

DRAFT
Planning Commission
June 20, 2016

Meeting Continued from June 6, 2016

Present: Bruce Riddle, Peter Merrill, Robin Adair Logan, Toby Dayman, John Reid, Quinn Colgan, Lori Hirshfield, Planning Director, Rich Menge, Public Works Director, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrative Officer

Absent: Jacques Harlow, Mike Morris, Selectboard Liaison

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

1. 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, Byron Hathorn, Brooke Ciardelli, and John Bruno were present.

Jo-Ann Ells reminded the Commission that:

- An Assisted Living Facility is a permitted use in the CB zoning district.
- The applicant is proposing to do the project as a Planned Development in order to request a waiver from the 50' height restriction.
- Approval of Planned Development does not authorize any construction; that is done under Site Development Plan Approval.

Jo-Ann Ells outlined that at the hearing on June 6, 2016, the Commission requested that:

- The applicant work with the abutter, Brian Marsicovetere, regarding the question he raised regarding one of the property lines.
- Staff determine the role of the Planning Commission in boundary disputes.
- The applicant prepare a visual analysis/cross section from Bullard Street.

Jo-Ann Ells stated that an agreement had been reached between the applicant and the abutter regarding the boundary line. She added that a condition should be added to any approval requiring the applicant to submit an updated survey.

2. 06-20-16

Jo-Ann Ells stated that she confirmed that the Planning Commission does not have a role in resolving boundary disputes.

Copies of the applicant's visual analysis from Bullard Street were distributed.

Lou Bieker reviewed the analysis.

Toby Dayman questioned why an analysis from the second story of the dwelling was not done for views one and two. Lou Bieker stated that those dwellings are a single story.

Toby Dayman asked about clearing on the hillside. Lou Bieker stated that no clearing would be necessary past the "carriage path."

Lou Bieker noted that the elevator overrun would be the portion of the building that could be seen when the leaves were off the trees.

John Reid asked about the design of the carriage path Currier Street intersection. Jo-Ann Ells noted that would be reviewed during Site Development Plan Review.

Quinn Colgan questioned the use of "private" areas as open space. Jo-Ann Ells noted common areas for the residents are counted as open space.

Bruce Riddle asked that the history of the carriage path be added to the Findings of Fact.

There was no public comment.

Quinn Colgan moved to close the Public Hearing. John Reid seconded and the Public Hearing was closed.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed changes to the draft Findings of Fact.

Peter Merrill moved to approve the application with the noted changes. Quinn Colgan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. 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, Byron Hathorn, Brooke Ciardelli, and John Bruno were present.

Letters from Northern Stage, The United Methodist Church of White River Junction, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission, and David Briggs were distributed. In

addition, a copy of the February 2016 Municipal Parking Survey and draft minutes from the June 7, 2016 Design Review Committee meeting were distributed.

Amended copies of sheet C-1, the Landscape Plan and the ground floor plan were distributed. Lou Bieker reviewed the changes to the plans. He noted that the plans would need to be revised to agree with the pending revised survey.

Lou Bieker stated that at the request of a Commissioner the proposed plantings were reviewed to confirm that were appropriate for shady areas.

Rich Menge gave an overview of the status of the Currier Street improvements. He compared this part of the project to the recent re-development of Prospect Street. He reviewed the design of the intersection of the carriage path and Currier Street.

Rich Menge stated that the DPW was comfortable with the suggested conditions of approval. He added that he appreciated the cooperation and expertise of the applicant's engineer.

Lou Bieker reviewed a change to the wall on the Gate Street side of the proposed terrace which resulted in the addition of railing and a feeling of openness.

Bruce Riddle asked if the VFW was an abutter. Jo-Ann Ells stated that they were not an abutter.

John Reid asked Staff to review the Parking Survey.

Lori Hirshfield reviewed the highlights of the Parking Survey with focus on the percentage of occupied parking spaces in various areas of the downtown.

Lori Hirshfield stated that the Town had received a grant and hired Resource Systems Group and Vital Communities to conduct a comprehensive parking study in the downtown.

John Reid voiced concern regarding where a resident of the facility who did not have an on-site parking space would park. Lori Hirshfield noted that the Legion lot allows 24 hour parking and that maximizing the use of this lot would be part of the parking study.

John Reid asked if the sidewalk would be extended to the Legion parking lot. Lori Hirshfield confirmed that it would.

Bruce Riddle asked about the parking needs of the facility.

Brooke Ciardelli stated that of the 50 employees, 30% are part-time. She added that there would be 35 full-time employees on site over three shifts with 15 on the first shift, and ten on the second and third shifts.

Brooke Ciardelli stated that 10% of the non-memory care residents (five people) are likely to have a vehicle.

Peter Merrill asked if there was a difference in the parking demand in the summer compared to the winter. Lori Hirshfield stated that there is less of a demand in the summer months.

