



PLANNING BOARD
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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, October 20, 2016 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Chair Stu Gerome, Scott Baker, Courtney Homer, Chip Hussey, Steve Gerrato - Alternate

Members Absent: John McDevitt - Selectmen's Rep, David Moore, Rich Winsor

Late Arrival: Jamie Connelly – Alternate

Staff Present: Mark Fougere - Consultant

Chair Gerome opened the Planning Board meeting at 7:00 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Projects of Regional Impact

There were no Projects of Regional Impact to discuss.

2. Preliminary Conceptual Consultation: 125 Ocean Road [Map R21, 51]

Owner: Harbour Links Estates, LLC

Applicant: Bill Goodison – Bluebird Self-Storage, Greenland

The owner and applicant are proposing to convert and expand the existing warehouse building at 125 Ocean Road to self-storage. Also proposed is a separate traditional single story self-storage building. Total square footage proposed is 143,800.

Bill Goodison, Bluebird Storage and representing Bluebird Greenland, addressed the Board; Bluebird Greenland is the new owner of the property. They are proposing to build a 136,600 sq. ft. climate-controlled storage building. If approved, this will be the sixth storage facility in New Hampshire. The main building will be climate-controlled self-storage; there will be a building in the back corner of the lot for traditional self-storage. The current offices at Gowen's Corner will be moved to the 125 Ocean Road location. Company offices will be on the second floor of the main storage building.

Ken Rhodes, CLD Engineers, discussed the site plan for the project. The existing building is located at 125 Ocean Road and abuts I-95. The building is currently 47,500 sq. ft. With two additions, the interior of the building will be two stories at 136,600 sq. ft. The rear building will be on a platform that has been graded. There have been two regulatory reviews and has gone to the Zoning Board of Adjustment: signage on the building was approved; signage along the highway and on the Ocean Road side was not granted. K. Rhodes described minor tweaks made to the plan. The plan has also been reviewed by the Conservation Commission. Disturbances will be for grading. They are proposing 48 parking spaces per the Ordinance, which is more than needed. The man-made wetland in the front will be enhanced with stormwater treatment. The previous owner will have access to the existing electronic billboard on the site. There is 62% greenspace where 50% is required. The site is well serviced by water and natural gas; a new septic system will be required. Water usage on the site will be mainly by employees.

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The plan has been revised based on discussion with the ZBA and Conservation Commission. A traffic study will be submitted as part of the application. The impact on traffic generated by a self-storage facility on a Saturday is almost negligible; there will less large trucks accessing the facility.

State level permits that are needed will be an Alteration of Terrain (they will be close to the 100,000 sq. ft. limit) and septic approval from NHDES.

Brendan McNamara, Architectural Designer, addressed the building design. A self-storage building has a function that is not very interesting—it's a big box. The only comparable New England style architecture looks like some type of mill building. They didn't want to consider using faux gables, etc. It would make the building look fake; they wanted the building to look somewhat like a commercial mill building. They've gone with the EFIS approach, which is stuccoed foam. The exterior has a masonry appearance but is energy efficient and durable. The office section of the building will have a 4' overhang. They tried to keep the building as non-intrusive as possible. They wanted to present an appealing building that was going to last.

M. Fougere stated that the site plan was straight forward. Most of the site was disturbed and this will be an improvement; he did a site visit earlier in the day. There was a brief discussion about the architecture. B. McNamara stated that the intent was there and they were trying to avoid a faux-looking building. They wanted the building to look honest to its function; it is a light industrial building. They focused on the visible portions of the building where they have the more advanced and developed skin.

The exterior wall starts flat, the windows are indented and the posts extend 3". The soffit eventually extends 1"; it's not a zero overhang roof structure. The office section of the building is out further to draw attention away from the long wall. The building is 440' long on the I-95 side. The back building will be the traditional self-storage and backs up to the services of the VW dealership. It will be a single building with the usual doors and slightly pitched roof, and is approximately 180' long. There will be 18 – 10 x 20 units on either side of the building (total of 36 units). The building will be ash gray. B. Goodison explained that he has reached out to the VW dealership; they share a common fence line. They would like people to pull into the parking lot near the office; there will be a gate preventing people from getting into the back building where they can't be seen at night. Hours of operation will be 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday; 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday; and 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. There will be an employee on site 8:30 a.m. to closing every day. Buildings will be fully alarmed and have video monitoring. B. Goodison would like to run a fence along the driveway abutting the VW dealership to block the area in; some of the overgrown brush will have to be removed. They invested a lot of money in the building, and plan to do the same with landscaping and the grounds.

