

PLANNING BOARD  
Tuesday, October 2, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.  
Basement Level - City Hall  
**Meeting Minutes**

Members present: Craig Pina, Acting Chair, Toni Goncalves, Bob Pelaggi and Reggie Thomas; also present Rob May, Shane O'Brien and Pamela Gurley, Department of Planning & Economic Development.

The chair notified all applicants that there were only four members present tonight and therefore all site plan approval and return to ZBA applications will need to be carried by a unanimous vote, and that anyone who wished to be heard before a full board had the opportunity to postpone to another meeting.

DCAM (Dept. of Capital Assets Management) Presentation  
Postponed to spring.

---

Acceptance of Minutes 9-6-18

Motion to accept the minutes of 9-6-18 as presented.

Motion: Pelaggi

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

*Endorsement of ANR Plans, Subdivision Plans and/or Lot Releases*

The secretary said that the developer of Woodland Park has requested the release of Lots 22-25 Heritage Court which are the final lots in phase 2 (the board is still holding all of phase 3).

Motion to release lots 22-25 from covenant

Motion: Goncalves

Second: Pelaggi

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

ANR plan for 130 Elliot St. to be discussed together with their request to return to ZBA.

---

Street Acceptances

*Baldwin Road*, extending from Colgate Road westerly and northerly to Vale Street;

*Boundary Circle*, extending from Randolph Avenue easterly and northerly to Brookville

Avenue; *Braintree Avenue*, extending from Boundary Circle, westerly and northerly to

Brookville Avenue, a distance of about 600.48 feet; *Vale Street*, extending from Norwich Road westerly to Upton Street, a distance of about 636.65 feet.

Councilor Jack Lally said he has been here several times with streets in his ward; the property owners pay the same taxes but without the streets being made public they cannot be scheduled for re-paving. He said that getting these streets accepted as public streets just means that they are eligible to be paved at some time in the future.

Bob Pelaggi asked if these streets are in need of immediate repair and was told that about 75% are in need of repair in his ward. Councillor Lally said that each councilor submits a list in February and gets one or two roads a year.

Action: Motion to recommend favorably

Motion: Thomas

Second: Pelaggi

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

---

1. Permission for Return to the ZBA

Property: Plot 4-1 Sewell Street

ZBA Denial: 8-15-18

Applicant/Representative: Michael Haikal/Attorney John McCluskey

Applicant's statement: Attorney John McCluskey said that Sewell St. was originally laid out with a cul de sac, but that it was not built out that way. He said that when the COB abandoned that part of the property the parcel lost frontage. He said that the size of the proposed house has been downsized, there is no garage and it meets the setback requirements.

Comments: Toni Goncalves asked how this new home is compatible with the neighborhood. Michael Haikal said it is a colonial style home and the neighborhood contains a mix of housing types.

Shane O'Brien said because of the additional of the new area the existing lot lost its grandfather status; the original lot existed prior to zoning and with the abandonment of the street the lot is now a non conforming lot. He said it still needs a variance from frontage and lot size.

Action: Grant permission to return to the ZBA: The board agreed that a substantial change to the plans had been submitted i.e. reduced house size and no garage.

Motion: Pelaggi

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

2. Permission for Return to the ZBA

Property: 130 Elliot Street

ZBA Denial: 8-15-18

Applicant/Representative: Joseph Savino/JK Holmgren/Attorney John McCluskey

Applicant's statement: Scott Faria said they applied to the ZBA originally for relief for lot width. He said they have the required 100' of frontage. He said the reason for denial was they had no visitor parking; there was also a public safety concern about gaining access to the front door by emergency vehicles and concern about the flood elevation. He said they are proposing three buildings each with three units. They have added parking spaces, there is a 10X20' no parking area by each front door and they raised the basement elevations 2' above flood elevation. Attorney McCluskey said all they were seeking was relief from section 13A.

Comments: Craig Pina said anything is an improvement to what is there now. Councilor Anne Beauregard said what is there now is not attractive, but she wondered if the neighbors realized what is being proposed; she said she would like single family homes or less units; she said that the street is unique and asked to be recorded as opposed.

Action: Grant permission to return to the ZBA

Motion: Thomas

On the motion: Bob Pelaggi said he feels they have made a substantial change to the plan and was glad to see they addressed visitor parking. He said that the area is zoned for multifamily use.

