

TOWN OF ANDOVER
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2022 - 7:00 P.M.
LOCATION: VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Jed Larson, Vice Chair Anne Peterson Cremé, Scott Person, Leigh Ann Hutchinson, Steve Nelson, Susan England (alternate), Anne Blanchard (alternate), and Kevin Arnesen (alternate)

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Jim Hallisey – Zoning Agent, Abbie Winter – Board Clerk, Bill Warner, Brandon Handfield, Carrie Crompton, Cathleen Desrosiers, Chris Bernard, Catherine Lewis, Dianne Grenier, Douglas Grunert, Eric Anderson, Eric Berry, Erin Boris, Gary Eucalito, James Cole, Jeff Murray, Jenifer, Joan Foran, Joe Poland, Julie, Katherine Hutchinson, Liz Lokiec, Louise Goodwin, Marcie Miner, Maria Tulman, Matthew Bruton, Maureen K., Pat Grimaldi, Pat Padlo, Paula King, Richard Wilson, Robin Pearson, Sarah Costagliola, and Stephen

- 1) CALL TO ORDER: Chair J.Larson called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

Application of Garrett Homes, LLC for a Site Plan Approval to construct a 10,640 square foot retail facility in an industrial zone in accordance with Section 9.0 (referencing 8.0) of the Andover Zoning Regulations.

- 2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

The representatives for the applicant, Garrett Homes, LLC, gave background on the site plan's building characteristics, parking lot characteristics, and traffic study.

J.Larson asked if the traffic study considered the site across the street, since those owners are intending to sell the property for commercial development. P.Padlo stated it is not included since it's in the early stages of planning, so there is not adequate data.

J.Hallisey stated he is still in the process of reviewing the materials that were recently submitted and updated. He asked if their plan to reduce the size of the parking spaces has an effect on the amount of impervious surfaces. M.Bruton stated the smaller parking spots reduce the size of overall parking lot, decreasing the amount of pavement on the property. M.Bruton added that they were asked to connect the Lake Road sidewalk to the front of the building, so this portion of the sidewalk that extends onto their property increases the overall amount of onsite pavement.

J.Hallisey asked about two outstanding approvals – one from the Department of Public Health and one from the Department of Transportation (DOT). M.Bruton stated they are applying for an encroachment permit from DOT regarding the site plan, the traffic, and the drainage. M.Bruton stated they recently resubmitted the traffic impact study as per DOT's request, and he projected they'll get approval in approximately a month. M.Bruton stated they are pursuing state approval for the transient non-community well, and he reviewed the required three-step process that will be completed when the well is installed, tested, and the plumbing is functional.

J.Hallisey asked about the adjacent properties' right to drain. M.Bruton stated the peer review engineer proposed that the site plan includes a culvert at the southwest corner of the property to drain

water from adjacent properties. M.Bruton showed the site plan's culvert and drainage system which connects to the DOT's existing culvert under Route 6.

J.Hallisey asked about the fire marshal's requests for approval. M.Bruton stated the fire marshal asked the site plan to include an Emergency Key Box – a "KnoxBox" – and a fire alarm as part of the building. M.Bruton noted the applicant will install a KnoxBox, and does not intend to put a fire alarm in at this time. J.Hallisey added that he will follow up with the fire marshal regarding the water flow in the event of a fire.

S.Person asked if the water moving from west to east will be redirected under the highway. M.Bruton stated water will flow into either the open galley subservice infiltration system to recharge the groundwater, or will flow directly into the culvert under Route 6.

S.Nelson asked for the site's signage plan. M.Bruton stated there is no defined tenant yet, however a free standing sign would be on the corner of the property at the Lake Road and Route 6 intersection following the Commission's sign regulations.

L.Hutchinson asked about entrance placement. M.Bruton noted the Route 6 driveway is their primary choice to attract drivers using Route 6. The secondary entrance on Lake Road is included due to the town's intention to develop parking across the street for the Rail Trail users – the second entrance and the sidewalk improvements intend to engage the trail users. The Route 6 entrance is designed to accommodate entering and exiting tractor trailers should the tenant need deliveries. M.Bruton clarified the site will not share an entrance with the neighboring Benjamin Franklin Plumbing business.

