

NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

September 3, 2019

The regular meeting of the Planning Board held in the Charles River Room, Public Services Administration Building, was called to order by Martin Jacobs, Chairman, on Tuesday, September 3, 2019, at 7:08 p.m. with Mr. Owens and Mmes. McKnight and Grimes, as well as Planning Director, Ms. Newman, Assistant Planner, Ms. Clee and Recording Secretary, Ms. Kalinowski. Mr. Alpert arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Mr. Jacobs announced the Rockwood hearing scheduled for 7:30 p.m. and the 77 Charles Street appointment scheduled for 7:35 p.m. will both be rescheduled.

Sign Agreement: Scenic Road Act: NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy, Petitioner (Property located at South Street approaching Needhamdale Avenue).

Ms. Newman stated at the last hearing the applicant showed the trees to be removed and no plan of where the replacements would be. They worked with the Tree Warden and did a plan. She has a letter from Engineering on a bond amount. She has prepared a draft agreement that conditions the removals. The applicant has proposed removal of 3 trees and replacing them with 6 trees with surety. There is one issue. The estimate from Engineering is \$4,200 for 6 trees and the price for the As-built. She does not feel an As-built is needed with 135% of trees. Mr. Jacobs noted a letter, dated 8/29/19, from Assistant Town Engineer Thomas Ryder.

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

VOTED: to approve the draft decision with the changes discussed tonight.

Mr. Alpert arrived at 7:15 p.m.

De Minimus Change: Amendment to Major Project Site Plan Review No. 2013-02: Town of Needham, 1471 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 1407 Central Avenue, Needham, MA), (Review of landscaping at median strip and new driveway opening).

Mr. Jacobs noted this is a deminimus change request for landscaping and driveway opening. Christopher Heep, representative for the town, noted there is a condition that the Town landscape the median strip in the fall of 2018 for the Cogswell Building. The applicant wants to add a new curb cut and access for the building. This was preliminarily presented at a meeting a month ago. He has the final plans now. Michael Richards, of Weston & Sampson, stated he met with the Design Review Board (DRB) and received comments. He revised the plan and received approval from the DRB. Mr. Alpert clarified that coming in from the center of town the first entrance will be for the Cogswell Building only. How does the Town plan to keep the public from the first entrance? Mr. Sampson stated signs will be posted. If people continue to go in barrels may be put there until the public gets used to it.

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

VOTED: to accept the application of deminimus change.

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

VOTED: to accept the request as presented.

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

VOTED: to accept the draft.

De Minimus Change: Amendment to Major Project Site Plan Review No. 2013-02: Town of Needham Permanent Public Building Committee, 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 1154 Highland Avenue and 92 Rosemary Street, Needham, MA).

Mr. Heep stated this is the new Memorial Park Field Building. The original decision was dated 3/8/18 and had a water bubbler surrounded by a grassy area and pavement. The applicant would like a 20 by 18 foot area with brick pavers with 2 granite benches. It is hard to establish grass in this area. He thinks this will look nice. Ms. McKnight stated it would be nice if there was some shade and asked if there were any thoughts of a tree. Ms. Grimes looked at the area. She does not think it would be feasible or aesthetically appealing. She feels it would be awkward at that location.

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

VOTED: to accept the request as a de minimus change.

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

VOTED: to accept the request as presented.

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

VOTED: to accept the decision as drafted.

Mr. Jacobs noted the following correspondence for the 2 previous discussions: a letter from Assistant Town Engineer Thomas Ryder, dated 9/3/19, with no comments or objections.

Ms. Newman stated there is an issue with the Sunita Williams School. She has been asked to issue a temporary Certificate of Occupancy. There are off-site improvements that still need to be done. The school zone sign has not been installed and the radar sign had the wrong speed limit on it. The DPW will make sure the police have more presence until the signs are functional.

