



**PLANNING BOARD**  
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**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD**

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Thursday, September 16, 2021 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Bob Dion, Stu Gerome, Steve Gerrato, Catie Medeiros, David Moore

Members Absent: John McDevitt, Frank Catapano (Alternate)

Late Arrival: Steve Smith (Selectmen's Rep)

Staff Present: Mark Fougere

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Co-Chair Gerrato opened the Planning Board public hearing at 6:30 p.m. Attendance of Planning Board members was taken by roll call: B. Dion – present, S. Gerome – present, C. Medeiros – present, D. Moore – present, S. Gerrato – present. A quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

S. Gerrato, addressing the Board, announced Julie LaBranche, Rockingham Planning Commission, has left the RPC which is devastating. A replacement has been hired.

1. Projects of Regional Impact

There were no projects of regional impact to discuss.

2. Subdivision of Land: 529 Portsmouth Avenue (Map U5, 9 – Commercial A Zone)

Owner/Applicant: Granite State Pioneer Group, LLC

The owner/applicant is proposing to convert the existing duplex into a condex.

The applicant requested a continuance to the meeting on Thursday, October 21, 2021; the Board agreed.

3. Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit: 309 Portsmouth Avenue (Map R21, 65 – RCIM Mixed-Use District)

Owner/Applicant: SKA Properties 11, LLC – Sheree K. Allen

The owner/applicant is proposing to add a parking display area ancillary to the existing automobile dealership.

S. Gerrato recused himself, explaining that he voted against this case at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting. He did not want the wetlands impacted. Co-Chair Gerome chaired this case.

Steve Haight, CivilWorks and representing the applicant, addressed the Board. Also present was Sheree Allen, owner/applicant; Joshua Lanzetta, Attorney – Bruton and Berube; Brendan Quigley, Gove Environmental; and Mike Menary, Civilworks. The lot is located next to the existing Mercedes dealership. They were before the Board at the public hearing in August. Attorney Lanzetta represented

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the owner at the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). S. Haight told the Board that he met with the Conservation Commission on Wednesday, September 08, 2021; a note Laura Byergo, Chairman, was given to the Board (copy on file). Altus Engineering provided a preliminary letter to the Board (copy on file).

S. Haight stated that at the last meeting there was a discussion regarding their ability to get the tractor trailers off the road and into the site with the laydown area. He explained how tractor trailers would enter the site to drop off vehicles and exit. A fire truck could do the exact same maneuver; the access points are more than adequate. A box truck could also do the same. The site has plenty of maneuvering ability. The abutters had asked that tractor trailers be off the road when loading or unloading. The owner has put up 'No Parking' signs along the property on Portsmouth Avenue.

A waiver for trees will be requested. The required number of trees is 184; they have 135. They tried to get as many trees on the site while keeping it as green as possible. Lighting has been restructured so the light spread is not off the site by more than .2; the averages meet the requirement. The hours of operation are 7:00 am to 7:30 pm; security lighting comes on at 9:30 pm. Four lights will be used for security lighting; all other lighting will be turned off.

S. Haight discussed Altus Engineering's review with the Board. There are no substantive changes to the drawings. The wetland boundary will be corrected. The existing conditions plan for landscaping will be updated. Spot grades will be added where the grade is less than 3%. The existing conditions plan will be upgraded to depict all existing structures within 200 feet of the lot. B. Quigley will stamp the plans to maintain consistency. The existing conditions plan will be updated to show the invert in and invert out of the culvert under Portsmouth Avenue. A free-standing sign is planned for the site. Variances and the Special Exception granted by the ZBA in June 2021 will be clarified. There will not be a building on the site; it will be a display area. The notes will be consistent throughout the plan that it will a display area. They have 25% open space as required with the landscaping, exclusive of the wetland area. LED lights are proposed; lights to be left on for security are designated on the plan. It will be clarified on the plan that lights will go off at 7:30 pm and security lighting on at 9:30 pm. Snow will not be pushed across the parking lot into the wetland area (a guardrail will be in place). The location will be clarified on the site plan. There is additional space on the lot available for snow storage if necessary. The intent is to plow snow on the side along the edge of pavement. Any curbing on the site will be granite. Grades will be changed for the access driveway to meet the requirements.

S. Haight noted that the display area is designed to meet AOT standards. They do not need an AOT permit from the State. The drainage/infiltration system meets the water quality volume, the stormwater infiltration requirements, and exceeds the Town's TSS removal requirements (the system as designed is at 90%).

They are proposing to bring the utilities to the site and stub them in case, in the future, a building is put on the site. The applicant would have to come back to the Board to put a building on the site. A utility is included for water, electric and gas. The City of Portsmouth requires separate lines for domestic water and fire. Septic is also noted on the plan. S. Haight explained the Storm Tech design under the display area, which meets the 50-year storm event and TSS removal requirements.

