

NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

September 27, 2016

The regular meeting of the Planning Board held in the Charles River Room, Public Services Administration Building, was called to order by Elizabeth Grimes, Chairman, on Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. with Messrs. Alpert and Owens and Ms. McKnight, as well as Planning Director, Ms. Newman and Assistant Planner, Ms. Clee.

Correspondence

Ms. Grimes noted the following correspondence for the record: a zoning notice from the Dedham Planning Board. Ms. Newman noted the Dedham Planning Board has actually drafted an article in anticipation of a vote in November on the legalization of marijuana. She stated she will follow up with Dedham to get more information.

Public Hearing:

7:00 p.m. – Amendment to Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2008-09: Town of Needham, 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property is located at 484 and 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham, MA).

Kelly Carr, Landscape Architect for BETA Group, reviewed the plan of the trail. She noted the site is 17 acres with an existing trail. She stated there are 3 goals of the project: to get access to all people, to get people to the water's edge and to enhance nature. The existing trail will be used wherever possible. The applicant wants to bring it closer to take it away from the golf course. She noted there will be pervious crushed stone, boardwalks through the wetlands, a small bridge and 2 fishing piers.

Ms. McKnight stated she is glad the applicant is doing the handicap accessible project. She asked where people will park to get on the trail. Ms. Carr stated there will be one handicap spot next to the trail and a paved ramp up to the trail. It will be fully accessible. She stated the existing parking lot has 50 spaces and 3 accessible spaces. The project will add 5 new spaces and one new accessible space. Four spaces will be for the trail itself. There will be 2 handicap spaces, at the entrance to the trail and 2 at the entrance to the Public Services Building, across from each other. The new spaces will go on the other end of the lot.

Ms. Carr stated the applicant is asking for an amendment to the decision for the original permit for the building. The project was originally granted 24 spaces less than required and are now adding 6 spaces. She reviewed the waivers being requested. She noted the project is not changing anything but adding parking at the end. Ms. McKnight stated people like the preservation of the wooded area at the corner. She asked to what extent will trees be removed to create the new spaces. Ms. Carr stated 3 pine trees will be removed. One is dead. Those trees will be replaced with 5 trees.

Mr. Owens asked why the project is adding 6 spaces. Ms. Carr stated she spoke with the project managers and the DPW and went through the IT manual looking for specifications for weekend spaces. She also checked the Mass General Laws. She wanted to allow for use during the week days when the lot is full. Mr. Owens asked if the project is cutting into the hillside for the new spaces. Ms. Carr stated there will be a little bit of cutting but there is a drainage issue that will be fixed. Mr. Owens stated there are puddles in the lot now. The lot does not drain anywhere. He asked what Engineering said about the storm water and their plans to improve it. He commented it seems the problem will be worse. What can the project do with the drainage?

Ms. Carr stated she went through the October 2008 Storm Water and Capacity report on this building. All water drains into a deep sump catch basin and overflow goes to a swale. It is oversized and can handle the amount of water that is being added to it. She stated she was not aware of the slope and puddling. Mr. Owens asked what the grade is currently. Ms. Carr noted it is about 1% but it varies a bit. Mr. Owens stated the Town Engineer is

concerned with storm water. He asked if there is a letter from the Town Engineer. Ms. Newman stated the Town Engineer has been involved with this and feels this project will address the ponding. Engineering has reviewed the drawings and are satisfied it will resolve the problems. Mr. Owens stated it appears this project will correct a few issues and was informed that is correct. Mr. Owens asked if the applicant considered putting the 6 spaces at the other end of the lot. Matt Varrell, Director of the Conservation Commission, stated additional parking would not be allowed in the grass area near the brook.

Ms. Grimes stated she sees what the applicant is doing adding spots but the spaces will be taken up with people coming into the building. She asked if the spaces will be labeled for use of the Reservoir only. Ms. Carr stated she feels they could do that because these spots are for that use. The trails will be labeled. She noted the project includes restriping some of the spots. Ms. McKnight asked if there is any state grant. Mr. Varrell stated grants were applied for but they did not get any. He noted they may apply again.

