

DRAFT
Planning Commission
June 6, 2016

Present: Bruce Riddle, Peter Merrill, Robin Adair Logan, Toby Dayman, Quinn Colgan, Jacques Harlow, Mike Morris, Selectboard Liaison and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrative Officer

Absent: None

Administrative Matters

1. Downtown White River Junction Parking Management Study

Matt Osborn reported that the Town is conducting a parking study for Downtown White River Junction. Matt noted that in 2005, the Planning Department instituted a Downtown Parking Survey. The survey takes place twice a year and is intended to monitor parking in order to avoid a parking problem from developing. He noted that parking occupancy has increased, but there is still sufficient capacity. However, with additional projects coming, it became a high priority to undertake a parking study. In 2015, the Town applied for and received a Vermont Municipal Planning Grant for the study. The Town hired Vital Communities and Resource Systems Group. Both firms have offices in the downtown and have extensive transportation planning and parking experience. He noted that the project will include Transportation Demand Management which looks at managing parking through alternative means of transportation such as transit, walking, biking and carpooling. Matt distributed the scope of work and next steps. He stated that a Steering Committee, comprised of downtown business owners and employees and town staff, was formed. The first meeting was held today. Matt noted that there will be two community meetings and a stakeholder's breakfast discussion as well as a community survey to solicit public input. Matt noted that the project is expected to be completed by the end of the year. Bruce Riddle stated that the first Steering Committee went very well and he is pleased to have consultants working on the project that have an office downtown and are directly affected by the project.

2. Demolition of Historic Structures

Bruce Riddle noted that the demolition of the Benjamin Wright House on Maple Street resulted in concern expressed by the Hartford Historic Preservation Commission of the need for a Demolition Ordinance in order to provide the opportunity for documentation. He stated that at some point, the Planning Commission will hold a joint workshop with the Historic Preservation Commission to discuss further.

3. Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (RPC) update

Bruce Riddle updated the Commission on recent activity of the RPC regarding transportation planning. He stated that he is trying to start a discussion regarding the need

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for well water testing with them. He noted that the RPC is reviewing the Town Plans for Woodstock and Pomfret over the summer.

4. Review Rules of Procedure

Bruce Riddle noted that once an application is submitted to the Planning Office Commissioners cannot discuss the application with the public.

Robin Adair Logan asked that the Commission be given application materials earlier than in the past.

5. Review Minutes of May 2, 2016

Robin Adair Logan moved to approve the minutes of May 2, 2016. Peter Merrill requested a change and seconded the motion with the noted change. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Review Projects Receiving Administrative Approval

Bruce Riddle explained that one permit had been issued administratively for the addition of 12 indoor seats at Singleton's store in Quechee.

7. Discuss availability for the next Public Hearing.

Quinn Colgan stated that he was not available for the July 11th hearing. All other Commissioners anticipated being available.

8. Public Comment.

None

Public Hearing

After Bruce Riddle opened the Public Hearing, he introduced the Commission and Zoning Administrator, explained the hearing process and Interested Party Rule. He then administered the oath.

1. Application #16-05 by Wayne Punt (owner) and Vermont Illustrating, LLC (applicant) for Site Development Plan Approval under section 260-45 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a Light Manufacturing Facility, lot 08-0150-000, Stagecoach Road, Quechee, in the QII Zoning District. (Continued from May 2, 2016)

It was noted that the applicant had requested a continuance.

Robin Adair Logan moved to continue the application to July 11, 2016. Peter Merrill seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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2. Application #16-10 by Spencer Brouillette (owner/applicant) for approval of a subdivision amendment involving the re-location of a driveway, lot 13-0040-001, Bliss Road, Quechee, in RL-1, FC, and Rural Lands Overlay Zoning Districts.

Spencer Brouillette and Tim Schaal were present.

Jo-Ann Ells noted that the Planning Commission had discussed the application informally at their hearing in March.

Tim Schaal reviewed the application.

Toby Dayman noted that there was a typo in note #1 on sheet C1.

Jacques Harlow asked why the driveway was not located on the upper part of Bliss Road. Tim Schaal explained that the location was discussed when the lot was created and access in that area was denied by the Department of Public Works.

Quinn Colgan asked if the 15" driveway culvert was adequate. Tim Schaal stated that it was sized for a 25 year storm event.

Quinn Colgan noted that there was a stone wall on Bliss Road. Tim Schaal stated that the proposed access is located at a break in the wall.

There was no public comment.