Lighting: no flood lights, but there will be LED lighting that is dark sky compliant facing down in the front on the walls and low lighting in the back. There was a brief discussion about the original pylon sign that has been changed based on the ZBA decision. S. Gerrato commented that the steel walls on the back of the building may be a problem. B. Goodison responded that steel walls will be in the back and on the long driveway side of the building abutting the service area of the VW dealership. He added that it was originally zoned Industrial. The regulations don't apply the New England look to industrial; the zoning changed, but the building didn't. Now they're applying the New England rules. B. McNamara added that the economic reality may be a factor in the steel walls; they are putting a lot of money into the façade along I-95 and Ocean Road. Chair Gerome assured them the Board was sensitive to those issues.

Chair Gerome opened the meeting to public comments. There being none, he closed the public hearing and returned to the Board. K. Rhodes commented that based on their discussion with the Board there may be minor adjustments to the plan. It was noted that most of the vegetated buffer on the VW side is

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owned by Bluebird Storage, with a small portion being owned by the VW dealership. Chair Gerome stated they wanted to guard against removing too much buffer, opening up the scene on that side of the building. The applicant was asked to include specs on the gate and it should be discussed with the Fire Department. B. Goodison stated there is an electronic device that will be on the gate for easy access for the Fire Department; they will also have an access code.

3. Conditional Use Permit: 80 Country Club Lane [Map R21, 15]

Owner/Applicant: Portsmouth Country Club

The owner/applicant is proposing to excavate and grade to enlarge the existing pond on the 15th hole from 2,538 sq. ft. to 18,735 sq. ft., with associated work in the local buffer zone as well as State and jurisdictional wetlands. The project will impact 7,943 sq. ft. of freshwater wetland, which includes the existing pond.

Marc Jacobs, Professional Wetland/Soil Scientist and representing Portsmouth Country Club, addressed the Board. Also present was Greg Dubois, Superintendent of the course. Near the 15th fairway, there is an existing pond of 2,538 sq. ft.; they are proposing to enlarge the pond to 18,735 sq. ft. The footprint will impact approximately 7,000 sq. ft. of freshwater wetlands. The existing cart path will be relocated but remain on the outside edge of the pond.

There are four primary objectives for expanding the pond: (1) drainage, trying to prevent encroachment during flooding from Great Bay due to a larger storm; (2) the larger pond will be designed to capture more surface runoff that is currently flowing out to the Bay unimpeded, providing pollution abatement functions with sheet flow going into the pond; (3) the pond will be aerated to provide some digestion of nitrogen and other fertilizer-type elements; (4) improve the playability of the course. Because the 15th hole is not ideally playable, it's preventing the course from being compliant with PGA standards. As a result, the course is unable to host tournaments.

M. Jacobs met with the Conservation Commission in August, and has received input from the Natural Heritage Bureau and NH Fish and Game. The Conservation Commission requested they aerate the pond; the course is committed to doing that. In addition, they are proposing a 400' screen along the outer Bay side edge of the cart path. At the request of NH Fish and Game they're adding 5' specimens of *Myrica Gale*, a salt-tolerant species, to provide a screen that will help protect the salt marsh sparrow.

The Conservation Commission also asked if they would consider replacing the three 12" diameter culverts that will provide eventual discharge of water in the pond with one larger pond. Their concern was that in a larger storm event, a culvert would plug and the pond would overflow. M. Jacobs noted that there was an emergency spillway; one large culvert would have necessitated elevating the cart path to cover the culvert. The result would have been an increased footprint and caused more wetland impact. The course didn't feel that was a good trade-off. The Conservation Commission also asked about the location of surplus soil. Any surplus soil from the pond enlargement will stay onsite; they haven't determined a location. M. Jacobs and G. Dubois will be working to find a location that is outside local and State jurisdiction. It will be surrounded by sufficient barriers, if needed. The plan also proposes silt fence at the limit of work. A waiver has been requested for the stormwater plan.