Quinn Colgan asked about the use of the municipal lot by the DMV. Jo-Ann Ells stated that the DMV has moved to Holiday Drive.

Quinn Colgan noted that there is some risk to assuming only five residents would have a vehicle given the applicant's testimony that residents are expected to be mobile. Brooke Ciardelli stated that the figure comes from the assisted living company that they are working with who run approximately 650 facilities.

Brooke Ciardelli stated that shifts do not all change at the same time.

Toby Dayman asked about the number of parking spaces at the Briggs and Legion lots. Lori Hirshfield stated that there are 160 parking spaces at the Legion lot and 39 in the Briggs lot.

Quinn Colgan stated that based on his calculations, the project would have a 6% impact on parking in the downtown.

Bruce Riddle asked about the comments from the DPW regarding snow storage in the proposed parking spaces on Currier Street. Rich Menge noted that these spaces may be used to store snow temporarily during cleanup efforts.

Toby Dayman asked that any changes to the trees on the Church site be reviewed. Brooke Ciardelli stated that the applicant is working with a committee of Church members on the issue. Jo-Ann Ells suggested adding a condition requiring any changes to the Church's trees be reviewed.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding drainage for the front terrace. Lou Bieker stated that water would be directed away from the stairs and drains would be installed to direct the water to the infiltration system. It was agreed that the location of the drains be reviewed.

There was a brief discussion regarding deliveries and the loading area. Byron Hathorn stated that the loading areas would accommodate the largest delivery vehicle that would come to the facility (23' box truck).

Robin Adair Logan asked about the difference between senior housing and an assisted living facility. Byron Hathorn stated that people who live in senior housing are independent.

Robin Adair Logan asked if the applicant was a non-profit. Byron Hathorn stated that the facility was for-profit.

Robin Adair Logan asked if the residents would contribute to the local economy. Byron Hathorn stated that he expected that residents would go to restaurants, the theater and other establishments in the downtown.

There was a discussion regarding how the retaining wall would interface with the pedestrian path and building. Lou Bieker stated that safety codes with regard to railing would need to be followed. He added that he anticipated that some landscaping might be added in this area.

Quinn Colgan asked about noise from the AC units on the roof top. Lou Bieker stated that this has not been reviewed yet and added that he expected that it will not be an issue and the units will have walls around them.

Quinn Colgan asked if pets were allowed. Brooke Ciardelli stated that residents can have pets and noted that there is a terrace designed for them.

Toby Dayman noted that he needed more time to review the new information before voting on the project.

Design Review Committee Chair Denise Welch May went over the Committee's review and recommendation to the Planning Commission including the building materials.

Quinn Colgan asked if street lighting would be installed. Rich Menge stated that it would and noted that the design was being discussed.

Bruce Riddle asked if there was any public comment.

George Abetti distributed a parking chart from Burlington, Vermont. He questioned the accuracy of the applicant's testimony regarding their parking demand, noting that 10% seemed low and noted that data from the applicant might not be objective.

George Abetti asked if the terraces can be counted as green spaces. Jo-Ann Ells stated that they meet Hartford's definition of open space.

George Abetti closed by stating he felt that the parking is potentially significantly underestimated.

Mary Nadeau asked if the geology of the lot had been reviewed. Bruce Riddle noted that the applicant testified about this at the previous hearing.

Mary Nadeau suggested the applicant consider underground parking.

6. 06-20-16

Brian Marsicovetere asked when the amended plan would be available. Jo-Ann Ells stated that it would need to be submitted before a zoning permit could be issued.

Brian Marsicovetere questioned if a different color scheme for the building might be better suited for the area.

Brian Marsicovetere asked about the use of the alcove at the back of the parking area. Byron Hathorn stated it was simply an open area.

Lori Hirshfield clarified that the Design Review guidelines do not include the ability to regulate color.

Bruce Riddle stated that he was ready to call a vote. He noted that the application is a fine addition to the community. He reminded the Commission that the plans were for permitting, not construction.

Toby Dayman and Robin Adair Logan stated that they needed more time to review the new materials before voting. The remaining Commissioners stated that they were ready to vote.

Robin Adair Logan asked what would happen if parking becomes a problem in the downtown. Lori Hirshfield stated that existing, approved, and potential development will be reviewed in the comprehensive parking study.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the changes to the draft Findings of Fact.

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

Peter moved to approve the application with the noted changes. John Reid seconded and the motion passed 4-2 with Toby Dayman and Robin Adair Logan in opposition. It was noted that Toby Dayman and Robin Adair Logan wanted more time to review the application before voting.

Adjournment

At 9:20 p.m. Peter Merrill moved to adjourn. John Reid seconded the motion and the Hearing was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,

Peter Merrill, Clerk