

**FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2021**

FITCHBURG CITY CLERK

Jul 26 2021 8:48 am

NOTE: *This was a Virtual meeting on GoToSeminar due to the pandemic.*

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair Paul Fontaine, Jr., Vice Chair
 Amanda Koeck Peter Capodagli
 Alyne Butland Laura O'Kane
 Alex Lopez Tracy McGrath (Associate member)

STAFF: Mike O'Hara

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m.

ANR PLANS

None.

Ms. O'Kane removed herself from the meeting as a Board member for the following item:

MINOR SPECIAL PERMIT & SITE PLAN MODIFICATIONS/EXTENSIONS

8-20 John Fitch Hwy., South Fitch Realty - repaving & parking lot revisions

Present: Laura O'Kane, Geronimo Properties.

Plan of 6-20 John Fitch Hwy & 329 Summer St. by S.J. Mullaney rev. 4/19/21 reviewed by the Board.

Plan showed improvements to parking lot for that plaza including revised driveway, parking aisles & striping, and a landscaped buffer to the adjacent dance studio at 325 Summer St. The dumpsters for the 30 John Fitch plaza will be relocated to the vacant lot at 329 Summer and will be screened. The lot is a potential future area for food trucks; they are soliciting food trucks to locate there.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to Approve the Minor Modification to the Site Plan. Roll call vote: Lopez: Yes. Butland: Yes. Capodagli: Yes. Koeck: Yes. Fontaine: Yes. Caron: Yes. Vote 6-0 in favor.

Ms. O'Kane returned to the meeting as a Board member.

18 Blossom St. - (a/k/a 44 Crescent) - landscaping plan

Present: Nick Pelletier, Pelletier Properties. Nick had submitted revised landscaping plan by Brandon Design dated 5/19/21. Three concrete foundation pads from the original project will be converted into landscaped planting beds and a patio area for residents. Water could be provided via hose from outside faucet of townhouses.

A decorative metal fence will be installed along the top of the wall at the corner of Crescent & Blossom. Board reviewed site plan depicting the proposed location for a historical marker. Nick showed photos of granite wall adjacent to 26 Crescent St. that could be a possible location for a historical marker noting the Crescent Hotel site. Also, a plaque could be placed at the stone wall on the corner of Blossom & Crescent.

Mr. Capodagli: This was the site of the first meetinghouse, church & school in Fitchburg, it deserves a more substantial marker with more information.

Ms. Caron suggested that the Board clarify that this is a further modification of the 2005 special permit reducing the # of units from 10 to 7.

07/23/2021

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Ms. Koeck) to Approve the Minor Modification to Special Permit 2005-10 with conditions: Number of units reduced from ten to seven, the three existing foundations are not to be used as future building sites, install appropriate historical marker on wall at corner of Blossom & Crescent, site landscaping to be completed by 90 days from issuance of Certificate of Occupancy. Roll call vote: Lopez: Yes. Butland: Yes. Capodagli: Yes. Koeck: Yes. O'Kane: Yes. Fontaine: Yes. Caron: Yes. Vote 7-0 in favor

Special Permit 2020-4, Marchetti Industries, 50 Whalon St. - transfer of Special Permit

Present: Mike Marchetti, Marchetti Industries, Bob Patton, Green Meadows, Dr. Watkin, property owner, Dennis Kunian.

Mike Marchetti is asking for permission to transfer the Special Permit issued to Marchetti industries in 2020 to Green Meadows, who currently have a cultivation & retail facility in Southbridge, Mass. He's researched other potential businesses to take the project over & has been impressed by Green Meadows.

Board comments:

Ms. Caron: Moral Background forms & CORI check? They have been submitted to the Community Development Dept.

Timeline? Bob Patton: After transfer of Special Permit they will apply for bldg. permits to finish the fit-out of the space at 50 Whalon St. & seek Cannabis Control Commission approval for the transfer Green Meadows will be using the same contractor on project (Red Line Wall Systems). Hope to be open by the end of 2020.

Dr. Watkin: Both sides' attorneys are in discussion concerning the lease. He expects that that will be finalized in the next few days. Green Meadows will also offer Medical Marijuana. Zoning clarification needed as to whether this will need a further modification of the Special Permit or whether one is needed since the Ordinance's definition of ME- Marijuana Establishment includes both Adult Use and Medical.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Ms. Koeck) to Approve the transfer to Special Permit 2020-4 from Marchetti Industries to Green Meadows, LLC pending receipt of:

- Written agreement between the two parties on the Transfer.
- Written agreement between 50 Whalon St. property owner and Green Meadows on property lease *[Note: Any confidential or financial information on written agreements to be redacted]*

Roll call vote: Lopez: Yes. Butland: Yes. Capodagli: Yes. Koeck: Yes. O'Kane: Yes. Fontaine: Yes. Caron: Yes. Vote 7-0 in favor.

Special Permit 2018-17, Native Sun, 140 Industrial Rd. - transfer to 140 Industrial, LLC

Atty. Phil Silverman has requested that this item be pulled from agenda pending the assembling of additional Moral Character forms & CORI checks. He will contact Community Development Dept. when they're ready to submit.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Special Permit & Site Plan Review - KCMC Management, Inc., 580 John Fitch Hwy - demolish existing Dunkin' Donuts & and replace with new fast food restaurant (drive-thru only)

Present: Chris Anderson & Bill Hannigan, Hannigan Engineering, John Nadreau store manager, Joe Cadette. Hearing opened.