Peter Merrill moved to close the Public Hearing. John Reid seconded the motion and the Public Hearing was closed.

Quinn Colgan moved to approve the application with the correction as noted. Robin Adair Logan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Application #16-11 by The Town of Hartford (owner) and The Sports Venue Foundation/Upper Valley Aquatic Center (applicant) for Site Development Plan Approval under section 260-45 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for an addition to an existing Recreational Facility, lot 14-0039-000, 100 Arboretum Lane, White River Junction, in an HC Zoning District.

Richard Synnott, Shannon Harrington and Steve Rooney were present.

Shannon Harrington gave an overview of the location, size and purpose of the proposed addition, the site improvements, drainage and water and sewer services.

Steve Rooney gave an overview of the elevation plan, internal layout, and mechanicals.

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Bruce Riddle asked if the proposed physical therapy space could be isolated from the rest of the building. Steve Rooney explained that this would not be done as the physical therapy space would share amenities such as the bathroom and locker room with the main facility.

Quinn Colgan asked if the seven handicapped parking spaces shown on the plan were proposed or existing. Steve Rooney stated that they were existing and would be restriped as part of the project.

Quinn Colgan asked if the stormwater pond was permitted for lot #1 only.

Toby Dayman asked the applicant to review the proposed grades by the ramp to verify they were A.D.A. compliant.

There was a brief discussion regarding signage.

There was no public comment.

Peter Merrill moved to close the Public Hearing. John Reid seconded the motion and the Public Hearing was closed.

Peter Merrill moved to approve the application. John Reid seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Application #16-12 by Main Street Renaissance, VT-LLC (owner) and The Village at White River Junction (applicant) for approval of a Planned Development under section 260-47 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations and Hartford's Subdivision Regulations, lot 45-0181-000, corner of Gates Street and Currier Street, White River Junction, in the CB and Design Review Zoning Districts.

Lou Bieker, Bryon Hathorn and Brooke Ciardelli were present.

Jo-Ann Ells explained that an Assisted Living Facility is a permitted use in the CB zoning district and that the applicant was proposing a Planned Development to afford the opportunity to request a waiver from the 50' height restriction.

Jo-Ann Ells stated that the Planned Development does not authorize any construction as that is done under Site Development Plan Review.

Lou Bieker gave an overview of the architectural plans focusing on the height of the proposed building.

Lou Bieker gave an overview of the proposed building materials and explained that the Design Review Committee had given the project conditional approval and that the applicant was meeting with the Committee in the morning to address the condition.

It was noted that the proposed color of the building materials did not translate well on the printed plans and some of the slides.

Bruce Riddle asked about the view from Bullard Street above the project. Robin Adair Logan suggested that the applicant do a balloon test. Peter Merrill stated that he was more concerned about the effect on the immediate downtown as the building would not change the skyline of the town from Bullard Street given that the buildings against the hill. John Reid agreed.

John Reid asked if the Fire Department had reviewed the height of the building. Jo-Ann Ells stated that the Fire Marshall had reviewed the plans with her and did not voice any concern.

Jo-Ann Ells stated that a survey is part of the required documents for a Planned Development. She noted that there might be a question about the survey from an abutter.

Byron Hathron said that he received a phone call from Brian Marsicovetere who thought there might be a discrepancy with the survey submitted for the applicant and one that his surveyor had prepared. He stated that the two surveyors were talking. He pointed out the line in question.

Brian Marsicovetere distributed three surveys of the applicant's property (McCutcheon, SVE and Otterman) and pointed out an inconsistency in the measurement of one of the lot lines.

Brian Marsicovetere stated that he was concerned about the effect of the project on his ability to build in the future and loss of sunlight.

Brian Marsicovetere voiced concern on the lack of time to review the application materials. Jo-Ann Ells noted that a CD of the materials was prepared by planning staff weeks ago and not picked up.

Bruce Riddle questioned how to solve the question regarding the competing surveys.

Jo-Ann Ells noted that the SVE and Otterman surveys were not signed by the surveyor and therefore not valid.

Brian Marsicovetere stated that he was concerned with the scope of the discrepancy and his ability to build in the future if the applicant is building up to the property line.

Peter Merrill stated that the Planning Commission does not resolve property line disputes.

Toby Dayman asked if additional information was needed for the Planning Commission to act on the request for additional height.

Byron Hathorn noted that if the discrepancy Brian Marsicovetere claims is true, the project could still be built.

