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**Town of North Reading**  
*Massachusetts*

*Community Planning*

TOWN CLERK  
NORTH READING, MA

### MINUTES

**Tuesday, November 17, 2020**

Mr. Warren Pearce, Chairperson called the Tuesday, November 17, 2020 meeting of the Community Planning Commission to order at 7:30p.m. via Virtual Meeting (Zoom, participants may call 1-301-715-8592, meeting code 9854300926.

#### MEMBERS

PRESENT: Warren Pearce, Chairperson  
Christopher Hayden  
David Rudloff

#### STAFF

PRESENT: Danielle McKnight, AICP  
Town Planner/Community Planning Administrator  
Debra Savarese, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Pearce informed all present that the meeting is being recorded.

Mr. Hayden read the Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the North Reading Community Planning Commission IS BEING CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to this meeting while in progress may do so by calling in 1-301-715-8592 and meeting code 9854300926.

### **300 Riverpark Drive/minor modification**

Mr. Bill Buckley of Bay Colony Group stated that they have been retained by Amazon Robotics to file this minor modification. This is an existing building with approximately 176,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility that was built in 1990. They have also retained IA Interior Architects to design an extended vestibule to the north entry of the manufacturing facility. He presented a rendering of the site and proposed vestibule, to discuss the proposed changes. Due to the Covid crisis they don't want the employees standing outside in the cold, waiting to get into the building. They would like to build an 80' long by 8' wide vestibule and 10' high. There is a two to three foot drop, so the grading would have to be redone to accommodate this construction. This is currently the handicap accessible entrance with handicap parking that would need to be removed and placed at the rear of the building and the current walkway would need to be redone to accommodate the handicap accessible route. There will be no expansion of the parking lot, only re-striping.

Mr. Hayden stated that there are two entrances on the walkway which entrance are the people going to go into. Are they going to go into the long entrance, or the quick entrance?

Mr. Buckley stated that there is not much parking in the rear and if you keep going south, this is all the truck docking. The day that he was there, most of the people were coming in from the west side.

Mr. Hayden stated that the entrance is almost in the middle and the vestibule is going to be 80' long, but, the people are not going to have 80' to stand in, they've got 25' before the door because they're all going to enter from the left. If this is being done for social distancing, they won't have 6' to stand apart. Fifty feet of the building will be lost because they're coming in on the wrong side.

Mr. Buckley stated that the architects and the operations people looked at this and this is what they thought was a viable option, for what is going to happen there.

Mr. Hayden stated that the operations people don't always know how it works. He looks at this and sees immediately that they have lost two-thirds of the vestibule that is being built for social distancing. It should be designed and constructed properly so that there is social distancing. He doesn't think that the architects thought this through and this will also set precedence.

Mr. Pearce asked how many people actually enter the building at any given point. If the people parked where the current handicap spaces are is there are place for them to walk to the right and come in from the other entrance.

Mr. Buckley stated that the does not know how many people enter the building and they could walk around and enter from the other entrance.

Mr. Pearce stated that this may be able to be modified using signage stating that "once you reach the distancing, you have to go to the other end" or create a more convenient walkway that goes from the left side of the greenspace over to the walkway and restriping the handicap spaces, so that when they get out of their car, they could easily walk to the walkway.

Mr. Hayden stated that he would like to know how many people are entering the building per shift and how many people are going to use this entrance.

Mr. Pearce stated that he would like to know what the other entrances are used for.

Mr. Rudloff stated that he would like to see a plan that shows the entire building.

Mr. Hayden state that the plan they are showing is dated 2001. There should be a more updated plan.

Mr. Pearce stated that the architects and operations should have had a criteria when they were drawing up this plan and that would probably have the information that they are looking for.

Mr. Buckley stated that pulled up google earth and got a picture of the site.

Mr. Pearce stated that it looks like to the right of the building that there are quite a few parking spots, almost more than at the entrance they're discussing. This would certainly encourage more of the people and they may hear that the reason there is a longer corridor on that side is because there is more parking spots for employees on that side of the building.

Mr. Buckley stated that he thinks what they were trying to do was max out by going to the end of the building and brought it up as far as they thought was appropriate.

Mr. Pearce stated that if they have a timed arrival, it wouldn't be unthinkable to do that. These are questions that somebody understood the reason for the design and would be able to answer.

Mrs. McKnight stated that she added the old plan to the folder, so that the CPC could see what they are modifying.

