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Town of North Reading
Massachusetts

Community Planning

MINUTES

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

Mr. Warren Pearce, Chairperson called the Tuesday, November 1, 2016 meeting of the Community Planning Commission to order at 7:33p.m. in Room 14 of the North Reading Town Hall, 235 North Street, North Reading, MA.

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Warren Pearce, Chairperson
William Bellavance, Vice Chairperson
Jonathan Cody, Clerk
Christopher B. Hayden

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.

Minutes

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of October 3, 2016 as written.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Bellavance and voted 3-0: (Mr. Hayden abstained & Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of October 4, 2016 as written.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of October 17, 2016 as written.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of October 18, 2016 as written.

Lawrence Road – bond release

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Bellavance and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the October 28, 2016 report from Design Consultants, Inc. and that the amount of \$1,760.00 be established as sufficient to ensure the completion of the Lawrence Road Subdivision. (previous bond amount \$49,490.20)

35 Main Street – discussion

Mr. Matt Waterman of Landtech Consultants, Inc. stated that they previously went to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance, to reduce the number of required parking spaces for a proposed storage facility with a small restaurant.

Mr. Scott Thorton of Vanasse Associates stated that they prepared a letter dated October 4th, that identifies the parking requirements for the project based on zoning for the restaurant use, and also some national standards for the self-storage units. Based on the zoning for the restaurant, would require 1 space for 4 seats which would be a total of approximately 12 spaces. The self-storage facility based on national averages requires approximately .17 spaces per thousand square feet. For this facility they are looking at about 14 spaces, so that is based on standards the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) have gone out and counted the parking demands of similar uses as developed these parking demand rates. This is the 85th percentile demand which is likely to be exceeded 85% of the time and that requirement is for about 14 spaces. So the demand for the two uses together, they expect to be about 26 parking spaces. He has worked on other self-storage facilities and typically they are very low traffic generators and low intensity parking generators. It is typically one employee on site and then they may have one or two customers that are on site during any one hour. On a Saturday or Sunday there may be three to five customers, but not a huge or very intensive parking generator. They are proposing 30 spaces with the current plan.

Mr. Jonathan Hall of Arenhall Incorporations stated that they have been in the self-storage business since 1986. They have four self-storage businesses in Massachusetts and three others coming on-line, so this is not their first building. They are family owned and operated company. They like the Town of North Reading and the community and they are not just someone that comes to the town, but become part of the community. They volunteer with Park & Recreation, they just recently oversaw the clean-up and restoration of the playground in the Town of Littleton, where they have a facility. They sponsor baseball teams and youth little leagues, etc. They are a member of the community, no matter what community they are in. As far as parking concerns, they have a facility in Chelmsford, Mass., which is 89,000 square feet with 5 parking spots and 1 handicap. The facility in Littleton, Mass., is 84,000 square feet with 12 parking spots and the facility in Maynard, Mass that was an old digital equipment headquarters building that originally had 300 parking spaces which nobody needs anymore, so right now because there was already parking there, they have 25 parking spots for a 150,000 square foot storage facility. They are currently under construction for another facility in Chelmsford, Mass that is a 99,000 square foot building with 6 parking spots. If parking was an issue they would have known by now and incorporated additional parking into the planning.

Mr. Paul Haverty of Blatman, Bobrowski, Mead & Talerman, LLC stated that he is a former 8 year member of the Zoning Board of Appeals in Chelmsford and never once was there a single issue or question in regard to the facility located in Chelmsford.

Mr. Pearce stated that his recollection from the last meeting was that this was never discussed as being a self-storage unit. He spoke to Mrs. McKnight, Town Planner who told him that it was discussed at the development team meeting, but it was never discussed at the Preliminary Subdivision meeting. So, knowing that Town Meeting was in the process of voting on a zoning

regulation which band anymore self-storage units, because it was something they basically did not want on Main Street, he was a little surprised that they ended up with one.

Mr. Hall stated that at the staff review meeting when they schedule it back in July was the day after the board addressed some concerns about the zoning of self-storage and it was brought to their attention that day. Since then they filed the ANR plan that would freeze the use of the property for three years.

Mr. Hayden stated that it was brought to this board as a nice little three building office park. Instead of throwing the carrot out there they should have just shown the board what they really wanted to do and this bothers him.

Mr. Hall stated that the subdivision plan was to freeze the dimensional requirements.

Mr. Hayden stated that there was an issue on the site plan that could have been fixed which would have frozen the zoning also.

Mrs. McKnight stated that what Mr. Hayden is referring to is that the ANR would have frozen the zoning with regard to the use and the Form B would have frozen the zoning in regard to dimension.

Mr. Pearce stated that this did not set well because the board felt that they were tricked.

Mr. Hayden stated that this is also out of our purview, at the moment.

Mr. Waterman stated that some of the important things that they wanted to present to the board tonight with moving their application forward with the Board of Appeals was to give a presentation on the plan that was submitted to the ZBA. This plan would keep the existing bowling alley in place and Andrea's Pizza would be relocated during construction. The proposed building will be three stories with 81,000 square feet of storage and the current building housing Andrea's Pizza will remain the same at 2500 square feet. Under the current bylaw the requirement would be 93 parking spaces and they would like to provide 30 spaces. 12 spaces would be for Andrea's Pizza and the other 18 for the storage facility. It is more than what they believe they need, but feel that it would give the planning board some comfort that there are enough spaces and then there are the required loading zones. Currently there is a total coverage of the lot with the existing conditions the pavement kind of goes to the property line on the westerly side, near McDonalds Restaurant and on the easterly side the pavement is just off, going approximately 10' off the property line. But, the coverage with the building and parking is about 61% of the lot, (75000 square feet). With the design as shown with the ZBA, the coverage goes down to about 58%, (67000 square feet). This does preserve the building and the proximity to the wetlands. They also prepared a rendering of the building, with three

different styles. a) mixed use of retail with storage facility b) straight storage facility c) storage facility with the existing Andrea's Pizza building.

