

APPROVED
Minutes
Hartford Planning Commission
March 8, 2021

**THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH
THE VERMONT OPEN MEETING LAW
WITH ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION**

Present: Bruce Riddle, John Reid, Toby Dayman, Dillon Bianchi, Dave Sherman, Robin Adair Logan, Kim Souza, Selectboard Liaison, Lori Hirshfield, Director of Planning and Development, Matt Osborn, Town Planner and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

Absent: None

Administrative Matters

Bruce Riddle read a script as required to hold a remote Public Hearing,

1. Sketch Plan River Roost

Mark Babson introduced himself as the owner of River Roost. He reminded the Commission that he had been before them in the spring and summer of 2020 to discuss expansion plans and that the Commission had requested that he have a traffic and parking analysis done.

Corey Mack of Resource Systems Group introduced himself and reviewed the analysis that he prepared. He noted that he had discussions with planning staff about the analysis.

Corey noted that there is limited on-site parking, and that he considered both the Town's parking requirements and others. Noting that this is not an isolated site but part of a developed downtown, Corey commented that many vehicles will be in the vicinity for other reasons in addition to visiting the brewery. Corey explained that he reviewed the parking surveys conducted by the Town Planner and concluded that the downtown is the busiest when there are events such as Northern Stage or First Friday. He observed that some of the people attending these events will likely also go to the brewery.

Corey reviewed his recommendation that signage, such as an on-site sandwich board, be provided direct people where to park off-site.

John Reid noted that the analysis does not include the impact on the parking of the approved redevelopment of 132 South Main Street and noted that the entertainment scene has grown during events such as Northern Stage and First Friday. He commented that a municipal strategic plan to address parking in the downtown needs to be developed. He added that he is happy to see the prospect of additional jobs and outdoor seating in the downtown but is torn about the application due to parking.

Corey noted that there is no way to account for the impact of the redevelopment of 132 South Main Street until it is operating. He added that River Roost and the entertainment scene are complimentary.

Dillion Bianchi noted that he is also torn. He noted that the sharing of parking spaces makes some sense, but it is hard to tell what the impact of the addition will be.

Dave Sherman raised several concerns including relying on Grow-Pro leaving the building, the location of available parking spaces are scattered, some municipal parking spaces need to remain non-allocated and the high percentage of off-site parking that the applicant is requesting.

Robin Adair Logan noted that the popularity of WRJ is creating a bit of a parking dilemma but stopping growth in WRJ in a Central Business zoning district is not the answer. She suggested meeting with the Selectboard to discuss parking strategies.

Toby Dayman noted that there will be few on-site parking spaces for customers given the allocation to employees and dwelling units. He stated that this could result in a large burden on municipal parking.

Lori Hirshfield explained that the Town has plans to add 50 parking spaces in the former Legion lot in the summer of 2022 and that parking spaces are available further away from River Roost in the downtown area.

Bruce noted he is inclined to approve the off-site parking given the Town's plans to add 50 parking spaces and the fact that people will learn where parking spaces are available.

Bruce polled the Commissioners on their guidance for the applicant.

Robin Adair noted that she agrees with Bruce that a parking waiver can be approved. She asked if there is parking available at the Courthouse parking lot. Lori noted that unofficially parking is available there during the evening and weekends.

Dave stated that he is uncomfortable with the project as parking spaces are already needed for the existing development in WRJ.

John expressed support for the application but noted that signage on the Town website and in WRJ to direct people to municipal parking areas will be needed. He voiced his belief that the benefits of the project such as jobs and taxes, outweigh the impact on parking.

Toby asked about the location of the planned 50 additional parking spaces. Lori noted that they would be added to the South Main Street Municipal Lot (former Legion parking area) behind Northern Stage and Trail Break. Toby noted that he would be in favor of the project with the addition of 50 parking spaces.

Dillon stated that he was in favor of the off-site parking because the benefits as noted by John outweigh the concerns.

Public Hearing

Bruce Riddle read a script as required to hold a remote Public Hearing, skipped reviewing the Hearing process as the applicant was aware from prior applications, took a roll call, and administered the oath.

1. Application #21-01 by Fred Davis, Jr., and Steve Davis (owners/applicants) for a lot line adjustment between lots 08-0088-001 and 08-0090-004, 120 Cope Lane and 177 Byron Hill, Hartford, in an IC zoning district and Planned Development.

Steve Davis and Tim Rockwood were present.

Jo-Ann reviewed the draft Findings of Fact.

John noted a correction to Finding #10.

There was no public comment.

John moved to close the Public Hearing. Robin Adair seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

John moved to approve the application with the noted correction. Robin Adair seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Matters Continued

1. Minutes of October 19, 2020

John moved to approve the minutes of October 19, 2020 as presented. Robin Adair seconded. And the motion passed unanimously.

2. Administrative Permits

Bruce reviewed the following projects that received administrative approval:

- Sleeping quarters, Quechee Fire Station
- Rooms converted to extended stay- Pleasant View Motel
- Walk in cooler- Taj India
- Hair Salon- Jct. Marketplace
- Outdoor seating- Quechee Ski Hill

3. Availability for the next Public Hearing (April 5th, early)

4. 03-08-21

All Commissioners anticipated being available for the Hearing.

4. Public comment

None

Adjournment

At 7:05 p.m. John moved to close the Hearing. Robin Adair seconded, and the Hearing was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,

Toby Dayman, Clerk