At 8:05PM Robin Adair Logan moved to enter deliberative session. Toby Dayman seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

At 8:33PM the Commission resumed the hearing.

Noting that Byron Hathorn had not signed the attendance before his testimony, Brian Marsicovetere questioned if Byron Hathorn's testimony was under oath. Bruce Riddle stated that it was.

Bruce Riddle noted that the Commission intended to continue the application and requested that:

- Staff seeks a legal opinion regarding the Commission's role in resolving competing surveys.
- The applicant work with Brian Marsicovetere to resolve the discrepancy with the surveys.
- The applicant prepares a visual analysis/cross section from Bullard Street.

Quinn Colgan moved to continue the application to 7:00 PM, Monday June 20th in order for the applicant to address the items noted by Bruce Riddle. Robin Adair Logan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

5. Application #16-13 Main Street Renaissance, VT-LLC (owner) and The Village at White River Junction (applicant) for Site Development Plan Approval under section 260-45 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a Nursing Care Facility, lot 45-0181-000, corner of Gates Street and Currier Street, White River Junction, in a Planned Development and the Design Review District.

Lou Bieker, Bryon Hathorn and Brooke Ciardelli were present.

Bruce Riddle noted that the application would be continued to June 20, 2016.

Lou Bieker reviewed the:

- Streetscape
- Interior building layout
- Parking
- Access
- Resident garden/terraces
- Conceptual signage
- Building materials

Bruce Riddle asked if the applicant had researched the stability of the hillside. Lou Bieker stated that the backside of the parking area has been engineered to withstand any movement. He added that the proposed retaining walls on the hillside would be engineered.

Bruce Riddle asked about the design of the barriers for the upper level terraces. Lou Bieker stated that there are standard codes that will be followed.

John Reid commented that water/ice could accumulate between the retaining wall and the building and cause a dam. Lou Bieker stated that he would ask the engineer about this issue.

John Reid commented on the extensive number of amenities for the residents.

Lou Bieker stated that it is expected that the residents will be mobile.

John Reid asked about the percentage of residents that will have a vehicle. Brooke Ciardelli stated that it is estimated that 10% of residents have vehicles upon arrival and 2.6 years after arrival they do not have a vehicle. John Reid questioned if this percentage was accurate for the expected residency.

Toby Dayman asked about the number of employees. Byron Hathorn stated that between breakfast and dinner time there would be 25-30, before breakfast and after dinner it would be less.

Toby Dayman asked about the stormwater design. Lou Bieker described the proposed stormwater system.

Toby Dayman suggested the applicant consider widening the carriage path.

Toby Dayman stated that the retaining wall and path are different on sheet C-1 and the landscape plan.

Toby Dayman asked about circulation in the parking area. Lou Bieker stated that a vehicle parked in the parking area would not obstruct the flow of traffic.

Toby Dayman asked if construction easements would be required. Lou Bieker stated that they can construct without them, but noted they would be helpful.

Toby Dayman suggested the applicant review the proposed plantings at the rear of the building to confirm they could tolerate the shady conditions.

Bruce Riddle suggested that the Planning Commission hold the remainder of their questions and open the hearing up for public comment.

Brian Marsicovetere asked if the current flooding problem on Gates Street would be addressed and about the use of an open “alcove” on the first floor. Lou Bieker stated that the alcove was just an open area.

Brian Marsicovetere asked if he could build to a zero lot line setback. Bruce Riddle stated that there are no setbacks in the CB zoning district. Lou Bieker added that there are building code requirements that need to be met for zero lot setbacks.

Jacques Harlow asked if the emergency doors open to areas on or off site. Lou Bieker stated that the emergency doors open to areas on site.

Mary Nadeau expressed concern with the impact of the project on parking. She noted that parking would be limited during times when residents, staff and theater goers were all using municipal parking at the same time. She added that the use of municipal parking by the people at the VFW and Matt Bucy’s property would add to the demand.

Byron Hathorn stated that he is meeting with staff this week and will submit amended plans as necessary.

Eric Bunge of Northern Stage commented that it was his impression that the intent was to slow down the project. He noted that there is a parking study underway and that the project is a wonderful opportunity for the town.

Quinn Colgan moved to continue the application to 7:00 PM, Monday June 20th and noted that the applicant should provide as up to date plans as possible. Robin Adair Logan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

At 9:37 p.m. Peter Merrill moved to adjourn. John Reid seconded the motion and the Hearing was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,

Peter Merrill, Clerk