Ms. Grimes asked why the project is not doing all the new spaces at once. Ms. Carr noted it was because of funds. The funding is for the trail although the spaces may be constructed at the same time. Mr. Varrell stated the trail project is using CPC funds and those funds cannot be used for municipal parking lots. Two of the spaces are not legitimately for the trail. Ms. Newman noted the full project was put forth so the applicants would not have to come back to build the 2 other spots for the second component.

Ms. Grimes noted the following correspondence for the record: an email from Fire Chief Dennis Condon with no issues; a letter from Police Lt. John Kraemer with no safety concerns; an email from Tara Gurge of the Health Department with no comments and an email from Assistant Town Engineer Thomas Ryder with no comments or objections.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to close the hearing.

A motion was made to amend the Special Permit under Section 7.4 to allow for the addition of six additional parking spaces to the main parking lot, the improvement of the existing trail around the Needham Reservoir to make it handicap accessible, future construction to revise and replace the existing walkway to the front entry of the Public Services Administration Building and the addition of three additional reserved parking spaces for future construction all as shown on the plans submitted. Mr. Alpert suggested adding the plan modification for signage that was discussed and a waiver of Section 5.1.3 (Parking plan and design requirements). The amendment was accepted.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to amend the Special Permit under Section 7.4 to allow for the addition of six additional parking spaces to the main parking lot, the improvement of the existing trail around the Needham Reservoir to make it handicap accessible, future construction to revise and replace the existing walkway to the front entry of the Public Services Administration Building, the addition of three additional reserved parking spaces for future construction, the plan modification for signage that was discussed and a waiver of Section 5.1.3 (Parking plan and design requirements) all as shown on the plans submitted.

7:30 p.m. – Amendment to Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2016-01: 57 Dedham Avenue LLC, 471 Hunnewell Street, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 15 & 17 Oak Street, Needham, MA).

Ms. Newman noted this hearing will be continued. Ms. McKnight commented on the drainage report. She wants to make sure the Engineering Department comments specifically on the adequacy of the drainage report. Ms. Newman stated Engineering feels the drainage report is adequate and satisfies the requirements.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to continue the hearing to 10/18/16 at 7:00 p.m.

Requested Release of Off-Street Drainage Bond: 708 South Street (Riverbend Lane) Subdivision – Lots 4, 4A and 5 (#85, #95 and #98 Riverbend Lane).

Ms. Newman noted this is the last 3 lots and the last piece of money the town is holding. This will close out the subdivision. There is a letter from the Board of Health recommending release of the bond.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to release the Off-Street drainage bond for Riverbend Lane for the full amount of \$10,500.

Plan Endorsement: 1242 South Street Definitive Subdivision: Richard S. Raisman & Lynn H. Raisman, 1242 South Street, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 1242 South Street, Needham, MA).

Ms. Newman noted the subdivision plan was ready for endorsement. The plan will go to the Selectmen for acceptance next week. She stated the applicant would like to name the street Aly Raisman Way. Ms. McKnight commented she feels that roads that will remain private, and the Planning Board has so conditioned the subdivision, the developer should be able to name the road. Public roads should be up to the Selectmen to name them. Ms. Newman stated that, technically, the Planning Board is supposed to sign off on all of them. Mr. Alpert stated he feels it is appropriate for the Planning Board to approve the names.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the name of the subdivision road at the 1242 South Street Subdivision Aly Raisman Way.

Discussion and Recommendations of Zoning Amendments for Fall November Special Town Meeting.

Ms. Newman stated the Board has voted on 2 articles already but need to vote on the third article. She has prepared recommendations for the Board to sign that will go to the Town Clerk prior to Town Meeting. She noted Article 13 is the Citizen's Petition. Ms. Grimes stated she would like to see the Article referred back to the Planning Board. Ms. McKnight agreed and commented there were some good ideas but feels it would require further study. Mr. Owens agreed.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to recommend the Article be referred back to the Planning Board and if the Article is not referred back to the Planning Board it should be rejected.

Ms. Grimes stated a volunteer is needed to present the Height Limitation Exception Article. Ms. McKnight stated she would present the article. Ms. Grimes will do the basement and a recommendation on the referral. The Board discussed different options for the referral recommendation.