Chris presented plan. Proposed demolition & rebuild is an effort to make the traffic flow on John Fitch Hwy better. Currently, cars in the queueing lane back up onto JFH. Currently there's only two car lengths between order & pick up windows, not enough time to fill orders. Proposed plan would have nine car lengths from street to Order window, then four lengths to pick-up window.

Board comments:

Ms. Caron: Revised Zoning Ordinance has a new section on standards for drive-up windows – requires a 10-foot wide escape lane. Chris: They cannot meet that requirement due to the configuration of the site & proximity to Falulah Brook.

DPW is recommending No Left Turns out of site onto John Fitch Hwy. Right in/Right out only.
Chris: Location is on the wrong (non-A.M.) side of the street for normal Dunkin's traffic. Prohibiting Left turns onto JFH would negatively impact the store's business.
One proposed H/C space is less than the req'd three feet from the street sideline. Chris: The access aisle for the H/C space is less than three feet, the space itself meets the setback. Issue to be clarified w/ Bldg. Commissioner.
The existing exit onto Lunenburg St. will remain the same, but since it's prior to the pick-up window it will be seldom used.
Deliveries? Will be off-hours, early morning. Deliveries wheeled thru gate at rear of bldg.
Façade? Chris showed architectural renderings. Google street view reviewed by Board.
Ms. Caron looking for a traffic impact study. The proposed configuration would increase traffic exiting onto John Fitch vs. Lunenburg St. exit.

Q: How will customers know that it's Drive-up only? There will be signs. "Drive-up only" has become more common at Dunkin's recently, especially since Covid.

Nick Erickson, DPW: They will be meeting w/ applicants & Mass DOT on 6/15 & asked for a continuance of the hearing to the next month.

Ms. McGrath: Suggested obtaining input from Fitchburg P.D. - Traffic Div. on the number of accidents at that intersection.

Bill Hannigan: Agreed: existing site is bad, but more queueing spaces for drive-up will help the situation. They need to have the same business viability as before. One idea - flip the plan 180° & have no access on John Fitch, install one two-way driveway on Lunenburg St. They will prepare a sketch of how that revision could work.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Ms. Koeck) to continue the hearing to July 13. Vote in favor.

Site Plan Review - Blouin, 14-18 Myrtle Ave., parking relief, split parcel w/ 3-unit & 4-unit

Present: Matt Blouin, Myrtle Realty Trust, property owner & Mike Marino, Chuck Budnick, Cabo Consult. Hearing opened. Matt had owned property since 2005. He has units that have 2 cars each. Since can't park in the one-way street, he's seeking to provide off-street parking for his tenants.

Mike Marino presented plan to divide parcel into a 4,602 sq. ft. Lot 1 (18 Myrtle - 3-fam.) & a 3,969 sq. ft. Lot 2 (14-16 Myrtle - 4-family). Unit mix: 18 Myrtle: two 2 BRs, one studio = six pkg. spaces req'd. 14-16 Myrtle: three 3-BRs, one 2-BR = 7 pkg. spaces req'd.

Board comments: Parking spaces cannot spill over onto sidewalk, unsafe to back out into street.

Ms. Caron: suggested lowering the grade of spaces in front of #18. Also, revise the four spaces in front of to meet the 3-foot setback from property line & bldg. Need to pave & stripe lower parking spaces, remove granite curbstones in front, provide some plantings in front, submit revised site plan to reflect these conditions (*note: can be hand-drawn by applicant*), push back retaining wall two feet.

Nick Erickson DPW: Per City Code, max. driveway width is 36 ft. Proposed driveway is 40 ft. wide but DPW could consider of waiver since exist in condition. If the granite curbstones are pulled out DPW requests that they arrange for deliver to the DPW yard. Also re: utility connections to the two bldgs. – make sure there's cross-easements for utilities, access, etc. in case lots are conveyed separately in the future.

Mr. Capodagli wants to see more landscaping on site. Matt: Can't put that much \$\$ into property, he's just trying to get the parking spaces off the street to improve the situation.

Ms. Caron: Board should try to insure that the property is improved, but still feasible.

Public comment: None.

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

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to continue the hearing to June 8. Vote in favor.

Roll call vote: Lopez: Yes. Butland: Yes. Koeck: Yes. O'Kane: Yes. Capodagli: Yes. Fontaine: Yes. Caron: Yes. Vote 7-0 in favor.

Special Permit & Site Plan Review - Caires, 14 Highland Ave. - convert single-family into a two-family

Present: Paulo & Carrol Caires. Hearing opened. Paulo explained his proposal – has owned property since last year, it was the site of a fatal fire in 2020. Very large dwelling – finished area 3,300 sq. ft., also a barn in the rear. Currently listed by Assessors as a single-family. He'd like to convert the 1st floor into a 4-BR unit and the 2nd & 3rd floor into a 6-BR unit (total: 10 bedrooms).

Board comments: Proposal is more like a rooming/lodging house. Too many BRs. Suggest eliminate BRs from the 3rd floor. Put back the two granite blocks on the left side of site as was shown in previous street views or block access to that side from the street. Driveway should be closer to the dwelling, then turn 90° into parking spaces.

Agreed: Board needs a site plan to review, there was no site plan submitted with application

Nick E - DPW-Engineering: Need to show how the first inch of rain from additional impervious area will be handled. Going from a single- to a two-family will require a new Sewer connection permit. Motion made & seconded to continue hearing. Vote in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Game On Fitchburg update

Update on measures to improve emergency response to site discussed.

MINUTES

Not yet available.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 9:46 p.m.

Next meeting: June 8, 2021

Minutes approved: July 13, 2021