J.Larson asked for clarification on M.Bruton's comment about a safety issue pertaining to the berm from the Lake Road sidewalk. M.Bruton stated the peer review engineer recommended the addition of a sidewalk exit to direct pedestrians to cross Lake Road at the northeast corner of the property, where Lake Road and Route 6 intersect. M.Bruton voiced that there is a guardrail and curb on the opposite side of Lake Road in that location and therefore is not a safe spot to direct pedestrians to cross the road. M.Bruton stated an exit to the sidewalk further up on Lake Road is more appropriate, further from Route 6. J.Larson stated the town wants the crosswalk extension to be further up on the property, to allow for crossing near the rail trail's parking area. M.Bruton stated they will include this revision in the site plan.

J.Larson asked about the amount of space between the side walk and the edge of Lake Road. M.Bruton stated the site plan incorporates the peer review engineer's recommendation of a 8' grass shelf minimum.

J.Larson asked if the tenant will keep the sidewalk clear in the winter. M.Bruton stated he will confirm sidewalk maintenance expectations with the applicant.

J.Larson opened the public hearing up for comments from the public.

Maureen K. asked for clarification on the site's location, and asked who the prospective tenant is and if multiple businesses will utilize the building. M.Bruton noted the building will have one retail tenant, and the owner is pursuing a few different potential tenants with standing non-disclosure agreements so no businesses are ready to announce themselves yet.

Chris Bernard, the property owner behind Ben Franklin Plumbing, voiced his primary concern for the increase in traffic and asked about the parking plan for the Rail Trail as it relates to the Lake Road entrance to the new site. J.Larson stated the improvements to the Rail Trail parking area will increase traffic safety.

Catherine Lewis asked about the site's future tenants, and the commission's regulations for discerning the type of tenants that can utilize commercial zoning lots. J.Larson noted that section 8 of the regulations outlines the types of businesses that can be developed in the business district as of right. C.Lewis asked who is responsible maintaining the drainage culvert under Route 6. J.Hallisey stated the State of Connecticut is responsible for the culvert's maintenance.

Dianne Grenier stated the community's desire for tax relief in the form of new businesses, like family owned restaurants, pharmacies, offices, and others. She requested the site plan and future tenant maintain aesthetics, place fencing and vegetation around the building's dumpster, include a bike rack, and contact the state archaeological department to see if there is significant findings on site to be aware of. J.Larson noted that hiring a town planner or economic development coordinator would recruit businesses to develop in town that align with the community's interests, as Dianne suggested.

Eric Berry noted his desire to maintain Andover's community charm and distinction, and his disapproval of a future tenant that would be a chain store offering cheap throw away goods and unhealthy food options.

Erin Boris stated concern for the Route 6 entrance relative to the mobile station entrance across Route 6. M.Bruton showed the entrance's location in relation to the Mobile station, and noted that their traffic study did not find any detrimental impacts to the surrounding areas, which CT DOT will review.

Liz Lokiec echoed traffic concern, and voiced support for developing business in town.

Joe Poland voiced concern for the potential of increased traffic onto Lake Road as a through road between the retail store and Columbia.

Louise Goodwin asked about handicap accessibility. M.Bruton showed the two handicap accessible parking spots and the handicap accessible path to the main entrance.

Maria Tulman voiced disapproval of a future tenant that would change the character of the town, and she is in favor of a tenant such as a restaurant or a doctor's office.

Pat Grimaldi voiced concern for tractor trailer traffic on Lake Road in the event of a detour. She suggested deterring tractor trailers from turning right out of the Lake Road entrance, and removing trees at the Ben Franklin Plumbing entrance to increase trail visibility.

Richard Wilson noted concern for traffic, curb cut, and the non-disclosure agreement as it pertains to town residents' inability to have a say in the type of retail stores that develop in town. He added the suggestion to update section 8 of the regulations so that residents may vote for what businesses are established in town. J.Larson stated the regulations can be adjusted however this would not impact this particular application, and he added residents can volunteer for the PZC to directly have a say in updating the regulations.

Catherine Lewis noted that she is working with a UConn professor of landscape and architecture to devise a plan to revise Andover this summer, and that she would like to work with the PZC on this.

J.Larson showed submitted written comments from Sue Feinberg, summarizing that she stated a commercial building would benefit the town but she would not support a big box store. Abby Cole's submitted comment mirrored S.Feinberg's discontentment with a tenant that would not fit Andover's rural character.

Ryan Fitch, the owner of the site's neighboring tree farm, submitted comment to request the applicant install a 6' fence keep people from trespassing on his farm.

L.Hutchinson suggested that the state start the 40 mph speed limit further past the stop light to slow traffic down in the project's area, and she reiterated M.Bruton's previous statement that the potential tenant anticipates one tractor trailer delivery a week which relieved her concern that this project would increase the number of tractor trailers using this section of Route 6.