S. Gerrato suggested taking the water from the pond and putting it back on the course due to the amount of fertilizer. M. Jacobs responded that the course doesn't use a lot of fertilizer: they're sensitive to the location on the Bay and it's very expensive. G. Dubois added it's used as long as it's not brackish which happens in the low area near the Bay. Tides may come close to the pond on rare occasion (example: during the recent King Tide).

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There were no additional comments from the Board. M. Fougere noted that the application was very thorough, addresses all points in the Conditional Use Permit and has been reviewed by the Conservation Commission.

MOTION: C. Hussey moved to accept the application for Portsmouth Country Club as complete. Second – S. Gerrato; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

M. Fougere stated there wasn't a need for the Town Engineer to review. Chair Gerome opened the hearing to public comments. There being none, he closed the public hearing and returned to the Board for further discussion; there were no comments from the Board.

MOTION: S. Gerrato moved to grant the waiver from Article 18 – Wetlands Protection Ordinance, Section 18.6.2 – Stormwater Management Plan. Further, S. Gerrato moved to grant the Conditional Use Permit as by requested 80 Country Club Lane [Map R21, 15]. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

M. Fougere requested the office be notified when work has started.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: C. Homer moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, October 06, 2016. Second – S. Baker; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

5. Approval of Invoices

MOTION: C. Homer moved to approve payment to Altus Engineers in the amount of \$4,960.53 from the Planning Board Town budget. Second – S. Baker; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

A check was received from UNH as partial reimbursement through the stormwater grant.

6. Topics for Work Session: Thursday, November 03, 2016

Topics for the work session on Thursday, November 03, 2016 were reviewed. The C-RiSe presentation will be postponed until after the first of the year. The schedule for zoning changes was distributed; M. Fougere added that the first public hearings should be held at the December work session.

7. Sign Committee Update

M. Fougere updated the Board on the Sign Ordinance revisions; the Sign Committee finished their task earlier in the day. Board members will be emailed a copy of the revisions within the next week and ready for review at the work session on Thursday, November 03, 2016.

8. Stormwater Revisions

Stormwater revisions will be done once Zoning Ordinance updates have been completed. Stormwater will be included in the Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Review Regulations.

9. Other Business

The Board Secretary stated that there has been a problem with Thurken Development, March Farm Way, reimbursing the Escrow Account which is used to pay consultants for their reviews of projects. As directed by the Board, no further occupancy permits will be issued until reimbursement has been received.

10. Subdivision of Land, Site Plan Review: 437 Portsmouth Avenue [U4, 25]

Owner/Applicant: Chip Hussey, Chipco Realty of Greenland, LTD

Subdivision of Land: *The owner/applicant is proposing to establish condominium ownership lines for two separate units on a condo plan.*

Site Plan Review: *The owner/applicant is proposing to remove all fuel pumps, diesel pumps and propane tanks as well as associated concrete slabs and canopy on the existing site.*

C. Hussey recused himself; Chair Jerome also recused himself but chaired the meeting due to the absence of several Board members.

Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering and representing Chipco Realty, addressed the Board. Also present was Attorney Jack McGee. An existing conditions plan was added, showing what is on site now. The canopy and gas tanks were removed as well as the gas and diesel pumps. Painted parking spaces were delineated on the plan, as requested by the Town Engineer. An Easement Plan to handle drainage was also included. There were no changes on the Condo Site Plan. Site Plan updates were reviewed. Additional green space has been added and parking spaces have been turned in the opposite direction. There is a single 10' wide pass-through in front of Unit 2; it's not a high traffic area. The traffic pattern for customers going to Nik and Charlie's and Carter's Auto was discussed. There were originally seven parking spaces in front of Nik and Charlie's; two have been turned sideways to make a larger buffer. A pocket park will be created near the door of the restaurant and will include picnic tables; this will add more green space and infiltration into the ground. A 6' wide island will also be added near the road. B. Scamman pointed out the island on the edge of Unit 2 that is paved behind the sign. They plan to cut off a small portion on the tip for better access to the rear of the building on that side. The frontage on Portsmouth Avenue has been cut back to allow for more green space along the road.

Chuck Williams, Rainscape, noted that another key point was putting the telephone poles in islands, protecting vehicles from hitting them. More green space was added to the side of Unit 2. Parking along the side of the building was also changed. A painted walkway has been added from the sidewalk in front of Nik and Charlie's across the front of Unit 2. A small concrete ramp will be added next to the pocket park at the restaurant. The total impervious surface has been decreased by approximately 1,000 sq. ft. The area to the side of Unit 2 that was a concrete pad (LP storage cage) will be paved and be access to the side of the building.

Also included in the discussion were plans by Charles Hoyt, Architect, of proposed renovations to Unit 2. Signage was discussed. There was approximately 306.5 sq. ft. of signage on the Unit 2 side. A sign for the business will replace the old gas station sign at the front corner of the property in the new landscaped island. Granite posts will be used; it is slightly smaller in square footage than what is currently on site.

Plantings in the islands along Portsmouth Avenue will be low-growing junipers. C. Williams added they were being cognizant of traffic; B. Scamman added they were planting those types of plants due to sight lines. Low-growing junipers will give it a green look. C. Williams stated they are a very tolerant plant that can be grown on the beach: can withstand the heat, very low water requirement, and low

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maintenance. They may also add some lower grasses in the 12” to 18” range. They would like to have evergreens with some perennials. Around the proposed sign there would be more traditional plantings to add color. Islands are on the property intentionally; they will not have to deal with the DOT right-of-way.

The Board felt the plans were a big improvement. J. Connelly questioned the pass-through in the six parking spaces in front of the building and not closer to the road. B. Scamman responded they didn't want the potential of vehicles hitting the building. J. Connelly was concerned about pedestrians and the walkway. B. Scamman didn't feel there would be many people walking in front of the building. M. Fougere agreed, adding if there was more traffic on that side of the lot, he would have the same concerns. C. Williams added that there would not be many vehicles parked in the front; people going to Nik and Charlie's could cut through the parking lot and they were trying to avoid that.

The island in front of Unit 2 will be 40' long and 5' to 6' wide. C. Williams stated he has one truck that is 53' long with the trailer; however, most vehicles are pickup trucks or service vans. C. Homer commented that she liked how the islands provided symmetry and uniformity across the property. She asked if they felt it differentiated the road and the property; B. Scamman responded the island on Unit 2 with the sign added to the property as will the pocket park with the picnic tables at the restaurant. He pointed out the picnic table could be removed for snow removal; bushes in that location would be damaged. A lot of thought went into making this a useable site with green space and open space. Members were pleased with the extra step that was taken to put the telephone poles in the islands.

S. Baker questioned the tenants at the rear of Unit 2 and the traffic that may be generated; C. Williams didn't see an increase. Carter's Auto is at the rear of Unit 2 and a new tenant will be in the stand alone building, which is approximately 1,400 sq. ft. Display parking spaces for Carter's Auto have been labeled on the plan; the Town Engineer didn't want any of those spots on gravel. A walkway has been added to the Carter's Auto location. Easements are part of the condo documents that have been submitted to the Town. Carter's Auto will be limited to 15 vehicles for sale; it will be noted on the plan. M. Fougere noted that there are cars in the back that have encroached on the abutter's property. C. Williams assured the Board there would be new expectations for the tenant.

There are no physical barriers in the front parking spaces; they will be lined and a curved island on the road side. Members of the Board were concerned about “fly-through” vehicles. B. Scamman responded that the island would dramatically change the flow path. M. Fougere added that right now it's wide open to traffic. B. Scamman noted that additional barriers would be a problem for snowplowing. M. Fougere suggested using cones when the initial changes were made.

