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Town Planner's Review
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

- X **Public Hearing - 19-21 Main Street – Parking Lot**. Formal application for site plan and conditional use for parking lot on four lots and reconfiguration of the entrance. Presentation of peer reviews for traffic and drainage studies. Toomerfs, LLC c/o Pete Murphy and Tim Murphy, owners. Mike Sievert, engineer. Robbi Woodburn, Landscape Architect. Map 5, Lots 1-9, 1-10, 1-15, and 1-16. Church Hill District.
- I recommend that the board review the outstanding issues. Soon it will be appropriate for the board to provide direction for preparation of a draft Notice of Decision for either approval or denial of the project.

Please note the following:

- 1) Final action soon. When the board is ready, it can direct me to prepare a draft Notice of Decision for either approval or denial of the project at an upcoming meeting.
- 2) Traffic peer review. The peer review by Jason Plourde of VHB was conveyed to the board. Mr. Plourde will attend the meeting on zoom to give a brief presentation of his review and answer any questions from board members. The review lays out some additional work that should be performed by Steve Pernaw.
- 3) Drainage peer review. The peer review by Erik Saari of Altus Engineering was conveyed to the board. Mr. Saari will attend the meeting on zoom to give a brief presentation of his review and answer any questions from board members. The review points out a number of items that should be addressed.
- 4) Conditional use criteria. The board discussed the conditional use criteria with members voicing various individual comments. Based on the board's continued review of the criteria, as needed, and review of outstanding issues, the board can provide direction for preparing a draft Notice of Decision when it is ready.
- 5) Changes/Questions? Are there any specific changes that should be made to the plan now? Are there any outstanding issues that need to be addressed?
- 6) Parking spaces. The plan is now for a total of 180 parking spaces. It probably makes sense to limit parking to use by lease on at least a weekly basis in order to prevent frequent hourly usage. James Bubar suggested granting the Town access in order to monitor parking and to request towing a vehicle without a permit or sticker (which the Town would only do on a complaint basis due to limited resources).

- 7) Sewer line. The existing sewer line will be relocated on the lot. Mike Sievert is discussing with Public Works whether any improvements to sewer would be needed beyond the property where the sewer joins the line in Chesley Drive. The applicant will probably need to relocate the sewer lines for the adjoining houses at his own expense. As a precedent condition they should obtain an approval in writing from the two property owners agreeing to the change, which is in their interest. There is a wetland south of the site. If the sewer line needs to be relocated within that wetland buffer a conditional use might be needed. An easement should be granted for those adjacent properties using the line.
- 8) Mill Plaza. Pete Murphy, the developer, has stated that this application is entirely independent from the Mill Plaza project. Colonial Durham Associates has spoken with him about leasing spaces on the lot but nothing definitive is in place according to Mr. Murphy. If Mill Plaza were to lease spaces pedestrian connections would need to be established on both sites.
- 9) Stormtech. Robin Mower asked several questions about the stormtech system regarding the filter media and nutrient removal. Mike Sievert said he would respond to them.
- 10) Stormwater. The drainage plan provides for maintenance in section 2.7. The pages should be numbered and the numbers included in the Table of Contents so this section and others can be readily accessed. Submission of periodic maintenance reports to the Town should be required.
- 11) Snow storage. The applicant should provide more details to demonstrate how one foot of snow could be stored on site. The applicant said they would designate about 8 parking spaces at the rear for snow storage so that these would not be rented in the winter. We should clarify whether any deicing materials would be used. Should the applicant be required to hire a plow contractor certified with SnowPro?
- 12) Vehicle impacts. Are there impacts from vehicular use upon neighbors that need to be addressed? Noise, lights, dust, etc.
- 13) Construction Management. A construction plan is needed. There would be around 17,000 cubic yards of fill requiring about 1,100 dump trucks, depending on size. What concerns does the board have with this? How will this be managed? Traffic control will likely be needed. A plan for handling damage to the roads if any occurs, including placement of a bond, should be prepared. Hours of operation are limited per the site plan to 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday. All dump trucks should come via Route 108/Route 4. The state maintains Route 108. The Town maintains Main Street.
- 14) Vegetative buffer. Is any preliminary maintenance/treatment of the rear buffer appropriate? Removal of any invasive species, dead/decaying trees, etc. Given the importance of this buffer, we could incorporate a requirement to examine the buffer at some time after completion of the project, such as 1 or 2 years, to ensure the buffer remains healthy.