3) CLOSE OR CONTINUE PUBLIC HEARING

J.Larson announced the Commission will continue the public hearing next month so the Commission may fully read the traffic study. The hearing will continue to immediately precede the next regular meeting on April 18, 2022.

4) ADJOURNMENT

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Jed Larson, Vice Chair Anne Peterson Cremé, Scott Person, Leigh Ann Hutchinson, Steve Nelson, Susan England (alternate), Anne Blanchard (alternate), Kevin Arnesen (alternate)

Member Absent: None.

Others Present: Jim Hallisey – Zoning Agent, Abbie Winter – Board Clerk, Katherine Hutchinson, Eric Anderson, and Maureen K

1) CALL TO ORDER: Chair J. Larson called the regular meeting to order at 8:48 p.m.

2) ROLL CALL/SEATING OF ALTERNATES: No alternates were seated.

3) ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Eliminate Section 5: New Business

Eliminate Section 6 item a: Old Business - Update on Affordable Housing Plan (Bill Warner – Consultant)

Eliminate Section 6 item b: Old Business - Update on gravel operation at 517 Route 6

J.Larson MOVED to approve the changes to the agenda. By unanimous consent, MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0.

4) PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

5) OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Discussion/possible action** – Proposed amendments to the Alcohol Regulations and the addition of language to address the retail sale of cannabis (medical & recreational).

J.Larson reviewed the Commission's previous changes to the regulations, including removing the town line stipulation as it pertains to liquor stores, and the exclusionary radius around the Hop River State Park Trail, and around a church, elementary school, library, park or a playground or a lot having frontage in a Residential District.

A.Cremé suggested the regulations require signage that the consumption of cannabis is not permitted on town property. J.Larson stated this is not within the Commission's jurisdiction, it's likely a state or Board of Selectmen determination. S.Person noted there is already a town regulation prohibiting the consumption of cannabis on town property.

J.Larson stated when the Commission is satisfied with these regulations, they will send it to Mark Branse for review, then they will be sent to the local Council of Governments

for review, then this summer the Commission will present the regulations to the public for comment.

b. **Discussion/possible action** – Proposed amendments to the Sign Regulations

J.Larson shared the new additions and adjustments to the Sign Regulations, including the definition of a sign, political position signs, banner signs, no trespassing signs, illuminated signs, vehicular signs, window signs, and others.

6) DISCUSSION

J.Hallisey noted all applications and affiliated resources are posted on the town website, and he asked for the Commission's feedback on the best way to access and post these documents. The Commission discussed the need for availability of paper copies, the benefit of public access to online documents, and the benefit of the archived documents section online.

7) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

J.Larson MOVED to approve the meeting minutes from February 28th, 2022. S.Nelson SECONDED.

The minutes of February 28th, 2022 were amended as follows:

Others present: Zoning Agent – Jim Hallisey, Board Clerk – Marina Pandolfi, Bill Warner, Chris Bell, Katherine Hutchinson, Matthew Bruton, Matt Eucalitto, Douglas Grunert, Robin Pearson, Sarah LeClerc, Sarah Costagliola, Nick Canny, ~~Hank Gruner~~

Section 7 item d: Old Business - Discussion/Action – Alcohol and Cannabis Regulations

S. Nelson stated to remove item "B" – package store next to a bar currently violates regulation. ~~Suggested lowering from 500ft to 200ft~~

S. England suggested to leave item "C" at 500ft, add an item "D" for ~~parks except~~ the Rail Trail and lower radius to 200ft. A. Cremè and K. Arnesen agreed.

Section 11 item b: Administrative Reports

J. Larson updated that there is nothing happening in the Inland/Wetlands Commission **that affects PZC**.

8) CORRESPONDENCE: None.

9) ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

J.Hallisey stated there are many residents starting projects in the spring and inquiring if certain lots are buildable.

J.Hallisey will write a blight enforcement letter for 5 Mathieson Drive, and he will send a letter to a property owner on Route 6 requesting to discuss concerns with property.

J.Hallisey reported that the demolition at 12 Center Street has commenced. There is no enforcement action needed, but J.Hallisey is in contact with the owner.

J.Hallisey will send two letters this week to the property owners across Parker Bridge Rd.

10) PUBLIC SPEAK: None.

11) NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE IS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 18, 2022

12) ADJOURNMENT

J.Larson MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 p.m. L.Hutchinson SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Abbie Winter,

Abbie Winter

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.