Second: Goncalves

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

Scott Faria said that the proposed ARN creates lots A B & C and contains the notation that A & B are not buildable without ZBA approval.

Action: Motion to endorse plan.

Motion: Pelaggi

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

### 3. Definitive Subdivision

Property: Plot 2 Belgravia Ave. – **Continued to November 7, 2018**

Lots: 4

Owner/Representative: Curley & Hansen

### 4. Definitive Subdivision

Property: 535 & 553 N. Cary Street

Lots: 14

Owner/Representative: Scott Burgess/JK Holmgren Engineering/Attorney  
John McCluskey

Applicant's statement: Scott Faria said the site consists of two parcels zoned R1C; the proposal is for a new roadway, utilities and 14 single family homes needing relief from lot size and frontage. They received a negative determination from Con-Com; they brought the plan to the traffic commission who did have concerns with the lack of sidewalks and traffic along N. Cary St.

Comments: Craig Pina asked if there was any way to make that (the new road) not a through way; he said he grew up in the area and is afraid this will create another cut through. S. Faria said that the layout of the roadway does not allow for speeding. C. Pina asked if there was any way to make it a cul de sac at the end, he said he does not want to create a situation that might be hazardous to the neighborhood.

Reggie Thomas asked if they would speak to the flooding concerns in the neighborhood. S. Faria said that the basements in the homes need to be higher than the highest estimated groundwater; he said it is not a surface water issue; he said there will be no surface water shedding to the neighbors' property; he said there is nothing that can be

done about groundwater issues causing the residents issues. Bob Pelaggi asked if there was any standing water on the property; S. Faria said there are two areas that hold water, but are not protectable under the wetlands protection act.

Toni Goncalves asked if they took into account quality of life issues, trees, fencing, noise; she said #541 will be the home most affected and surrounded by homes.

Spoke in favor of the proposal:

Councilor Jack Lally said Jane Baker, 541 N. Cary St., had no objection except that she would like the trees and shrubs to remain.

Margaret Shea, 542 North Cary St., said she would like to see process move forward, but thought the concerns of the neighbors to be addressed.

Joanne Ritz, 571 North Cary St., said that although she is in favor of the development she had some concerns; she does not want a detention basin next to her home; the new driveway will abut her driveway; there have been so many accidents that have happened at that corner that have hit her wall; children walk N. Cary St. and there are no sidewalks; when they cross the street they will be walking right into the area proposed for the road;

Spoke in opposition of the proposal:

Patricia Spenser, 50 Amark Rd., said the land is swampy and she worried about flooding during spring and is concerned about what will happen to the wildlife.

Rhonda Eaton, 78 Amark Rd., said the curve is blind;  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the year you cannot see coming around from Winter St.; she said when she spoke to them about her access their solution was that she take another way to enter her property; she asked why she should be inconvenienced; she said 14 houses is not 14 cars; that the area ponds; she asked about the possibility of a cul de sac.

Eric Eaton, 78 Amark Rd., asked if the basins will be open. He said they will be providing a water source for rats, vermin and mosquitoes; he is concerned about standing water. He asked if there was a traffic study. S. Faria said that it is a detention basin not retention basin and they will be taking water from the lower corner and putting it in the basin; he said there has been no traffic study done.

Councilor Jack Lally handed out a paper with the residents' concerns. He said the corner is dangerous regardless of the project; the residents' are concerned about increased noise and reduction of trees in area; concerned about the water table; he said the concerns of the neighbors need to be taken into consideration.

Shane O'Brien said that the City Engineer has comments that need to be addressed and said that the board can ask for an impact study.

Council at Large Robert Sullivan said that part of the city has a habitual traffic area problem. He said he is not opposed to development, but that the board needs to look at the density and scope of the project and the quality of life of the neighbors; they need to listen to the residents and see how the plan might be modified. He said that Councilor at Large Winthrop Farwell was unable to be there but had the same concerns.

The chairperson read the letters in opposition submitted into the record.

C. Pina said that he is not comfortable with road as designed. B. Pelaggi asked if they had done any size comparison to the existing lots in the neighborhood and if they were requesting any waivers. S. Faria said most of lots are 10,000 sf. and that they are seeking waivers from the 30' radius; lot frontage, width and area. He said they will agree to an independent traffic study.