- 15) Electric charging station. The applicant said they would look into incorporating one or more electric charging stations. We encourage them to do this.
- 16) Lot configuration. I recommend the applicant discuss the optimal lot configuration with the board. There are four lots now. It would make sense to reconfigure the lots: a) combine all into one lot; b) create 3 lots with the two houses on their own lot with some back areas/parking on each and the large parking lot and probably driveway as a separate lot. Easements would be needed for access and parking. The advantage of this layout is that each of the three properties could be sold separately, adding flexibility and potentially value; or c) putting one of the houses on its own lot and the rest of the parcel on one lot.
- 17) Headlights. Screening, such as a fully opaque wall or fence, should be installed on the easterly side to prevent car headlights from shining into the two houses. Is the retaining wall high enough above the level of the asphalt to shield headlights?
- 18) Retaining wall. Should additional plantings be incorporated along the retaining wall, including ivy planted at the base or hanging plants incorporated at the top?
- 19) Lighting. It is probably appropriate to reduce the pole heights further (from 20 feet to a maximum of say 12 feet) and the maximum level of footcandles from 5.2 to 2 or 2.5 footcandles. It would be helpful to have a dimmer, as proposed, so that the lights can be adjusted in the future if necessary. The board could revisit the lighting some time after completion and specify reductions in the level if appropriate. Mike Sievert conveyed about the most recent design, "Please find attached two plans, additional light fixture information and a night lighting rendering from Chesley Dr. I spoke to the lighting designer and she said that these fixtures will reduce glare because they have a defused lens, and a shield around the light fixture. In addition, this light has a dimmable feature that can be set to go dim at any time and the % dimmable can also be set. The designer is suggesting setting the lights to dim to 30% of their design brightness at say 10pm each night, and they will only get brighter when motion is detected."
- 20) The locations for 6 lights in the medians seem to be the right locations. The site is elevated so unless there is a line of sight provided showing that glare from the lights will not affect the lots situated below on Chesley Drive the lights should be significantly reduced in height and/or shields added (the cut sheet notes that the light is recessed but we have seen glare from comparable fixtures). Also, why are the T4 lights are significantly brighter than the S4 lights? Cut sheets of each fixture will be needed soon or as a precedent condition.
- 21) Staff comments. Rene Kelley, Police Chief, and Audrey Cline, Code Administrator, have no concerns with the project pertinent to the site plan application.

Christine Soutter, Economic Development Director said, "I don't have any suggestions for changes as I think the updates have addressed any relevant concerns. As far as construction vehicles and work hours, I don't think we have the right to dictate when they can work unless it is starting exceptionally early (before 7am) or going late into the

evening. I would think all that can be asked is that there be construction flaggers present if there is going to be so many trucks as to significantly impede the normal flow of traffic. All construction will affect someone in some way and that is to be expected...I think the plans as they stand are fine.”

Brendan O’Sullivan, Acting Deputy Fire Chief, said, “The only concern has since been addressed and confirmed with Michael Sievert . The driveway is 20 feet wide and allows access for our largest truck. I supplied Michael Sievert the turn radius of our largest truck and he incorporated it into the plan.”

I am waiting for comments from Public Works.

- 22) Other items. Install signage for compact spaces. Pavers at the front will need to be moved back beyond the sidewalk. Confirm that these pavers are comparable to those used at 18 Main Street. Should two accessible parking spaces be moved out of the compact spaces? Show light pole in front as being removed. Remove lights shown at southerly corners of the site. Label four shrubs at southwest corner of site. Add stop sign at exit. Is there curbing along the entrance driveway?
- 23) Screening. Here is the excerpt from the Site Plan regulations referred to above about Screening. Is the plan sufficient?

Section 5.9 Screening

5.9.1 Where nonresidential uses and/or off-street parking facilities abut a vacant lot in a residential zone or an existing residential use, the perimeter shall be screened to provide physical and visual separation from the residential zone or use.

5.9.2 Screening measures composed of trees, shrubs, berms, walls, and/or fences shall be installed to a height of 6 feet, or higher, when appropriate, as specified by the Planning Board. A wall or fence shall be placed on the exterior side of any landscaping unless otherwise approved by the Planning Board. The more attractive finished side of the fence shall face abutters, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Board.

5.9.3 When natural vegetation is used, it shall consist of evergreen shrubs and/or trees planted in a line to form a continuous screen that will grow to a minimum height of 6 feet within 3 years. Additional evergreen shrubs/trees may be planted in a second, staggered line to form a screen together with the first line.

5.9.4 All sites shall incorporate screening measures to prevent the headlights of vehicles from shining on adjoining residential areas.

5.9.6 The Planning Board may stipulate additional buffers due to unusual impacts generated, including odor, noise, glare, dirt, dust, vibration, etc.