Public Hearing:

7:30 p.m. – Amendment: Rockwood Lane Definitive Subdivision: Wayside Realty Trust, Chris Kotsiopoulos, Owner and Trustee, 36 Rockwood Lane, Needham, MA, Original Petitioner (current owners: Hillcrest Development, Inc., and Elite Homebuilders, LLC), (Property located at Rockwood Lane consists of the dwellings currently numbered 38, 45, 46, 52, 55, 58, 63, 64 and 69 Rockwood Lane and one adjacent parcel, Needham, MA, Assessors Plan No. 17 as Parcels 71, 72, 73, 79 and 80 and Plan No. 20 as Parcels 86, 87, 88, 89 and 63), Please note that this hearing has been continued from the May 21, 2019 and June 4, 2019, June 18, 2019, July 16, 2019 and August 6, 2019 Planning Board meetings and will be further continued.

Mr. Jacobs noted there is a request for a continuance. There was a meeting with Town Engineer Anthony Del Gaizo, Assistant Town Engineer Thomas Ryder, Attorney George Giunta Jr., Alton Stone, Mitch McGill and the Planning Director this morning to discuss where they were at. It was the conclusion of Mr. DelGaizo that the calculations presented do not make an apples to apples comparison. The applicant agreed to try again and would need about 2 weeks to get it done. A 10/2/19 meeting was suggested. Ms. Newman stated this did not include the entire watershed. The applicant is confident they can show no difference. Ms. McKnight stated she would like a member of the Engineering staff here at that meeting. Ms. Newman will ask Mr. DelGaizo to attend the meeting.

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

VOTED: to continue the hearing to 10/2/19 and extend the action deadline for a commensurate amount of time.

7:35 p.m. – Discussion regarding Mixed-Use Retail/Self Storage Redevelopment – 77 Charles Street.

This has been withdrawn for tonight.

Board of Appeals – September 19, 2019.

Robert C. Martin and Yasodhara Paruchurru -- 16 Pleasant Street (formerly known as 173 Dedham Avenue).

Mr. Alpert stated the applicant is tearing down the house that fronts on Dedham Avenue and building a new one that fronts on Pleasant Street with a 3 car garage. Ms. McKnight stated the Board received letters from the neighbors in support which was very helpful and the garages are separate so it seems ok.

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

VOTED: “No comment.”

Alex Kuzakovsky – 260-262 Rosemary Street.

The applicant is taking down a pre-existing, non-conforming 2 family and building a new 2 family. Mr. Alpert stated this is allowable by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) if they find the new home is not more egregious than the existing.

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

VOTED: “No comment.”

Preparation for zoning public hearing schedule for September 17, 2019.

Mr. Jacobs noted Mr. Alpert will present the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) article. Ms. Newman will update the power point presentation. Mr. Alpert would like to send a notice of this hearing to all Town Meeting members by mail with a cover letter that stresses these hearings are for raising issues and questions so the Planning Board can deal with them prior to the Town Meeting. Ms. Newman will draft something and distribute it. She noted Ms. Bailin will not be here for Mixed Use 128. Ms. Grimes will present.

Mr. Alpert hoped Natasha Espada would be able to attend the 9/17 hearing. Ms. Newman will reach out to her but is not sure. Ms. Newman proposed to send a letter to Town Meeting members with both articles and descriptions. Ms. Grimes suggested posting a letter on the town’s Facebook page.

Correspondence

Mr. Jacobs noted a legal notice from Dedham; material about flooding, which Ms. Newman stated was a private matter; Trip Advisors information regarding the Fuel Cell and information about 260 Washington Avenue.

Report from Planning Director and Board members.

Ms. Newman stated NBC Universal will be looking for an occupancy permit. There are changes to the façade and they may need a diminimus change. The Design Review Board has approved. She stated she has a question about Sunrise Terrace. This is a 6-lot unit. Will they need a sidewalk installed? The street is bonded and a

sidewalk has not been installed. This is a private way. Ms. Grimes stated she went there and feels it would be silly to put a sidewalk there. It is a nice little cul-de-sac. Ms. Newman stated an exception could be made because it is a private way. Ms. Newman noted the subdivision decision would need to be amended. She noted the Memorial Field parking has been striped for 116 student spaces in a different color.

