not sure he can get a revised insurance as this is listed in the coverage sheet. Mr. Balduf stated he will accept a letter or an email and Mr. Conroy agreed with that.

Gregory Dixon, engineer, explained the site and the grading. Mr. Czachorowski asked how long this project will take and Mr. Dixon stated he is not sure. Ms. Khatib asked for the legal description, WRPOD 3 area, nature of the project, locus plan, zoning, plan set for site plan, and owner/applicant be added to the cover sheet. Mr. Macchi stated he will make sure everything is there. Ms. Khatib questioned the chemicals on site and Mr. Macchi stated nothing will be stored on site. Ms. Khatib asked the dimensions of the array around the fence and Mr. Dixon stated it has to be 10' which it is. Ms. Khatib questioned an update from Eversource. Mr. Macchi stated they were supposed to have something from Eversource two weeks ago, but they are still waiting. Mr. Conroy stated we will need the information by next Friday. He stated we will need a letter from the insurance company, revised plans, Eversource plan and something from Deputy Chief, Paul Barry before the next meeting.

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Mr. Conroy moved to accept an extension of time on which to take action up to and including March 31, 2022. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 4-0-0. Mr. Conroy continued this meeting to March 3, 2022 at 7:20 p.m.

9:07 p.m. Dry-Ex, 2220 Boston Providence Highway Site Plan, Case No. 21-11 and Special Permit, Case No. 21-12: Mr. Conroy stated there are only four board members present tonight. Atty. Macchi was representing the applicant and stated they will proceed at risk. Mr. Conroy read the public hearing notices.

Mr. Macchi stated there will not be a lot of storage or a lot of trucks on site. Also, there is no hazardous waste on site. This use is an upgrade from a lot of the buildings in the area. There is no residential buffer needed. He stated there will be less noise generated as there will be an office building and pavement on three sides. There are no sight views to preserve in this area. There will be two access points, Route 1 and Hilltop Drive. They will update the plan when they hear from MA Dot. Atty. Macchi stated that 17 parking spaces are required and 17 are provided. Dry-Ex is not a customer-oriented business. This will be a corporate office. There will be no intention in the future to ask for the storage of hazardous materials. There will be no storage of anything or any materials that leak. They will never generate more than 15,000 gallons of toxic waste. Stormwater Management will be treated properly and directed back into the ground.

Steven Cabral, Crossman Engineering stated Sheet C-4 shows the existing conditions. Further, there is public water on Route 1, but no public sewer in this section. Soils are good and the water table is 10' deep. They did a traffic study in August of 2020 during morning and evening peak times. He stated the septic flow will be comparable to a four or five-bedroom house.

Mr. Conroy read comments received. Mr. Macchi stated they have applied for a septic permit and they have to go before the Board of Health. Mr. Balduf read his comments.

Ms. Khatib feels this is a good plan, but would like the site plan information added to the cover sheet. Further, any new tenant would need to come before us. She asked if the board could reduce the pavement and amount of parking because this is a small scale business. She questioned if they need all that pavement. Atty. Macchi stated he thinks when they hear from the Fire Department the answer will be yes. Ms. Khatib asked if the 22 employees will be on site all at once and Atty. Macchi stated no they won't. Ms. Khatib would encourage them to reduce the number of spaces. She also asked that the free-standing sign be located on the site plan. Mr. Cabral It will be a ground-mounted free-standing sign but it is not designed yet. He will get the board a copy of it as soon as it is done. Mr. Czachorowski also supports reducing the amount of impervious cover. He questioned the address of the building. Mr. Macchi stated he would like it to be Route 1, but that is not where the frontage is. Mr. O'Leary feels there is a conflict between the snow storage and the line of trees on the plan. Mr. Cabral will check that. Mr. O'Leary questioned the open storage and asked how it will be accessed. Mr. Macchi stated by stairs. Mr. O'Leary stated it looks like the bays are set up to go in on one side and out the other side. He asked how many bays. Mr. Cabral stated that is the plan and there will be five bays. Mr. O'Leary asked if the basement will be used for storage and Mr. Cabral stated yes. Mr. O'Leary asked if there is any thought to eliminate the entrance on Route 1 and Mr. Macchi stated they are discussing that with MA Dot now. Mr. Cabral stated that some employees would drive by the site if they did that.

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Mr. Macchi stated it could also be a fire department issue. Mr. O'Leary questioned Hilltop Drive being private. Mr. Macchi thinks they have derelict access to the middle of the street. Mr. Conroy asked for a list of storage stuff. He asked if there is enough frontage on Route 1 and Mr. Macchi stated no. Mr. Conroy asked what is going to be put in the cellar and Mr. Macchi responded just storage.

Mr. Conroy moved to accept an extension of time up to and including March 31, 2022 for both the special permit and the site plan applications. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 4-0-0. Mr. Conroy continued this hearing to March 17, 2022 at 7:10 p.m. and 7:11 p.m.

Master Plan Update: Mr. Czachorowski stated the next meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday at which time there will be discussion on vision and goals. They will also start planning for the next forum.

Hybrid Meetings: Ms. Khatib stated she is still waiting for some input and will forward a full report to the board upon receipt.

Planning Board discussion procedures: It was agreed there will be a web demo done at the next meeting. Ms. Khatib feels we need clear guidelines. Mr. Conroy feels it would be easier to hold the meeting in the Inspection office. It was agreed to hold the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Czachorowski will confirm that with both James Crowley and Pat Deschenes and also the location of the meeting.

Mr. Czachorowski moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Mr. Conroy and voted 4-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John O'Leary, Vice Chair

Accepted 3/3/22