

PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2021 - 6 PM

Meeting Minutes

The application of POUA Holdings, LLC for a proposed 40R Development at 223/261 Thatcher Street within the Thatcher Street Smart Growth Overlay District. The proposal is for a 175 unit mixed income residential development.

Bob Pelaggi introduced himself and called the January 21, 2021 special meeting of the Brockton Board to order and read the following statement: This meeting is being recorded in accordance with the government order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law General Law chapter 38 section 20. Real time public participation and comment can be addressed to the planning board utilizing the zoom virtual meeting software for remote access; this application will allow users to view the meeting and send a comment or question to the chair via the question and answer function submitted text comments will be read into the record. For those of you joining by phone press star nine. If you want to asked a questions please raise your hand. A copy of this recording will be on the city's web pages. All votes will be done via roll call to ensure account accuracy. As your name is called please indicated that you are present. The following members were in attendance: Robert Pelaggi, Craig Pina & Larry Hassan, Toni Goncalves and Reggie Thomas. Also in attendance were Director Rob May, Planner I Raisa Saniat, Administrative Assistant Pamela Gurley and Deputy Chief Ed Williams.

Rob May read a statement read into the record (see attached).

Bill Grogan of the POUA introduced his team. Attorney Jim Burke said that the POUA is the non profit affiliation of the Arch Diocese; their mission is to provide affordable and decent housing; he said the application for 40R designation was approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; (went through time line of approval) he said this project is essentially as of right; the ordinance established a minimum standard; the applicant is in compliance with the ordinance; no waiver requests were submitted; they have met all minimum standards and are exceeding some standards; he said that the planning board is looking at an as of right project.

Bill Grogan read an opening statement into the record (attached). He said that the property is owed by the Poor Sisters of Sorrowful Mother; he said that the development team has been working on a design that proposes diverse unit types and is built around the existing convent; they have been working with BAT to design an internal bus stop; they have maximized green space and minimize impervious area.

Brian Kutcher said they are proposing four new buildings, renovation of the existing convent; buildings B1 & B2 are townhouses units and the C units are elevator units; he said they have worked worked closely with the COB; decreased paved surfaces 23% and there is an increase of 50% in greenspace; they are proposing natural stormwater practices; the wetlands were delineated, reviewed by the agent, he said the submitted RDA to the conservation commission and received a negative determination. He said the project includes three interior roads; street scape with sidewalks and lighting

three smaller parking lots; extension of sidewalks along Massasoit; they will maintain and improve the current existing crosswalk; above and below ground SWmanagement; t passive landscape and open space for residents and street trees.

Jay Szymanski said that the entire project design was centered around the convent building; he said that the convent will have 39 unique units and the chapel will be repurposed as community space; building B1 and B2 are townhouse units with direct access to the units (15 units in each building); C1 is an elevator building (28 units) and C3 is also an elevator building (78 units); parking has been provided along the street to provide traffic calming (see attached renderings). He said that the buildings are designed to take on the aspects of the surrounding building.

Jeff Dirk said they have been working with the peer review consultant regarding traffic. He said that the traffic study was pre covid and college was in full session; the study took in Pine St to the exit and entrance drives at Massasoit; he said that typical commuter trips at peak hours would be about 60 vehicle trips and in the evening 76 vehicle trips; he said that he believes that those traffic numbers will be reduced by the ability to ride the BAT bus; he said the project is intended to be a walkable and bikeable site; he said that it was confirmed by the peer review consultant there will be no increase delay in vehicle cueing at intersections...no more than 5 seconds. He said that the COB conducted a road safety study along Thatcher St. with OCPC and that safety was improved by improvements made as a result of the suggestions. He said site lines approaching and leaving the site exceed what is required. He said that there will be a local preference for up to 70% of units set aside for Brockton residents and Massasoit employees. He said there will be a board of managers which will include residents and that the chapel will have significant community space which will be allowed to be used by the Brockton community.

Bob Pelaggi asked how did they arrived at 175 units; Bill Grogan said that number is permitted within the overlay district and it fit the location; he said they are committed to preserving the convent and chapel.

Bob Pelaggi asked if they knew what the total yield of bedrooms was and was told approximately 290 bedrooms; he said their total number of parking spaces was 185 and asked if that was that adequate; Bill Grogan said that the convent will focus on senior housing and parking is usually less than one per unit; he said their average is usually .75 per unit and they are providing 1 space per unit as required within the district.

Bob Pelaggi asked public transportation and Bill Grogan said there is a an internal BAT stop being proposed....a new route extension.

Bob Pelaggi asked about the maturity of the trees being planted and if there was any comment from peer review; Brian Kutchner said 2.5-3" caliper and there was no comment on that issue; he said they did have a discussion on planting being used for SW.

Bob Pelaggi asked how many stories was in the convent and was told there is an existing elevator.

Larry Hassan said it looks like the BAT bus location is located at building B2 and asked if there was an agreement with BAT; Bill Grogan said they have been speaking with Mike Lambert and he is interested in extending the route and will be sending a letter to city.

Larry Hassan how many units are classified as affordable; Bill Grogan said 25% is required at 80%; he said with the diversity of housing types they are looking to provide 51%; he said they are proposing a diverse integrated development and a significant number will be unrestricted.

Larry Hassan asked about designating the units for for people that work in Brockton; Bill Grogan said there will be a local preference to up to 70%... for current residents...municipal employees, employees of local businesses...households with children currently in school system.