7:55 p.m. – Presentation on M.G.L Chapter 40B Project: Petruzzello Properties LLC, Petitioner (Property located at 1180 Great Plain Avenue).

Mr. Jacobs reminded all this Board would not be making the decision but giving comments to the ZBA. Peter Zahar, representative for the applicant, stated this is a renovation of a vacant building to create 16 apartment units. The applicant will be going to the DRB on 10/19. The applicant has been trying to keep the neighbors informed. They have dropped 100 flyers around the neighborhood. He gave an overview of the project. This is Single Residence B District with the building between Great Plain Avenue and Walnut Street. The building was formerly used as a retirement home. The church owns the property but there is a purchase and sale agreement. There are 99 feet of frontage on Great Plain Avenue and no frontage on Walnut Street. There is a 20 foot right-of-way to Walnut Street. The property contains a 14,500 square foot, one-story building. The church bought it in 2014 and in 2017 leased part of it to the synagogue for day care.

Michael McKay, architect, stated the applicant will keep the building, add almost a full story and maintain the double gable. There will be new siding. The current is board shingles and clapboard. It is 20 feet in height to the ridge and 28 feet toward the back. The site slopes down and there is a gate proposed on Walnut Street. The gate will be controlled for emergency access only and by the Fire Department. There will be a small vestibule in the back. They will be removing the greenhouse. There will be a split entry and a left entering off Great Plain Avenue in the case of a queue. Gables will be introduced all the way along both sides. The first floor will have a mail room, lobby and elevator. There will be 8 1-bedroom units and 8 2-bedroom units. The units will be 1,300 square feet for a 2-bedroom unit and 1,000 square feet for a 1-bedroom unit. They will be rental units and they feel it is the perfect location.

Ken Keenan, of Bayside Engineering, did a full traffic impact study. He feels 16 units will have a very small impact. There will be 8 trips in the morning and a little higher at 12 entering and 4 exiting in the afternoon. There is no change in level of service. He noted there is a very narrow driveway that will need to be 2 way. He would have one lane with temporary signals with the priority to entering cars. He suggests video detectors for maintenance purposes. Mr. Zahar noted this is being built with no access out to Walnut Street. The abutters have requested this.

Bob Engler, of SEB Inc., stated originally there were all 1-bedroom units but the state would not allow that. So they have accepted a 50/50 split. There are 27 parking spaces on site. Mr. Alpert noted a letter from the Town Manager stating the Board of Selectmen would prefer access to Walnut Street. He asked if Walnut is a public or private way. He noted if public, the whole town has access to it. He agrees with the Selectmen there should be access to Walnut. He feels this is a great project. Mr. Jacobs noted the following correspondence for the record: a letter, dated 5/29/19, from Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick to Mass Housing.

Ms. McKnight stated she sees this as a transit oriented development. She asked if it really requires 27 parking spaces. She noted Section 10 of the traffic report on pages 6 and 44. The MBTA does not have a bus route along Great Plain Avenue; the route is on Chestnut Street; that should be corrected. Mr. Zahar feels this is a nice balance. He is trying to proceed with the neighborhood in good faith. He feels the signal concept works. Ms. McKnight asked if charging stations would be provided for electric cars and was informed yes. Mr. Owens commented this is a great project. It is exactly what the town needs in downtown. Mr. Keenan noted in Newton they did not have to pave a certain number of spaces and left them green until it was decided if the residents needed them. Mr. Jacobs asked if the Selectmen have stated no preference for traffic flow through the site. Mr. Zahar stated maybe individually but collectively no.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by four of the five members present (Mr. Jacobs abstained):

VOTED: to vote in favor of the project as presented.

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

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Elizabeth Grimes', written over a horizontal line.

Elizabeth Grimes, Vice-Chairman and Clerk