Mr. Hayden stated that they should have come to the board with a site plan and then they could have discussed the parking variance. This is now under review with the ZBA and he believes what they are asking this board to do is to change their recommendation to the ZBA. They sent the recommendation with the existing zoning for Main Street which does not have classification for storage facilities, so they have to go with the existing which is 1 per 1000.

Mr. Waterman stated that they did read the letter and understood the board's position, but they worked from a planning perspective, they started to think like planners and their preferred preference of the renderings is Concept A. They were trying to think outside the box and get some support from this board with the ZBA. They came up with some smaller footprint that kind of takes advantage of a more traditional square building that has retail up front which is more consistent with what they discussed at the preliminary subdivision phase. Concept B would require a larger variance from the parking, but opens up the green space more, where they have retail out front and meet all of parking standards with what the retail would require and would meet the standards of 11 spaces for the storage facility.

Mr. Hayden stated that he is not going to change his opinion until they come back to the board with a plan, because right now he does not have a plan to support. They should have come to the board with the new plan before going to the ZBA.

Mr. Cody stated that it is not the board's decision to make at this time. The ZBA will need to decide whether to give the variance or not.

Mr. Pearce stated that from his perspective he feels the same as Mr. Hayden that they are being asked to opine on something that they don't even have a real plan in front of them. They should have done the Site Plan Review before trying to get the variance approval.

Mr. Waterman asked Mr. Pearce if what he is suggesting is that Site Plan approval come before asking the variance request.

Mr. Pearce stated yes. Because if in the site plan it is required or that they want a variance request, then any approval given by this board would be subject to the variance being approved by the ZBA. This is basically how it is done.

Mr. Hayden stated that if they thought the project was good then they would support it.

Mrs. McKnight stated that the applicant needs both approval from both boards and it is up to them what order they prefer. However, before this board can issue the Site Plan approval, the

regulations state that the applicant have variances in hand, at the time. There is nothing to stop them from applying and doing both simultaneously, but the board would probably not issue a decision until the ZBA decision is made and this is why applicants go to the ZBA first.

Mr. Hayden stated that here, they usually come to the planning board first to show the project and get the support of this board.

Mr. Pearce stated that if the project changes for some reason and requires fewer parking spaces, then they will need to go back to the ZBA again.

Mr. Waterman stated that there is also the cost of doing a full plan site plan review and does make sense to get the other relief first, to see if the plan is even viable.

Mr. Hayden stated that that is fine, but don't ask the board to change their opinion because we don't know what the plan is.

Mr. Waterman stated that they are here this evening to provide the board with additional information, to show the different alternatives and impacts that are associated with these different alternatives.

Mr. Hall stated that they would be able to come back to the board with a specific plan.

Mr. Hayden stated that this should have been done instead of showing the other plan. At least then the board would have had a better idea of what they wanted to do.

Mr. Pearce stated that the ZBA has no reason to give the variance.

Mr. Hall stated that they have done it before for another project in town.

Mr. Hayden stated that was on Concord Street in an industrial area, which is a different zone. The board also required the same as what is in this zone.

Mr. Waterman stated that the parking is based on the use, not on the zone.

Mr. Pearce stated that they should have told them what the real plan was.

Mr. Cody stated that be honest would have got them a lot further. He also stated that he agrees with Mr. Hayden and Mr. Pearce and will not change his opinion at this time.

Mr. Pearce stated that the only other thing to do is to file for Site Plan Review and see if the board is able to support the plan.

Mr. Bellavance stated that when designing the building they should review the Overlay District regulations, so that it will meet the design standards.

20 Main Street – SPR – cont. P.H. 8:00pm

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Bellavance and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to grant the requested continuance of the public hearing for 20 Main Street until Tuesday, December 20, 2016 @ 8:00pm

Shay Lane Subdivision – plan endorsement

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 4-0: (Mr. Veno absent)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to endorse the plans entitled, “Definitive Subdivision Shay Lane, 383 Park Street, North Reading, Massachusetts 01864”; dated 12/23/2015, final plan revision 10/26/2016; drawn by TTI Environmental, Inc.

Zoning Board of Appeals

317 Haverhill Street – On the petition of Daniel Demetri for a home occupation special permit for a home office to transport refrigeration services business.

The Community Planning Commission does not object to the request if the provisions of §200-42 are adhered to.

29 Leland Road – On the petition of Ronald Racca for a for a home occupation special permit for a consulting business.

The Community Planning Commission does not object to the request if the provisions of §200-42 are adhered to.

Town Owned Land - discussion

Mrs. McKnight stated that the Town-owned land has been completed. There were some comments made from previous town planners that if some lots are combined they could become buildable lots and we are unsure if this is what the board would prefer, or should it state that the board is not in favor of having these lots combine.

Mr. Pearce stated that the comment is not meant to have the Board of Selectmen combine the lots, it is strictly informational. They could be used for potential 40B sites and affordable or senior housing.

Planning Administrator – Update**318 Haverhill Street**

Mrs. McKnight inquired on behalf of a prospective buyer for the property about how much work could be done in the winter; the feedback was that cutting and clearing is generally fine, but infrastructure work should not be done in the cold season.

Grant Applications

Mass Downtown Initiative – New signage bylaw
DLTA – Technical assistance for Master Plan

Adjournment at 9:00PM

Respectfully submitted,



Jonathan Cody, Clerk