

WALPOLE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES OF OCTOBER 19, 2023

A regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, October 19, 2023 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; Catherine Abate, Clerk; Philip Czachorowski, Paul Smith and Carl Balduf, Town Engineer.

Mr. Conroy opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Minutes: Mr. Conroy moved to accept the minutes of September 21, 2023. Motion seconded by Ms. Abate and voted 5-0-0.

Mr. Conroy moved to accept the minutes of October 5, 2023 with the changes put forth by Mr. Czachorowski. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 5-0-0.

7:05 Kearsarge, North Street, Case No. 23-04 Continued Hearing: Mr. Conroy moved to accept an extension of time up to and including November 30, 2023 as requested by Rob Bukowski, Weston & Sampson. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 5-0-0. Mr. Conroy continued this hearing without testimony to November 2, 2023 at 7:05 p.m. as requested by Mr. Bukowski in order to receive input from the Fire Department.

Master Plan Update: Mr. Czachorowski stated did remove Sarah Khatib’s name from the cover of the Master Plan and added Paul Smith. Mr. Czachorowski does have a copy of this but it is on a dropbox.

Mr. Czachorowski moved that given the response received from Judi Barrett the board accept her invitation to meet on December 7, 2023 via Zoom. Mr. Czachorowski’s motion did not have a second. Mr. Smith stated Ms. Barrett hasn’t even acknowledged the January meeting we asked for.

Mr. Czachorowski moved that the Planning Board accept the terms of Judi Barrett’s letter dated October 15, 2023 and further we will meet with her on December 7, 2023 via Zoom. Ms. Abate stated Ms. Barrett signed a contract with us and is now putting someone else she signed a contract with ahead of us in her schedule. We were definitely put on the back burner. She doesn’t think we are asking for a lot by asking her to come to one meeting. Mr. Smith agrees with Ms. Abate and feels she owes this to the town appear before us. Mr. Conroy stated Ms. Barrett needs to be here for the public hearing as she has put this all together.

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Ms. Abate stated there is a motion on the floor with no second. Mr. Czachorowski asked for a second and there was none.

7:20 p.m. The League School, Moose Hill Road, Case No. 23-07: Mr. Conroy read the public hearing notice. The applicant was represented by Atty. Nadine Bailey, Macchi & Macchi, Norwood, MA. Atty. Bailey stated the project team is as follows: Larry Sawyer, CEO of the League School; Atty. Craig Ciechanowski; Joe Piccarilli, High Point Engineering, Dedham, MA; Shawn Kelly, Traffic Engineer, Chappel Engineering, Marlboro, MA.

Mr. Conroy asked if this project falls under the Dover Act and the applicant's attorney stated yes. It was agreed that the school is before the board in an effort to be a good neighbor.

Atty. Bailey submitted a hand out to the Board. She stated that the locus for this project is completely within the Residence A district but not the WRPOD. Ms. Bailey discussed the present use, the proposed construction, also the required, existing and proposed zoning criteria.

Joe Piccarilli, High Point Engineering explained the proposed buildings as shown on the site plan, along with the traffic report and landscape plan, which showed the variety of flowers and evergreens which will be planted in accordance with the four seasons.

Mr. Conroy read comment letters from the Board of Health, Sewer and Water, Walpole Fire Department and Mr. Balduf reviewed the Engineering comments dated October 18, 2023. Mr. Balduf stated that the fire hydrants are listed under the general comments and Mr. Piccarilli stated he will correct that. Mr. Balduf stated he did provide comments to the Conservation Commission under the Land Disturbance permit which are included in his comments to the Planning Board. Mr. Conroy asked if there are any wetlands on this site and Mr. Balduf stated no.

Mr. Balduf recommended moving the placement of the generator as he felt it is too close to the neighbors. Mr. Piccarilli stated they would like it to remain as shown on the plan because moving it will interfere with some of the functions of the school. It is basically in a hole as shown and they would be willing to add an additional barrier. Mr. Conroy suggested they talk to the neighbors and asked that they let us know what is agreed to.