Minutes

Ms. McKnight noted on the minutes of 7/7/16 the word "such" is missing on page 1.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to approve the minutes of 7/7/16 with the one change discussed.

The Board members passed in their changes for the 7/19/16 minutes.

7:30 p.m. – Amendment to Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2016-01: 57 Dedham Ave. LLC, 471 Hunnewell Street, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 15 & 17 Oak Street, Needham, MA).

Ms. Newman noted there is a bond from the restaurant to cover the wood enclosure around the dumpster. Between the time the Board approved the plan and now someone put up a chain link enclosure. It needs to be a wood enclosure as that is what the Board approved. She does not know what happened between the parties. The parties are working it out and will put the correct enclosure in. The Board signed the bond agreement.

Appointment

8:00 p.m. – Discussion: Rosemary Recreation Complex.

Ms. McKnight made the disclosure that she is an abutter to an abutter within 500 feet of the Rosemary Recreation Complex project. She feels she should recuse herself from this discussion. Mr. Alpert stated he has been in the same situation and noted it is a personal decision. She could recuse herself or she could decide if she does not have personal concerns as an abutter and sit in the hearing now that she has made her disclosure. Ms. McKnight decided she could be impartial and will sit in on the discussion.

Steven Popper, representative for the applicant, stated the purpose was to come to the Board before the presentation and get any concerns the Board may have. Joel Bargmann, or Bargmann Hendrie & Archetype, Inc., introduced the project and discussed the waivers that will be requested. He noted the site encompasses all of Rosemary Lake and the existing pool. He described the site and current conditions.

Ms. McKnight noted there is a hedge all around Rosemary Street and she was concerned with the visibility of vehicles. Mr. Bargmann stated the existing parking lots are undefined gravels lots with no drainage. There is no setback on the new parking lot as it is going in the same spot as the current. The new project is going in the existing footprints of the pool and bath house. The existing pool is 20,000 square feet. The new pool has a footprint of 12,600 square feet. The bath house will be a little larger than the existing.

Mr. Bargmann stated the upper level parking lot will have a guard rail, underground retention basin for storm water and connects to the sewer system. There are 2 existing driveways that come down the hill and both are steep. With the new plan the driveway will be moving down Rosemary Street and some of the incline will be removed. The bath house will have a second floor that will be used year round. There are 2 overflow basins and a backup system is being built now. The site slopes down to Rosemary Lake and the project is repairing and enhancing the existing system.

Mr. Bargmann noted there are 67 parking spaces in the 2 lots. The project will have 97 total spaces on the 2 lots. The size of the pool is decreasing and the number of patrons will decrease with the size of the pool. There will be ramps for handicap accessibility, terraces and steps. He noted there will be a fair number of trees lost to make the code compliance. All is accessible so it will be the same path for everyone. He noted 10 months per year the pool is closed. It is open an average of 2 months and 6 days a year. All year the offices on the second floor will be open. The project assumes 17 cars for the offices.

Mr. Bargmann stated there is a multi-purpose room in the building that has 165 seats at maximum capacity. They will need 67 parking spaces for the 10 months when the pool is closed. There is no parking requirement in the codes for pools. He noted at peak there will be 21 employees. There are a lot of drop offs for the pool and a lot of bikes and walkers. He estimates 304 users. The peak usage of the pool is on the nights of swim meets. That is about 6 nights for 2 hours. He stated the pool may have 113 cars. Visiting teams come in school buses. The Memorial Field parking lot will be used for overflow parking on swim meet nights and will be used for staff parking. He stated they would like feedback from the Board.

Ms. Grimes asked how many spots are they requesting for the waiver. Mr. Bargmann stated the project needs 181 spaces and there are 97. The other issue is the one foot candle artificial light. The foot candles on the road light the sidewalk. All on the sidewalk are zero and at the driveway it is a 2 foot candle for more light. There is a 1.96 candle average proposed for the parking lot. He noted it is a remote site and a little bit down the hill from Rosemary Street. The lighting engineer feels a little more light is better. The upper lot has average 2.64 candles. The project is rebuilding and reforesting around the retention area. They would like a waiver from trees in the parking lot and noted they will lose 9 parking spaces if trees are required. There is also a waiver request for interior landscape.

