



Town of Westminister

MASSACHUSETTS 01473
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

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Jon Wyman, chairman

Marie N. Auger, vice chairman

Michael Fortin

Andrew Rice

Linda Wiest

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, July 12, 2016

Room 222, Town Hall

Attendees: Mike Fortin, Andrew Rice, Linda Wiest, Town Planner Stephen Wallace

Absent: Jon Wyman, Marie Auger.

Additional Attendees: Mr. Jamie Rheault/Whitman & Bingham Assoc., Ms. Doneen Durling/Gardner News, Mr. Richard Proof(sp?), Mr. Tom Browne/Monty Tech, Mr. Pete Maxfield/Monty Tech, Mr. James J. Hachey/Monty Tech, Mr. William Senecal/LPA Architects.

7:04 p.m.

Mike opened the Planning Board meeting and informed those present the meeting was being audio recorded.

Ms. Doneen Durling/Gardner News informed the Board she would be audio recording the meeting also.

7:04 p.m. - *Minutes*

Mike asked PB members to review the June 28, 2016 meeting minutes. Andrew motioned to approve the minutes. Seconded Linda. Voted AIF.

7:05 p.m. - *Public Hearing regarding a Site Plan Approval for Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School: new 7,465 square foot building to house the school's veterinary arts program, and the addition of 28 parking spaces*

Mike opened the public hearing for the Monty Tech Vet Building site plan review at 7:05p.m.

Mike informed those present that in the interest of disclosure, he has a grown daughter who is a teacher at Monty Tech, but she is not a part of the proposed Vet Program and it would not influence his ability to make a fair decision.

Mike read the public hearing notice published in the Gardner News. Stephen told the Board that he had received the site plan application on June 20th and had distributed it to the nine municipal entities that review plans on the PB's behalf. Fire Department had some questions that were addressed by applicant, ConCom Agent has reviewed drainage calculations and is ok, DPW had six comments that have been addressed in an updated plan that was submitted.

Mike asked the project engineer to highlight the changes to the plans as he made his presentation.

Mr. Jamie Rheault/Whitman Bingham introduced himself and the project team. Mr. Bill Senecal/Architect, Mr. Pete Maxfield/Carpentry Instructor at Monty Tech and Clerk of the Works, Mr. James J. Hachey/Director of Vocational Programs at Monty Tech, and Mr. Tom Browne/Principal at Monty Tech.

Mr. Rheault noted that the main architect of this project was also the architect for the new Briggs School in South Ashburnham.

Mr. Rheault: New 7,465 sq ft building, placed where the tennis courts are now, new plan will have a grass area where the rear most tennis court is, 28 space parking lot to the left side, curb cut is where existing curb cut is but wider (26 feet) to accommodate turn radii and will need permit from MassHighway. MassHighway comments have been incorporated into updated plan. Parking will have 24 foot maneuvering lanes and 9' x 18 ½' and 9' x 19' parking slots. Fire Department wanted pavement

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within 50' of building so a bump out in the parking area was added next to the building and will be hatched NO PARKING. A copy of the plan with the Fire Department truck turning radius requirements has been presented and approved by the FD. Utilities: Sewer will be Westminister. An existing 4" sewer from the existing locker building goes into a 6" gravity line into a pump chamber that pumps to the force main which has a check valve. DPW wants a 6" sewer line from the new building to tie into the existing 6" gravity line with a tee. DPW has requested a second pump in the pump chamber for redundancy. Both pumps will be visually and audio alarmed to the Vet Building. Andrew asked where the pumps will be located? The pumps will be located where the existing pump is located now, but in a new reinforced concrete chamber below grade with a locked hatch.

Water will be supplied from Fitchburg. The existing 2" supply will be tapped with a 2" line w/ shutoff going to the new Vet Building. Westminister DPW has asked that sewer fee will be based on a Westminister DPW water meter where water enters Vet Building and will be a condition of the site plan review.

By eliminating the rear tennis court the impervious area drainage has been reduced and storm water will now be handled in an underground catch basin system that leads to a water quality unit (like stormsceptor or technic) that spins out grit and debris before allowing water to gravity flow out to an existing drain manhole which connects by gravity pipe flow to an existing drain manhole on campus and then travels through underground drain under the road and out to the brook. Monty Tech will maintain water quality unit.

ZBA has issued a finding that Vet School is exempt from Zoning per MGL 40A.3.

Concept plan was filed with ConCom for a request for determination. The plan was issued a negative determination. No filing needed. Drain cover and structure at entrance will be turned into a storm drain for entrance way.

Mr. Rheault presented a list of requested waiver letter to Stephen/PB. Mr. Rheault then addressed comments from MassDOT. The existing walkway will be accessed from walkways around the new building and will have new handicap accessible ramps. There will be marked handicapped accessible parking spots as part of the parking.