Rob May said there is no indication of a gas utility being brought in; he asked that they add the location of existing and proposed natural gas to the plan. He said the board has put in conditions in the past to protect trees and they were clear cut anyway; he said he would like to see a 9'-13' permanent vegetated buffer. He said it is important to have an independent traffic study and maybe come up with traffic calming options. The consultant will be hired by the COB and paid for by the applicant. BSC currently has the peer review contract. R. May said that he will contact BSC with the scope of the review and get a price.

T. Goncalves asked if they had considered decreasing the number of lots; S. Faria said he would have to go back and check with the applicant and attorney.

Jacklyn McQuarrie, 92 Amark Rd., said asked about the wildlife and worried about what will happen when they are disturbed.

Acton: Motion to continue to November 7, 2018 by agreement of the parties.

5. Site Plan Approval – Amendment to 40R Project  
Property: 155 Crescent Street  
Proposed: Mixed Use  
Applicant: Beantown Builders

Applicant's statement: Donald Donaldson said he would like to amend their approved 40R proposal. He said the original proposal was for co working space, but that the lenders said the proposal was not financially feasible. He said the compromise was something with a steady income that would make it more marketable. He said they have reduced the size of the commercial space and are proposing five units on the top floor and one ADA unit on the first floor...all market rate. There will be eight parking spaces.

Comments: Bob Pelaggi said when they board approved the 2-2017 plan the applicant new they needed parking. D. Donaldson said they have a written agreement with the owner of the mattress factory on Montello St. B. Pelaggi said that since it is not a recorded agreement, if the property was sold they would lose their parking. He said he is still very concerned about parking.

Shane O'Brien said their original approval allowed for them to seek a remedy for their parking and if they were unable to meet the requirement before their COC was issued.

B. Pelaggi said there is a higher probability of 24 hour on site parking with residences.

D. Donaldson said when he lived in Boston and owned a car he never used it. He said that the COB talks about development and every time a project comes up for redevelopment the city continues to hold on to the old ways; parking is not the

paramount issue; they expect people to bike, the commuter rail is a five minute walk; the BAT stop is right out front.

B. Pelaggi said that if he understands correctly, they are stating that the balance of people will not drive to which he was told yes. Rob May said under the current C3 zoning the re-use of this building has no requirement for parking. He said there are 20 parking spaces on the street that are available for use. S. O'Brien said there is a very small amount of sensible uses for these buildings with the current parking calculations. R. May said we cannot create land. B. Pelaggi said that it makes sense; the buildings are decades old and he has no issue with the re-use, he just can't get past parking. He said it was the perfect application for zoning as there is a definite hardship and felt that it would be granted the variance from parking.

It was pointed out that the current plan did not show the updated parking requirement do to an oversight. B. Pelaggi said that the plans should have the current parking schedule; with that current schedule they seem to be only one space short.

Barry Koretz said he owns the two abutting parcels and nothing would make him happier than to make this building habitable...he wants to see it fixed...he said people come by bus to his 2<sup>nd</sup> floor tenant.

Reggie Thomas said that the Cambridge Work Bar has no onsite parking; it does work, but understands that it is a new concept for here.

Councilor Anne Beauregard said that she knows that the developer has been trying to purchase the abutting property but cannot locate the owner.

Debra Kinan, said she runs the convenience store at 137 Crescent St., and although she is not opposed to the development she is concerned about the parking. She said her customers use some of those on street parking spaces.

Jeanne Holmes, 65 Belcher Ave., said she understands what the regulations say, but said that they have Jim's Auto work on their cars and parking is always a problem. She said this is not Cambridge; we have a parking problem; we don't have bikes; we don't have people coming off buses and trains; there is such a problem that we need a new parking garage; she said that realistically people with a 2 bedroom unit will have two cars; she said she thinks it is a great idea but parking needs to be solved.

B. Pelaggi said that he would like to see a motion to approve with the condition that the applicant gets a deeded easement or alternative parking. D. Donaldson said that he complied with the provisions of the first approval and found alternative parking...he said now he needs less parking and the goal post is being moved. S. O'Brien said that the board accepted the prior agreement letter without any deeded easement for parking and as pointed out the requirements for parking were much greater.