Mr. Buckley stated that he understands the questions that the CPC has and he will be better prepared at the next meeting.

#### **Public Hearings during COVID – discussion**

Mrs. McKnight stated that Governor Baker signed a fiscal 2020 supplemental budget bill (Chapter 201 of the Acts of 2020) that includes language to recommence hearing timelines and constructive approvals as of December 1<sup>st</sup>. She spoke to Phil from NORCAM about how they can be helpful, she also spoke with the Town Administrator and John Eichman from KP Law about the requirements and limitations for Town facilities and meeting spaces. (See memo dated 11/20/2020)

Mr. Pearce stated that they would probably not have thirty people attending a meeting and asked if the Town Hall gym could be used, even though it doesn't have the air handling system.

Mrs. McKnight stated that there is also no P.A. system in the gym. After speaking to Phil from NORCAM, the only way to have people participate is if they each had a device because it's not set up for audio, so people won't be able to hear each other and have it picked up on a ZOOM hearing, at the same time. Although, we don't think that we would have more than twenty-five people, in the room, we might have eighteen or twenty, and we would not be able to have the hearing.

Mr. Pearce stated that that they have to pick a plan and live with the consequences.

Mrs. McKnight stated that her recommendation would be that they do the public hearings over ZOOM. She believes that the access and safety will be better. She really appreciates NORCAM's offer to help the people that need help with the technology. They could also put in the hearing notice, the phone number to call NORCAM.

Mr. Pearce asked if NORCAM puts it out on the T.V., then everyone in the world can watch the meeting and then all we would need is one person to take phone calls, or input from the people, who don't have the technology.

Mrs. McKnight stated that they could also let the people know that the meeting will be broadcast, again, and give them the date and time of the broadcast. Town Council did tell her that the CPC cannot tell the people that the meeting will be continued to allow for more comments, before the hearing happens.

Mr. Pearce stated that to some extent they would not be able to take a vote that night, because we would then be disenfranchising people that might have a valid comment, if we have that as a possibility for them.

Mrs. McKnight stated that they can't put in the ad that the hearing will be continued, but the CPC can continue the hearing.

Mr. Hayden stated that they can get an early notice out to the abutters that there is going to be a public hearing and give them some information (paper wise), and if they have any comments or questions and can't joint the meeting, they can drop off the correspondence before the meeting. A deadline should be given for this correspondence.

Mr. Pearce stated that the consensus of the CPC is to give the ZOOM meeting a try, for public hearings.

Mrs. McKnight stated that the abutters can call and make an appointment to come to the town hall to view the plans, or drop off comments.

#### **Economic Development Committee – Appoint CPC member**

Mrs. McKnight stated that Mr. Hayden's term on the EDC expired, when his term on the CPC expired.

Mr. Rudloff moved, seconded by Mr. Pearce and voted 3-0: (Mr. Carroll & Mr. Bellavance absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to appoint Mr. Hayden onto the Economic Development Committee as the Community Planning Commission's representative member.

#### **Minutes**

Mr. Hayden moved, seconded by Mr. Rudloff and voted 3-0: (Mr. Bellavance & Mr. Carroll absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to approve the minutes of October 20, 2020 as written.

**Planning Administrator updates****Carpenter Drive**

Mrs. McKnight is continuing to work on the Carpenter Drive project with Dave Giangrande of Design Consultants.

**E-Permitting**

Mrs. McKnight is continuing to work on the E-permitting set-up, for the other departments.

**Grant Programs**

Mrs. McKnight is continuing to get information out to the businesses, with whatever grant programs become available.

**Charles Street Ext.**

Mr. Pearce stated that the Charles Street Ext. project has stalled.

Mrs. McKnight stated that the CPC is holding a bond for this project. If the CPC wants to talk about finishing the project, they can do that.

Mr. Pearce stated that the bonds that the CPC have taken in the past for subdivisions, had people living in them and that's why they took the bonds. He's more concerned with the subdivision not being worked on and the drainage system and other items are going to go through another winter. He and Mr. Hayden asked that DCI or the town Engineer be asked to visit this and all other active subdivisions to be sure they are properly stabilized for the winter season.

Mrs. McKnight stated that bond is now cash and was given to the Treasurer to deposit. She can ask the town engineer to review the subdivision and let her know if there is anything that needs to be done to stabilize the site.

Adjournment at 8:50PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Ryan Carroll, Clerk