Larry Hassan asked how that has worked in other towns; Bill Grogan said that Haverhill has a similar type of local preference and it was very successful and that they worked with the city for outreach.

Bob Pelaggi asked they to express in dollars what the rent would beaffordable vs market rate; Bill Grogan said that at the 80% income level rent for a 2 bedroom unit may be \$1,700 for a 2 person household earning up to \$60,000 and for a 3 person household earning up to \$78,000; market rate could be in the low \$2,000 for a 2 bed unit.

Toni Goncalves said she hasn't heard anything about any outdoor recreation. Bob Pelaggi said that BETA also made a comment regarding that issue. Bill Grogan said that they are committed to provide an appropriate play area; significant open space along the rear of the site; considering a contribution to upgrade a playground off the site.

Toni Goncalves said that she thinks some outdoor recreation would be added value to this site.

Larry Hassan said that the plan shows open space and a pocket park; Bill Grogan said that the open space areas are along Thatcher St (walking trails, memorial to sisters, benches) and said that a playground area may be internal to the site.

Rob May said that the members had received a letter from Jeanne Holmes which was also made made available to the public on the public drive.

Barbara Owens, 222 Thatcher St. said she has three autistic children and is concerned about noise and about the location of the buildings with the elevators; she said she is also concerned about traffic; she said that the current bus does not make stops on Thatcher St; she asked if there would be any sidewalks on Thatcher St; she said there is no playground around there. She was asked if she was concerned about noise during construction or the finished condition and was told there should be no noise from the units; there is no exterior space associated with the building and that they were adding sidewalk on their side of the site. Rob May said that the bus will probably not stop on street.

Elaine Donovan, 42 Thatcher Sq, said she would have preferred single family homes; she said that the traffic study was from Thatcher and from Pine to the entrance to the college; she said there are no major intersections there and would like to see the study

included Grove and Summer Streets. She said they ignored high density intersections. Phil Paradis (BETA) said that the project meets the requirement of the impact analysis; the distribution of traffic will spread out quickly; he said they analyzed the intersections closest to the project. Rob May suggested that they schedule a meeting for early next week to discuss the issue. Elaine Donovan said she thinks that the impact of the BAT bus is being greatly exaggerated...no one that lives in Brockton will not have a car because there is a BAT bus stop ...she said the project is to big and too dense.

Bob Pelaggi said that the board had some of the same concerns and that is why we had it peer reviewed.

Rob May asked the person with the phone number of 508 942 1678 to identify themselves; Jeanne Homes identified herself for the record and read her previously submitted statement into the record.

Toni Goncalves said that the letter received by board. The chair said that any one that wants to see her comments can see them the public website. Ms. Holmes said she wanted to speak and continued on with her statement.

Bob Farrell, 149 Carl Ave, said he is also concerned about traffic flow; he said there are no approach lanes for bus routes and fire apparatus; he said it looks like they drive over the curb; he asked what the effect would be on Brockton schools as they are already underfunded by the state. Rob May said he was previously told by the superintendent that school enrollment has dropped and is project to keep drop; caused some financial concerns from school dept. 80% comes from state...the superintendent was not concerned about adding more people to the district...in general and school bus routes are determined by the school department. Bob Farrell said that the turns for fire apparatus are tight; he said they are not figuring traffic from the re routing of Rt 18 and traffic from the junk yard and construction vehicles for this project.

Heather Martin, 15 Beaver St, said her biggest concern is traffic; side streets are used as cut throughs to the Downey School and to Crescent St and asked if the traffic study looked at that; the chair said that will be taken under advisement and he will ask the applicant to respond.

Darlene Morocco, 80 Kame St, said she is worried about traffic on Kame; she said it is a cut through to the college.

Barbara Ownes how long will construction be 18-24 months ; Bill Grogan said if they are successful in arriving at a successful design they will submit their applications for financing ..he said it usually takes several funding applications...construction is probably a couple of years out and depending on financing it may be phased.

Elaine Donovan said she is hoping to save the mature trees along Thatcher St.

Rob May read a chat statement from Lisa asking if the city will need to hire additional police and fire; and asked if the traffic study included the proposed Massasoit property proposal for 500 apartments.

Although Jamal Brathwaite had his hand up to speak when recognized he did not speak.

Barbara Owens asked about rents and what was low income and if there would be section 8 and was told there are various income tiers and they can not discriminate.

Councillor Jeffrey Thomson said he has been working with Councillor Susan Nicastro and Rep. Michelle Dubois to make sure the applicants are responsive to concerns; he said that the council has set aside \$100,000 to mitigate adverse impacts from the development and will work with the constituents.

Councillor Nicstro asked about security in the complex; she said that the back of building B1 faces the street and would like to see more of a buffer as showed by convent. She said she would strongly recommend that they consider a playground and said they had discussed a community garden and would like to see that also. She said that the zoning was approved days before she became a councillor; she said that no one is speaking in support; however the use is allowed; she said she has spent many hours working with the developers and wants to make sure this is the very best project it can be.

Toni Goncalves said there are numerous concerns about traffic...she asked that they come back with some solutions in regard to traffic concerns; she said maybe they should look at decreasing the size of the project; she said there is a need for outdoor recreation on site and asked them to come back with commitments.

Bob Pelaggi said that they have heard the comments from the citizens and the board. He asked that they get together and have answers and responses for the next meeting; he said they need to propose something by way of a playground to accommodate this size project and said the project appears to be dense.

A motion was properly made (Goncalves) seconded (Thomas) and unanimously passed to continue the hearing to Thursday March 11, 2021.

Meeting was adjourned.