Mr. Rheault presented a list of requested waiver letter to Stephen/PB. Landscaping will be grass. There will be no parking lot lighting.

Mr. William Senecal then presented the architectural elevations of the proposed building and described the building and program: New program for Monty Tech (developed on a model created by Tufts) to teach students about the Veterinary field. Becker College Doctors and college students will come in and staff the Vet School. Monty Tech students will be able to choose half year electives to work as staff and attend classrooms to learn about animal surgery, dental, exams, lab, pharmacy, waiting area, reception. Students will run the building by participating in grooming, front desk, assisting as they can in the clinic. The surgery will have a camera hooked to a remote classroom for viewing.

The Vet Clinic will be open to the public, and will only service cats and dogs.

Mr. Senecal showed the PB 3D graphics of the proposed building. Slab on grade. Students will build it: framing, plumbing, electricity stonework, heating systems. They hope to have foundation in by start of school in September. Vinyl siding, large windows, simple style.

Andrew asked about lighting on building? Wall packs to light the perimeter of the building for security. Linda asked about the outdoor facilities for animals? 10X20 area for animals to relieve themselves. No overnight animal stays.

Stephen asked if Wachusett Animal Hospital had been contacted? Mr. Senecal told the PB Wachusett AH had been contacted early on and expressed their support and helped out with the preliminary planning. The MT Principal, Mr. Tom Browne told the PB that part of the vet program is to reach out to area business and create a program advisory. Business partners from the field are part of the design of the program. Wachusett AH, Sterling AH, VCA agency who oversees many of the vet clinic, etc. were all contacted for their input before the formal paperwork was even started and have shown their support for the program.

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Andrew asked about if there were any traffic concerns? The clinic will operate during school hours (8:00 am to 4:00 pm) and will serve primarily low income families. Four parking spaces will be used by visiting Doctors and college students.

Mike asked how much water use could be expected. Mike suggested contacting Wachusett AH to model their(WAH) low water use procedures for grooming and facility cleaning. Mike asked about signage? Mr. Senecal: The plan is to have the MT students design and build the signs. Mike asked Stephen to provide them with the Westminster Bylaw section for signage.

Mike asked the PB members if they had enough information to make a decision on the site plan review. Yes. Motion to close the public hearing by Linda. Seconded Andrew. Voted AIF to close.

Mike asked Board members to next consider the waiver requests. Mike read the waivers:

2.1 of the Site Plan Regulations require that plans be prepared at a scale of 1 inch= 40 feet, however the plans submitted are at a scale of 1 inch = 20 feet.

2.1.5 Landscape plan.

2.1.7 Luminary plan.

2.1.8 Open Space & Recreation Areas.

2.1.9 of the Site Plan Regulations require a locus plan be prepared at a scale of 1 inch= 200 feet, however the locus plan submitted are at a scale of 1 inch = 1,000 feet.

2.1.13 Evaluation of Impact on Landscape.

2.1.14 Evaluation of traffic impacts.

2.1.15 Environmental impacts.

Andrew motioned to accept all waivers as listed. Seconded Linda. Voted AIF.

Stephen read the four standard PB conditions to all site plan reviews:

1. Other approvals or permits required by the Zoning Bylaw, other governmental boards, agencies or bodies having jurisdiction, shall not be assumed or implied by this Decision.

2. The Site Plan Approval applies only to the site which is the subject of this Application. All construction to be conducted on the site shall be conducted in accordance with the terms of this Approval and shall be limited to the improvements shown on the Plan.

3. The Board hereby reserves its powers to modify or amend the terms and conditions of this Approval upon its own motion with consent from the owner or the applicant, or on the Application of the owner or applicant. The Board further reserves its powers to amend this Approval without a new public hearing provided that the Board finds that such amendment is not significant to the public interest and that such amendment is not inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Bylaw or with the terms of this Approval.

4. This Approval shall lapse on July 12, 2018 if a substantial use thereof has not sooner commenced for good cause. Any request for an extension of the time limitation set forth herein shall be made in writing to the Board at least 30 days prior to July 12, 2018 and the Board reserves its rights and powers to grant or deny such request without a public hearing.

The PB members added the following conditions:

5. The Applicant agrees to provide the Westminster Department of Public Works with 48-hours advance notice for all inspections.

6. The Vet Center building will be required to be metered to properly bill for the sewer use. It will be metered similar to the fieldhouse. The water meter shall meet the requirements of the Westminster Sewer Department.

7. The hours of building operation shall be between 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Mike asked if PB members were ready to vote on the Site Plan review. Motion to approve the site plan with the seven conditions listed by Stephen. Seconded Linda. Voted AIF.