Action: Motion to approve with standard approval letter with the following: The change in use requires the applicant to have 15 parking spaces; there are eight proposed on site (five required for residential use) and the applicant had previously secured an agreement with the property owner at 200 Montello St., allowing him the use of five additional spaces. If the applicant finds he is unable to meet the current parking requirements for

the proposed re-use of the building they shall seek a waiver from the Planning Board prior to issuance of any certificate of occupancy by the Building Department.

The Applicant shall have two (2) years from the date of this approval letter to commence construction on the project.

Motion: Goncalves

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

#### 6. Site Plan Approval – 40 R Project

Property: 26 School Street

Proposed: Mixed Use

Applicant: BRG Group/Steven Dailey/Place Tailor

Applicant's statement: Steven Dailey said the owner intends to demolish the building and rebuild in same footprint; he said the proposal is for 25 residential units and 2,500 sf of café space; he said there will be 20 on site parking spaces and they will enter into an agreement with the parking authority for a payment in lieu of parking. He also said that this plan addresses comments from tech review and BSC Group. Nicole Dunphy (Highpoint Engineering) said they added snow storage areas to plan and added a construction exit to the plan.

Comments: Bob Pelaggi said all the residential parking will be on site and he said there is a public parking lot adjacent to the property.

Shelia Sullivan Jardin, 34 School St. (BAWIB) said she has concerns; she said she is not for or against the project; she said that the building is within inches of her building and said that when testing was done to the property the debris was pushed to her property. She also said that she has to have people towed from her lot daily.

Councilor Anne Beauregard said she was hoping that the owner would be able to re-hab the building, but is excited on seeing something happening to that area; she said she is looking forward to the café, but wants to make sure that both the café and the residential part are built.

B. Pelaggi asked if there was a tenant for the café yet and was told that the owner will operate the café.

Action: Motion to approve with standard conditions.

Motion: Pelaggi

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

#### 7. Site Plan Approval

Property: 561 Thatcher Street

Proposed: Scale Building & Restroom Building

Applicant: Paul Andrade, Everett's Auto Parks/ Scott Faria,  
JK Holmgren & Barry Koretz, BKA Architecture

Scott Faria said the proposal is for a larger scale house and restroom for customers and said that the existing scale house will be torn down. He said there is no sewer down Thatcher St. and the two proposed septic systems were approved by the BOH. The narrowed down entrance along Thatcher and the expansion of the island will direct the traffic. The new parking space dimensions meet COB standards.

Comments: Bob Pelaggi asked if there was any greenspace and was told a small amount. Shane O'Brien said that the city engineer still had concerns and the plans must go back to city engineer for approval.

Councilor Susan Nicastro asked if any of the work was in the flood zone and was told no.

Action: Motion to approve with standard conditions. Note: Applicant must meet with city engineer relative to concerns.

Motion: Thomas

Second: Pelaggi

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

#### 8. Site Plan Approval

Property: 1854 Main Street

Proposed: Automotive Service & Repair & Sales

Applicant: MassBest Motors/Scott Faria, JK Holmgren

Applicant's statement: Scott Faria said that the applicant was before the board several months ago to build an addition to his existing site. Since that time he has purchased a new, larger property and will be moving his business to that site. He said the existing building will remain and they are adding a new 60'x100' building; parking will be in front. He said that the property abuts the Salisbury Plain River and they received an OOC from Con-Com. He said the applicant has also gone back to licensing and reduced the number of cars for sale to 83 to come into compliance with the parking requirements.

Comments: Shane O'Brien asked about the progress of the LOMA and whether they had addressed the city engineer's comments relative to the grading. S. Faria said they have base elevation of 70 and flood plain goes half way through property; they filed for a letter of map amendment; if they don't receive it they will have to address the flood plain issues and revise the site plan and go back to con-com.

Action: Motion to approve with standard conditions; contingent upon receipt of LOMA.

Note: Applicant must meet with city engineer relative to concerns.

Motion: Pelaggi

Second: Thomas

In favor: 4

Opposed: 0

#### Other Business

Discussion relative to late filed information. It was agreed that a memo is to be sent out.

Updates from Board Members

**The listing of matters is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.**