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Mr. Smith asked to hear about the traffic study. Shawn Kelly, Chappell Engineering stated they went to the site and did a traffic study. Most of the traffic will be coming and going from Route 1 and the proposed driveway. They will also provide signage for crossings between the buildings. Mr. Smith asked how far the driveway is from Route 1 and Mr. Kelly stated about 400'. Mr. Smith asked if there are any restrictions on Moose Hill Road and Mr. Conroy stated no. Ms. Abate stated there are only two areas shown on the plans for snow storage. Mr. Piccarilli stated they will work with Mr. Balduf on this. Ms. Abate asked how many students and how much staff. Mr. Piccarilli stated there will be fifty of each. Ms. Abate asked how do they get to the school and Mr. Sawyer stated they will transport 1-3 people in minivans. Ms. Abate asked if the Rec Court will be paved and Mr. Piccarilli stated yes. Ms. Abate questioned the bollards in front of the dumpsters and Mr. Piccarilli stated they are being placed on the sides. Ms. Abate asked if the Café will be open to the public and Mr. Sawyer stated yes. Ms. Abate asked how much traffic will that generate and Mr. Sawyer stated minimal. Mr. Czachorowski feels this is a good project, and asks that the cover page be corrected. He also questioned the solar canopy and asked if that will make a difference in the landscaping. Mr. Piccarilli explained it. Mr. Czachorowski asked for "do not enter" signs and also school signage. Mr. Piccarilli stated there will be an entrance sign similar to what is there now. Mr. Czachorowski questioned the snow removal also and the dumpster and asked if there will be a recycle dumpster and Mr. Piccarilli stated yes. Mr. Czachorowski stated he would like a push button caution light and questioned the electrical lines. Mr. Piccarilli stated everything will be underground and they are going to relocate a utility pole. Mr. O'Leary asked if the paved Rec Court will have lighting and Mr. Piccarilli stated no as it will only be used during the day. Mr. O'Leary asked if the walkway would be covered and Mr. Piccarilli stated yes. Mr. O'Leary stated he visited the site this afternoon and found there was good sight distance and not much traffic. He questioned a berm. Mr. Piccarilli stated there will be one, but they are working right now with the abutters. Mr. O'Leary asked how many handicap spaces there will be and Mr. Piccarilli stated three. Mr. O'Leary questioned the maintenance plan and asked if there will be training in the maintenance building and Mr. Piccarilli stated no. Mr. O'Leary asked how many bays will be in the building and Mr. Piccarilli stated three. He asked if there will be an issue with chemicals on site and Mr. Piccarilli stated no. Mr. Conroy stated there have never been any issues with the first

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school. He asked if any overflow would go onto the road and Mr. Balduf stated no as this is designed for the 100 year storm, and he knows it will hold more than that. He has no issues with it.

Mr. Conroy questioned the café hours and Mr. Sawyer stated it will be 7:00 am to 2:00 pm. Mr. Conroy suggested there be signage to designate parking spaces for people going to the café. Mr. Sawyer stated they have discussed that. Mr. Conroy asked if there will be Café weekend hours and Mr. Sawyer stated no. The purpose of the Café is to train the kids. Mr. Conroy asked if there should be something at the end of the sidewalk near the crosswalk, such as a tree, planting or a barrier or whatever you want to put there to show it ends so this doesn't become a pathway to Route 1. Mr. Balduf stated every sidewalk needs an entrance even if it doesn't go anywhere. Mr. O'Leary asked if the pathways are paved or gravel and Mr. Piccarilli stated they will be concrete and asphalt in the back.

Mr. Conroy asked for public comments.

Damian Bialonczyk, 254 Moose Hill Road stated he lives across from the proposed building and he is concerned that they underestimated the traffic impact. He feels it should enter and exit through Route 1 and urges the board to consider that as an alternative approach. He is also concerned with the blending of the school with the neighborhood. He feels this will have a negative impact on his property as he will be facing a new large structure rather than the trees that are there now. He would like the school to consider some additional privacy for him. Mr. Conroy asked if the angle can be pushed more and Mr. Piccarilli stated he will look at it. Mr. Conroy asked if the vehicles will be mostly vans and will they be parking on site and Mr. Piccarilli stated yes to both questions and there will be parking on both sites. Mr. Conroy asked if they control the vans and Mr. Piccarilli stated yes, 100%. Mr. Conroy stated he is not sure the vans can turn from Route 1 into the school.

Mr. Piccarilli stated there will be vegetation similar to what is there now. Mr. Conroy urged the applicant to meet with the neighbors.

Angela Ward, 237 Moose Hill Road stated she appreciated talking to the applicant, but is still concerned about the generator. She would like the noise minimized if it is going to stay where it is shown to be on the plan. She also feels more greenery is needed as she can see the parking lot now.

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Ms. Bailey stated the lights will not shine onto the neighboring properties. Mr. Piccarilli explained the placement of the generator and stated it could be 5-6' high. Mr. Conroy questioned the decibels and Mr. Piccarilli stated he doesn't know, but will look into that. He stated it is an emergency diesel generator, which will not run all the time or at 2:00 a.m., but probably 20 minutes per week at the same time. The entire building will be electric to run the lights and heat.

John DiCalogero, Dorset Lane asked what will be between his house and the school. They have never had a problem, but would like to make sure there is some type of fence and tree line between the two properties. They don't want this area to turn into another Walmart. He would like a meeting between the neighbors and the school. Mr. Piccarilli showed Mr. DiCalogero the plans showing what they are proposing. Mr. Sawyer stated they will do whatever possible to minimize any impact on the neighbors and is willing to meet with them.

Marie DeCalogero, Dorset Lane questioned the expansion and asked if there will be a recreational building. Mr. Sawyer responded maybe years from now, but not now. Mr. Conroy stated if they do that they will have to come back again.

Atty. Bailey granted the board an extension of time up through and including December 31, 2023. Mr. Conroy moved to accept an extension of time up to and including December 31, 2023. Motion seconded by Mr. Czachorowski and voted 5-0-0. Mr. Conroy continued this hearing to December 7, 2023 at 7:10 p.m.

Garden Path Estates bond: this will be added to the November 2, 2023 agenda as the bond has not been reviewed by the town's Finance Department yet.

Ms. Abate moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Mr. Conroy and voted 5-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Turco-Abate, Clerk

Accepted 11/2/23