The lighting design has been sent to Eversource; their final design is pending. The expectation is there will be a separate service to the display area and lights. The system has to be tied into the main building in order to turn on and off. They were unsure if Eversource would require a separate service.

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The Site Plan Review Regulations requirement for trees was briefly discussed. S. Haight explained it was based on the amount of impervious area that is proposed on a lot. The regulations allow credit for trees on a site. The regulations are requiring a forest on this site. M. Fougere noted that he will review the plans for credit and the regulation has been an issue in the past. When the plan was before the Board 10 years ago, there was a waiver submitted for trees.

*S. Smith arrived.*

Sign height was questioned; any sign would not be higher than the current sign. The landscape was reviewed. Credit can be received for 6 inch and larger trees. Altus Engineering commented that landscaped islands must be 12 feet wide. A waiver will be submitted for the width of the landscaped islands. The islands being proposed are 8 feet wide. They are trying to minimize the amount of paved area on the site and have a viable project.

B. Dion asked if there was any advantage to using pervious pavement. S. Haight responded that in this case it did not do any good: all the run-off on the site is being captured and put into the treatment system. They would prefer not to have pervious pavement; cost is one reason and the other is due to it being a transient site with vehicles being moved in and out. S. Haight explained that there are approximately 150 spaces on the existing site that are used for service and display. Approximately 150 to 200 cars are being moved back and forth and stored off-site. As inventory is sold, cars are moved to the site. A display area would eliminate that process. The layout has been scaled down as much as possible to 140 display area spaces.

S. Haight explained the Storm Tech System in depth. This type of system is fairly common for large commercial-type projects. Rather than a detention pond, it has been put under the parking lot allowing for land area to be captured back. The same system was approved 10 years ago. This system is designed to be put under a parking lot.

S. Haight stated that on the plan given to the Board tonight, there was a black line and a red line. The Conservation Commission requested a third party review the wetland delineation and the report done by Gove Environmental. Jamie Long had done a delineation on this site in 1996, 1998, and 2010 (red line). Holloway had also done a wetland delineation. B. Quigley delineated the wetland (black line) for this project. The lines are similar. They did not feel a third-party review was necessary. The impact to the site has been reduced with the proposed plan. They have minimized the impact and maximized the number of spaces, arriving at 140 spaces.

The other recommendation from the Conservation Commission was to move everything out of the buffer zone; this would not be a viable project. The display area would be cut by approximately 50% or more, leaving only 60 to 70 spaces. The underground detention area would still be needed as would landscaping, lighting, etc.; it would be financially unfeasible. The Conservation Commission Chairman did not want to hear that and was adamant that 'no' was the answer. S. Haight continued there was not much Commercial C zone in Town. This area was zoned for the proposed project and the existing business needs to try to expand.

S. Gerome clarified that the red line was the 2010 delineation. The black line was done by B. Quigley. S. Gerome noted the drainage structure was in the wetland area. S. Haight commented that once the wetland is filled, they are in the buffer.

D. Moore: Stated they had been pretty thorough and he did not have a problem with the location of the detention system. B. Dion questioned why the detention system could not be moved closer to the road.

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S. Haight responded it was the grade. Gravity had to be used for drainage. S. Haight explained why the water could not flow from Portsmouth Avenue into the system and the amount of fill needed on the site. Again, it was balance. S. Smith asked him to point out where the lower drainage flowed. S. Haight explained how it would drain from the site under Rt. 33. The elevation of the culvert (15-inch pipe) under Rt. 33 is 34. The retaining wall will be 4 feet to 6 feet.

C. Medeiros: Did not love the two curb cuts. She felt they were opening the property more as well as creating a safety issue with a curb cut lined up with the one across the street. S. Haight responded that when they do driveways, they try to put them across from one another, especially if it is a 'T' intersection. Currently, tractor trailers can get into the site, but cannot get out and are parking on Portsmouth Avenue. The proposed entrance/exit is designed to solve that problem. C. Medeiros commented that the two sites felt separated and not cohesive. S. Haight explained there would be landscaping between the two sites and they would be tied together. The display area was extended for visibility from Rt. 33 as well as the number of spaces and to be able to use the grade for drainage. The proposed signage will be on Rt. 33. S. Haight will provide detail for the sign. C. Medeiros felt two signs for one cohesive site was a little excessive but has not seen the signs.

B. Dion: Asked if they had considered using the space between the new site and the existing site to redesign the parking and gain spaces. S. Haight responded it was different ownership under the same group; there is a setback requirement between the lot lines. They would need relief to combine them.