Stephen will draft a decision letter for all to review. If acceptable to all parties, the PB members will sign it and Stephen will file it with the Town Clerk.

7:47 p.m. - Planning Board policy discussion: minor subdivisions and road standards.

Mike asked PB Andrew and Linda to consider waiting to review and discuss the policy until all Board members were present. All agreed to pass over it and add it to the next agenda.

7:48 p.m. - Residential zoning changes: Planning Board kick-off discussion.

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Stephen reviewed his laundry list of Zoning amendments he would like PB members to work on in the coming months:

- ☐ Definitions Section: residential development definitions.
- ☐ Accessory Apartments (or in-law apartments).
- ☐ Inclusionary Housing (requiring or incentivizing developers to build affordable housing units as part of their developments). Carrot or Stick approach?...
- ☐ Setback standards for sheds and other accessory structures.
- ☐ Standards for Home Occupations/Businesses: the few standards we have on this are written right into the accessory use listings in Item I. (Accessory Uses and Off-Street Parking) of our Zoning Bylaw's Table of Uses.
- ☐ Update the Zoning Bylaw's cluster housing provision in line with the Natural Resource Protection Zoning (NRPZ) concept: please note that I am still awaiting notice from Jeff Lacy of the Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) as to whether or not he can help us with this.

The PB will use the July 26th meeting as a working meeting for Residential Zoning. Stephen will also be asking for an afternoon working session to work with builders and developers and home based occupation businesses to get their input for any amendments.

The Board also hopes a new Building Commissioner will be appointed before long in order to participate in the amendment changes.

Stephen hopes we can have fleshed-out proposals to shop around to the other municipal entities by mid-December. That will allow up to 100 days for review and comment. Hold public forums early next calendar year before the required public hearing in late March. Then on to Annual May Town Meeting.

8:01 p.m. - *Town Planner Update for June.*

Grants-

Stephen is awaiting a check as part participating in the Governor's Community Compact program to pay for the economic self-assessment project, which will be conducted by Northeastern University's Dukakis Center. An agreement will be signed by the Selectmen. A 220 page questionnaire will be filled out by various boards and departments. Northeastern will then compare the data we send back with the other 120 communities who have participated. They will then come out to put us through a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) exercise. Stephen thinks this project will most likely take place sometime in the fall.

Stephen met with staff from MPRC' to begin the senior housing project being funded from the Commission's District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant program. While reviewing the initial soil boring report from the engineering firm that designed the senior center, it appeared that there were very few soil borings taken in the vicinity where we plan to build the senior housing.

Believing we needed more soil information before we could determine the exact number of senior apartments that could be built in this location, Stephen contacted GeoSearch who agreed to conduct six additional soil borings in the back of the property free of charge to the Town. With the new soil information in hand, Stephen believes MRPC now has all the information necessary to prepare an estimate of the number of senior apartments that could be built in this location. MRPC will also document the regional need for senior housing. This project should be wrapped up by the end of the summer and then we can hire a housing consultant to draft our RFP for a builder.

The Old Town Hall survey is now ready to be sent out. Surveys will be numbered to prevent stuffing the ballot box. The top choice will appear as a warrant article on the Fall Town Meeting.

8:05 p.m. *Adjourn.*

Linda made a motion to adjourn. Andrew seconded. The PB voted AIF to adjourn.

5 Pages of Minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Fortin

12 Attachments :

1) Gardner News Public Hearing Notice for Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School.

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1 page.

2) Application for Site Plan Approval prepared by Whitman & Bingham Associates LLC, Leominster, MA, dated June 14, 2016. (*Monty Tech vet clinic site plan application.pdf*)

3) Site Plan for Monty Tech property prepared by Whitman & Bingham Associates LLC, Leominster, MA, dated June 14, 2016 and revised July 11, 2016.

4) Stormwater Report prepared by Whitman & Bingham Associates LLC, Leominster, MA, dated June 14, 2016.

5) Tax card for the property from the Westminster Assessor's office.

6) Comments from the Fire Department, dated June 23, 2016.

7) Comments from the Department of Public Works dated July 8, 2016.

8) Comments from the Conservation Commission dated July 8, 2016.

9) Waiver request letter prepared by Whitman & Bingham Associates LLC, Leominster, MA, dated July 11, 2016.

10) Town Planner PB Review Memo for Monty Tech Vet Clinic dated July 11, 2016. 3 pages. (*Hearing Memo - Monty Tech July 2016.pdf*)

11) 2016 Zoning Overhaul Work Sheet. No date. 1 page. (*Zoning Overhaul Phase II.pdf*)

12) Town Planner Update memo to BoS Dated June 29, 2016. 2 pages. (*Planner Update June 2016.pdf*)

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