Mr. Popper stated Town Meeting gave permission to go ahead. The applicant is trying to utilize the space there. They have worked at it for quite a while with the results that have been presented. He would appreciate any commentary the Board has before the applicant submits it.

Ms. McKnight noted the proposed swimming pool is part of the larger parcel and she is glad it is being presented all as one. She stated she walks around the pond frequently. There are easements for drainage and pedestrians may not really have a right to walk on them. She hopes as part of the research the easements could be established. She would be willing to help as a retired attorney. Mr. Popper stated there is a separate initiative that deals with the trail system. That is different from the pool complex to be permitted.

Michael Retzky, Project Manager for Public Facilities, stated he read the title report today around 5:00 p.m. There is only one parcel around the lake that Town Counsel had a question on. Ms. McKnight stated she would like the easement depicted on the plan. Ms. Newman noted all easements will be shown on the property as part of the filing.

Ms. McKnight stated she would like to see the easements that not only burden but benefit this parcel. Patty Carey, Director of Park and Recreation, stated one across the lake is not a public use easement. Ms. McKnight commented Rosemary Street and Hillside Avenue have a very dangerous corner. Cars come around the corner at a tremendous rate of speed and cannot see because of the hedge all around the corner. Mr. Owens stated he did not know there was a hedge on the lake side. Ms. Carey noted there is not a hedge but a fence and some growth.

Ms. McKnight stated, for the sake of visibility, she would like the growth to come down. She noted the fence does not enhance the area at all. Mr. Bargmann stated that by law there can only be a picket or chain link fence around a pool. This project will have a black chain link fence. Ms. McKnight asked if the small lot further around the lake is available for overflow parking to meet the needs. Mr. Popper stated it is equidistant from there or Memorial Field. He noted the cost to bring that lot up to code would be prohibitive.

Ms. McKnight stated a pedestrian activated crosswalk at Hillside and Rosemary may slow people down for safety and would be helpful. She would like a sidewalk all around on the pool side of the street. Mr. Alpert stated Ms. McKnight is getting far away from the pool area. CPC funds will be used. He noted Ms. McKnight has some great ideas but they are beyond the scope of this project and beyond the scope of the funds. He would like to get back to parking. Ms. McKnight noted there are 2 trees proposed in the center of the parking lot. Mr. Popper noted there are actually 3 trees.

Mr. Alpert noted the analysis on page 4 with 97 parking spots. He asked how many patrons does the pool get now at peak season. Ms. Carey stated it shifts during the day. There are lessons in the morning and the pool could have 250 spread out noon to closing. The usual stay is 2 hours and a lot of people walk. Mr. Owens stated he would like to give some informal feedback. All 3 issues seem a significant improvement over what they currently have. He feels it is a step in the right direction. All 3 will be enhancements and it will enhance the whole area. He noted moving the driveway down the hill away from the tracks enhances the site distance. He feels it is all directionally correct. Ms. McKnight stated the project is moving the driveway closer to the dangerous curve and takes away from that. Mr. Owens disagreed. He feels it will be much safer.

Ms. McKnight noted the rising sun is also an issue in the morning going up the hill. Ms. Grimes stated the lighting at a higher volume is a good idea. Ms. McKnight noted the people who live near the pond may have an issue with the lights. Mr. Bargmann clarified the lights will not be on all night.

Permit Streamlining

Mr. Owens stated the CEA has been working on streamlining the process for a long time. They are making suggestions for their consideration to make it easier and more predictable so people can have a better idea of what to expect. A lot is the Planning Board policies and procedures.

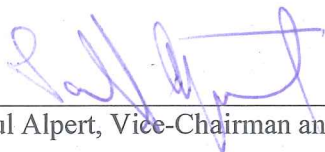
Report from Planning Director and Board members.

Ms. Newman noted she is getting most of the information by electronic filing now. She will start posting everything on line.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker



Paul Alpert, Vice-Chairman and Clerk