S. Gerome opened the meeting to public comments. S. Gerrato, 512 Post Road: Referring to a note received from the Conservation Commission (copy on file), commended the Conservation Commission on a great job. This was a highly sensitive area. S. Gerrato stated Autumn Pond Park was approximately 5 feet lower than this project. There are serious problems in Autumn Pond and was concerned about the water flow into that area. S. Haight and members of the Board attempted to explain the water flow and that it would not affect Autumn Pond Park any differently than it is now.

There being no further comments, S. Gerome closed the public hearing and returned to the Board for comments. M. Fougere noted that the Conservation Commission specifically requested a second independent assessment of the wetland to consist of a full hydrology of the area and the parcel's place in the larger area. It was stated that J. Long did two assessments and Gove Environmental did one; the Board did not feel another review was necessary. M. Fougere stated that 10 years ago the Conservation Commission voted in favor of the project and the State approved the Dredge and Fill Permit. The proposed design is basically the same. The site plan included the building and parking, and was approved by the Planning Board. The site was never developed and ownership changed. S. Gerome did not like the structure in the wetland but it was out of the Planning Board's hands (a Special Exception was granted by the ZBA). S. Haight noted that everything they have done was about balance and felt they did a good job with this project. There are significant upgrades to the plan.

S. Haight requested feedback from the Board regarding the waivers for trees and the width of the landscaped islands. S. Gerome stated he did not have a problem with the trees but was unsure of the island width. D. Moore did not have a problem with either waiver request. B. Dion did not like the detention center in the wetland; S. Haight stated they would do it differently if it was possible. C. Medeiros felt the waivers were reasonable.

MOTION: B. Dion moved to continue the Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit, 309 Portsmouth Avenue (Map R21, 65), to the public hearing on Thursday, October 21, 2021. Second – D. Moore; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

S. Gerrato rejoined the meeting.

4. Capital Improvement Plan Review

John Balboni, representing the Greenland School Board, reviewed the School's CIP. S. Gerome questioned the windows and if they were architecturally correct to the old building. J. Balboni explained they are architecturally correct but old and need to be replaced; they will look the same. S. Gerrato asked if they would have to mortar around the windows to prevent leaking. J. Balboni was unsure how that would be done. The estimates were all-inclusive. Windows are scheduled for 2023/2024.

Three bids were received for the roof. J. Balboni explained they have requested \$60,000 over the years so there is not a large expenditure all at once. The total cost will be close to \$350,000. The 2004 section of the School is in very bad condition. \$200,000 should have been budgeted over the last two years for the roof; this year would be the third. J. Balboni stated that the roof has been patched in order to extend its life. A metal roof has been discussed.

The ventilation system was new to the CIP this year. J. Balboni stated the ventilation system would be installed duct work in the ceiling; mechanics would be on the roof. There is no outside air going into the 60's building other than doors and windows being open. The School will look into ESSER funds for the ventilation system. The ESSER funds are available to schools through the American Rescue Plan Act. J. Balboni reiterated the system needed to be done due to code. ESSER funds will be used to make the building compliant. They will be requesting a lump sum for next year and not phased over several years.

Paving the parking lot was discussed. The School will be requesting funds to pave the parking lot this year; it will not be phased over several years. C. Medeiros commented that the windows and ventilation were more important than paving the parking lot. D. Moore suggested phasing the cost over three years and doing the parking lot in the third year so it was not a giant impact on the taxpayer. S. Smith suggested they work in conjunction with the Town when road paving was done.

Vanities have been replaced and the vent repairs have been done. It was noted that the vent repairs were different from the replacement of the ventilation system. C. Medeiros requested that the Board receive the actuals when projects are done.

J. Balboni will provide to the Board the square footage of the roof, verify the patching on the replacement windows, and did the School Board concur working with the Town on paving.

5. Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes from the meetings on Thursday, June 17, 2021, and Thursday, September 02, 2021, were continued to the next meeting.

6. Approval of Invoices

MOTION: S. Gerome moved to approve the invoice from Fougere Planning & Development: Planning Board Town Budget--\$959.46. Second – C. Medeiros; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

7. Other Business

There was a brief discussion about meeting with department heads who submitted a CIP. M. Fougere noted that the Selectmen have not decided which option would be the best for the Fire Department;

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that was the biggest CIP issue. S. Smith stated the Selectmen needed to have another meeting for further discussion.

M. Fougere has a call in to the Superintendent of School and will ask him for more information on the School CIP.

### 8. Topics for Work Session: Thursday, October 07, 2021

Topics to be discussed at the work session on Thursday, October 07, 2021, include the CIP, Zoning Ordinance work and Site Plan Regulation updates (trees, grades).

### 9. Adjournment

MOTION: S. Smith moved to adjourn at 8:03 p.m. Second – C. Medeiros; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING
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Thursday, October 07, 2021 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant