

**DRAFT FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair Peter Capodagli
Paul Fontaine, Jr. Mike Hurley
Laura O’Kane Andrew Van Hazinga
Amanda Koeck (Assoc. Member)

STAFF: Mike O’Hara, Tom Skwierawski

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m. in the Community Room, Fitchburg Fire Headquarters, 33 North St.

ANR PLANS

Champa / Bellabarba, Valley St & Albee St.

Slight revision of an ANR plan endorsed by the Board in February 2019 by carving off an additional 4,800 sq. ft. of Bellabarba’s lot at 95 Valley St. and consolidating it into the abutting Champa parcel (286 Albee St.). The Board endorsed the plan.

MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW

371-373 Lunenburg St., The Caregiver-Patient Connection

CPC had submitted a revised plan showing angles parking spaces in front of 371 Lunenburg and landscaped beds, per condition of the Planning Board Special Permit. Board agreed to suggest that the applicant submit a revised plan showing all of the plan revisions req’d by the conditions of the Special Permit. Action on Site Plan Review deferred.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Site Plan Review - 1425 Water St., Twin Cities Auto Sales

This had been advertised and notice mailed to abutters as a major Site Plan Review. Trevor Burt submitted revised site plan showing 1425 Water St. (sales office for used cars), 1423 Water (2-family dwelling), and 1427 Water (dwelling & 1st floor storefront, both vacant). Vehicle display spaces, customer & tenant parking, etc. now shown on plan. He will remove awning from the 1425 bldg. & provide some green space. He’ll have one wall sign on business. Property still has “For Sale” sign but it is not listed anymore.

No public comment. Motion made & seconded to close public hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Van Hazinga) to Approve the Site Plan, subject to:

- Recondition or remove existing wall sign at 1427 Water St.
- Stripe spaces on existing and new pavement at 1423 & 1425 Water St.

Vote 6-0 in favor.

Joint Public Hearing - Public Shade Tree & Scenic Road Act - Pearl Hill Road, Unutil

Tree Warden Gary Withington, DPW & Dave Clapham, Unutil Forester present.

Dave presented a list and photos of trees to be trimmed or removed as part of Unutil’s Storm Reliability Program. Since Pearl Hill Road has been designated as a Scenic Road, a hearing before both the Tree Warden and Planning Board is required.

Total trees proposed to be cut: 69. 36 of them are within the street layout, 33 on private property. Unutil will remove cut wood unless homeowner wants it.

Q: Will stumps stay? Dave: Yes, because of cost and time. When stumps are near stone walls or on a slope, they’re difficult to grind. Mr. Van Hazinga: Leaving stumps detracts from appearance of the Scenic Road. From the photos it looks like many stumps could be removed.

Agreed: Any tree stump within the public right-of-way that is not impeded by slope or stone wall will be ground.

Public Comment:

Mike Donnelly, Mt Elam Rd.: Trees proposed to be removed are the wrong trees in the wrong places. He agreed with their removal.

Mr. Withington, Tree Warden has assessed condition of trees with Unitil and agrees with their removal. Timeline: Start work week of 4/15 or 4/22.

Motion made & seconded to close public hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Van Hazinga) to Approve the proposed tree removal as shown on the list submitted by Unitil, provided that tree stumps within the public right-of-way that are not impeded by slope or stone wall shall be ground down to ground level. Vote 6-0 in favor.

Special Permit & Site Plan Review - Brennan, 768 Water St. - 2-family dwelling (cont'd from 3/12/19)
Hearing re-opened. No revisions to plan since last meeting.

Some Board members concerned with narrowness of lot (50 feet), limited lot size (barely 5,000 sq. ft.) and limited side yards. Q: Is site appropriate for a two-family?

Mr. Capodagli: Putting another two-family on the site would repeating the mistakes of the past.

Public Comment:

John Morrison: owner of radio station: If special permit is approved, he suggests that there be a common driveway access & maintenance agreement with the 5-family dwelling on the right.

Motion made & seconded to close public hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Van Hazinga) to Deny the Special Permit due to site constraints, the limited lot size, and lack of width and side yards for a desirable two-family residential use. Vote 6-1 to Deny.

Special Permit & Site Plan Review - Rivarola, 37 Goodrich St., convert 2-family to 3-family dwelling (cont'd from 3/12/19. Request to continue to June 11th)

Hearing re-opened. Since the last meeting it has been confirmed by the Building Commissioner that adding a 3rd unit in the unfinished attic space will most likely require the installation of residential sprinklers. The applicant's architect would need to do a building code review. Having learned this, the applicant requested that the hearing be continued until the June meeting in order to evaluate his options. Motion made & seconded to continue the public hearing to the June meeting. Vote in favor.

Modification & Extension of Special Permit #2017- 7 - Harper Furniture renovation, 10 Main St., 1-11 Summer St. & 15 Summer St.

Hearing opened. Jon Rudzinski, Rees-Larkin Development present. He needs to ask for an extension of the 2-year period to start construction, but also is requesting a modification to increase from 42 to 44 units. Mass Historic has requested changes in the design (described in Jon's 3/22/19 Memo to the Board) and shown on plans from The Architectural Team dated Feb. 19, 2019.

Requested changes:

- # of units increased from 42 to 44.
Types: Studio: 1 unit. 1-BR: 14 units, 2-BR: 23 units. 3-BR: 6 units. Total #BRs: 66.
- # of affordable units at 60% AMI increased from 18 to 20.
- On-site parking spaces increased from 26 to 28 (includes 10 commercial spaces).
4 spaces are outside bldg.
- Off-site parking spaces leased in MART garage increased from 24 to 30.
Overflow spaces at Micron Products have been eliminated, they will no longer allow.
- Parking ratios now 1.32 spaces per unit.
- Front entrances of the Townhouses onto the sidewalk has been eliminated, access to units now via interior corridor.
- Façade of new construction has been pulled forward to be flush to the property line.
- Main St. facade now all masonry materials per NPS. NPS is requiring façade be restored to 1950s era appearance, rear façade remains painted clapboards (cement fiber panels).

Micron will no longer allow shared parking due to their multiple work shifts.

Ms. Caron suggested providing parking spaces for motorcycles, an EV charging station, also suggested lighting up building; it will be a landmark bldg. There'll be a visitor drop-off area at the rear of the bldg. Fire station will have 2 units on the 2nd floor, 1st floor will have the amenity space for the residents. The public activity space in front of the former fire station could be seating with planters & decorative fencing, but it's only intended for residents of the building.

Public comment:

Bill Larson, Micron Products, wants to make sure trash dumpsters won't be on Micron's property.

Jon: They won't be.

Glen Fossa owner of former Moran Sq. Diner, 2 Lunenburg St. supports proposal – will be good for business in the Moran Sq. area.

Motion made & seconded to close public hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Van Hazinga) to Approve the requested Special Permit Modification, and also to extend the time period to start on the project to November 2010 (12 months from the original 24-month period). Vote 6-1 in favor.

Proposed Zoning Amendment - Medical Office uses (cont'd from 3/12/19)

Hearing re-opened. Mr. Fontaine continued discussion – several towns (Chelsea, Millis, Rockland) have a separate substance abuse facility as a separate use on their Use Table. Some towns have a req'd buffer between such uses and/or a buffer from residential uses, schools, etc. Some also have different parking requirements.

Board agreed: Draft an amendment with these provisions:

- Add separate line item & definition of substance abuse facility.
- Restrict use to the Medical Marijuana overlay district by Special Permit.
- Establish a minimum 1,000-foot buffer between such uses.

Draft amendment will be sent to Law Dept. to review.

Motion made & seconded to continue public hearing to May meeting. Vote in favor.

Proposed Zoning Amendment - Replace existing Sec. 181.87, Smart Growth Overlay District (40R) with entirely new section

Tom: Rather than discuss the 40R amendment tonight, he'd like to switch gears & discuss the process for submitting an application the DHCD for preliminary approval of an Amendment to the 40R district. (See attached).

Motion made & seconded to authorize Tom to submit the application for preliminary approval to DHCD. Vote in favor.

Ms. Caron had several comments on the zoning amendment (marked in red in her version)

Motion made & seconded to continue public hearing on the 40R amendment to the May meeting.

Vote in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Community Health Connections, improvements to Drepanos Drive

Jeff Angers, CHC Facilities Director & Richard Davenport, Davenport Paving present to discuss condition of CHC's 2010 Special Permit concerning reconstruction of Drepanos Drive.

Jeff submitted plan w/ proposed revisions to the street improvements on the 7/18/2001 plan:

- Eliminate island @ Nichols & Drepanos.
- Grind & replace pavement from Nichols & Drepanos westerly to CHC's main driveway, approx. 440 ft. long (shown in blue pencil) on plan.
- Raise 4 CB structures along that stretch.
- Place 4 inches of riprap on the downhill (southerly) side of Drepanos, between Tom Donnelly's driveway & Nichols St.

CHC's budget for this is \$50,000. CHC would like to substitute this proposal to satisfy the Special Permit condition.

Q: Would Board be in favor of accepting this as a partial solution, and have CHC come back in two years with a plan to do the rest? Agreed: Jeff will go to CHC's CEO with this proposal.

Mr. Capodagli is OK w/ a partial solution, but only if the City can issue a fine for a zoning violation if the rest of the road is not repaved.

Maybe CHC can reach out to the state rep. and state senator for help?

Dick D. will also see how far the \$50K will go if they leave the island at Nichols & Drepanos as is. Board agreed to continue the discussion on this next month.

Informal - 255 Main St. (fmr. Fidelity Bank site) - residential development, Krikorian

Bill Krikorian and Charles Roberts, Kuhn-Riddle Architects present to discuss preliminary proposal for "Gateway Village" a 112-unit multifamily development at the NE corner of Main & Snow Streets. Board reviewed concept plan of parcel @ NW corner of Day & Main.

All units will be market rate, 1st two levels of structure will be parking decks - 85 spaces (non-combustible material). The five levels above will be wooden construction. Height: 85 feet, which is the max. in Bldg. Code for that type of construction. Unit types: 53 1-BR, 59 2-BRs.

Board comments: Parking: Can they lease spaces in the MART garage? Mr. Van Hazinga would like to get to a 1:1 parking ratio. Look at height of similar buildings in the downtown. Look at possible off-site improvements @ Main & North – working pedestrian signals are needed.

Build-out expected to be two years.

Bill plans on submitting an application & plans for the June meeting.

[Ms. Caron felt the room prior to the following item due to a conflict of interest.]

Informal - ACT Labs (Independent Testing Lab), 131 John Fitch Hwy.

Logan Morse, ACT Labs, John Caveney, Caveney Architectural Collaborative & Jamie Rheault, Whitman & Bingham present. Logan gave a brief background on ACT Labs. They have locations in Penn., N.Y., Calif. & Michigan. They aim to become the 4th approved testing lab in Massachusetts. Est. 6-10 employees eventually at this location, all trained chemists, etc. If business grows they may be expanding into rest of the building. Their employees go to grow facilities & take random samples in v. small (micrograms) amounts & bring back to lab.

The location is the former SunSations Tanning Salon, adjacent to Dickie's Grillin'.

John presented floor plan for interior. The appearance of the building's façade will not change - no sign, just an address sign.

ACT Labs will be submitting plans & application for the May meeting.

[Ms. Caron returned to the meeting]

Certificate of Completion - Windsor Hts. subdivision

The subdivision covenant approved in 2000 for this subdivision (Bishop & Castle Rds.) contained a provision that the Board would issue a Certificate of Completion when the roads were complete.

This Cert. had never been done.

Motion made & seconded to authorize the Chair to sign the Certificate of Completion. Vote in favor.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of March 12th meeting approved w/ some corrections.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 10:15 p.m.

Next meeting: May 14, 2019