S. Gerrato stated that the Board “beat this up” at the last meeting and they returned with more than expected. He suggested the plans, as presented, should be approved. There was no written review from the Town Engineer. B. Scamman stated that the Town Engineer wanted Subdivision Approval from DES. B. Scamman has spoken to DES and their only concern was the lot loading; 1.27 acres was needed and the lot was 1.8 acres.

It was suggested that Conditional Approval, pending comments from the Town Engineer, be granted. M. Fougere stated that if the Town Engineer's comments were going to change the layout significantly, he would be hesitant. It was noted that he has already looked at it, and the changes should be minor. He suggested that if the Board was comfortable, it could be a stipulation in the approval. B. Scamman asked that the Board advise the Town Engineer that they approved the changes. Chair Gerome stated he would like the Town Engineer's constructive comments.

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MOTION: J. Connelly moved to grant the waiver from Section III: Scope and Requirements of the Site Plan Review, Section 3.3.1 – Site Plan Review Not Required. Second – S. Baker; four in favor, one abstain (Chair Gerome). MOTION CARRIED

There were no comments pertaining to revisions of the plans. C. Homer asked the benefit of adding stipulations. M. Fougere explained that the plan would be approved and they wouldn't return if they addressed any concerns the Town Engineer may have. B. Scamman noted that they would need State Subdivision Approval. M. Fougere explained that the Board had waived major site plan review. He continued that two approvals needed to be granted: (1) the condominium creation which would create the subdivision and (2) approval of site plan amendments. The Board was in agreement to grant conditional approval.

MOTION: S. Gerrato moved to approve the Subdivision of Land for 437 Portsmouth Avenue [Map U4, Lot 25] into a total of two lots in accordance with the plan by Emanuel Engineering dated October 19, 2016, Project No. 16-055, with the following conditions: (1) all pins must be set prior to recording; (2) NHDES Subdivision Approval must be received; and (3) three revised sets of plans and a mylar must be submitted. Second – S. Baker; four in favor, one abstain (Chair Gerome). MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: C. Homer moved to approve the applicant's request for a site plan modification for 437 Portsmouth Avenue [Map U4, Lot 25] in accordance with the plan by Emanuel Engineering dated October 19, 2016, Project No. 16-055, with the following conditions: (1) specs for plantings must be added to the site plan; (2) a note added that cars will only be parked in designated places; (3) waivers and Special Exceptions/Variances must be noted on the plan; (4) subject to review and comments by the Town Engineer, with direction from the Board that they were pleased with the revisions; and (4) three revised sets of plans must be submitted. Second – J. Connelly; four in favor, one abstain (Chair Gerome).

C. Hussey and Chair Gerome rejoined the Board.

11. Other Business

M. Fougere updated the Board on his meeting with Christian Smith and Scott Gove earlier in the day regarding Seavey Way. The original plan was approved with on-site wells and septic. Since the approval, they have been trying to get water from Rye; an agreement has finally been reached. The owner and developer are anxious to start the project, and would prefer to not have another public hearing. The plan was approved but not recorded. S. Gerrato noted that bringing water to the subdivision changed the septic designs and the requirements are easier.

The change in the plans was from on-site wells to City water. Chair Gerome noted that there is a four party agreement and there were no changes that could be made by the Board. M. Fougere added that the waterline will be overseen by the City of Portsmouth and it's their specs; they have signed off. The Fire Department has reviewed and approved the fire hydrant locations. M. Fougere also stated that there is a 10" water main within the subdivision, and 12" at the entrance for possible future extension. After an in-depth discussion, the Board was in agreement that a noticed public hearing would be needed. It was also noted that the Board of Selectmen has asked the Planning Board to thoroughly vet the quality and quantity of the water to be extended to Seavey Way. M. Fougere stated the discussion that will happen at the meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016, will be solely about adding water to the subdivision; it is a subdivision amendment and not adding water to Greenland. The Town Engineer will review the project for Town-related issues only.

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12. Adjournment

MOTION: S. Gerrato moved to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Second – S. Baker; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, November 03, 2016 – 7:00 p.m., Work Session, Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted – Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: 