



Planning Board

November 16, 2016 – 6:01 PM – **Minutes**
New Bedford Free Public Library, 613 Pleasant Street

PRESENT: Colleen Dawicki, Chairperson
Kathryn Duff
Peter Cruz
Arthur Glassman
Alex Kalife

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Jennifer Clarke, AICP, *Acting City Planner*
Constance Brawders, *Staff Planner*

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dawicki called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

A formal roll call was conducted confirming members present as stated above.

MINUTES REVIEW AND APPROVAL

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to approve the September 14, 2016 meeting minutes.
Motion passed unopposed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM - 1 – (NOTE: The following cases were heard simultaneously and voted upon individually)

Case #31-16: Southeastern Massachusetts Veterans Housing Program (Veteran's Transition House) - Request by applicant for Site Plan approval for new construction of veteran's housing and support services on a 0.51 acre site, located at 20 Willis Street, WS Purchase Street and NW Purchase Street (Map 66, Lots 167, 168 & 33) in the Mixed Use Business (MUB) zoning district. Applicant's agent: Women's Development Corporation, 861A Broad Street, Providence, RI 02907.

ITEM - 2 Case 32-16: Southeastern Massachusetts Veterans Housing Program (Veteran's Transition House) - Request by applicant for Special Permit for parking reduction from 35 spaces to 18 spaces on a 0.51 acre site, located at 20 Willis Street, WS Purchase Street and NW Purchase Street (Map 66, Lots 167, 168 & 33) in the Mixed Use Business (MUB) zoning district. Applicant's agent: Women's Development Corporation, 861A Broad Street, Providence, RI 02907.

Dean Harrison, Director of Real Estate for Women's Development Corporation, stated this 501c3 organization from Providence, RI that has been developing and managing properties for over 30 years, branching into Massachusetts. He stated previous work experience has made him very familiar with the Massachusetts process for affordable housing. He introduced other members of the team present.

Jim Reed, Executive Director of the Veteran's Transition House at Willis Street, stated they had been looking to do this type of project for some time and have partnered to provide permanent housing for veterans along with supportive services, including therapy and transportation services.

Dean Harrison covered the process of how they became involved in this project and partnered with VTH.

Charlotte Thomas-Davison, of the Women's Development Corporation, walked the board through the site plan materials presented to the board, to include the demolition of the existing building which will be replaced with two buildings. She stated that Building A will house 23 enhanced SRO units and a point of service administrative suite for VTH and property management, as well as a kitchen, and large dining/assembly room. She went over the plans, including the entrance locations, lobby and parking area, noting that all public functions occur on the 1st Floor.

Ms. Davison then explained that Building B is a smaller multi-family residential structure, which will contain seven housing units. (2 studios, 2 two-bedroom apartments, and 3 one-bedroom apartments) She again noted the entrances off of Willis and Pleasant Streets, and pointed out the ADA units and elevator access.

In response to an inquiry by Board Member Glassman, Ms. Davison explained that the difference between this project and the current facility is that this new project will be permanent housing with lease holding tenants, as opposed to transitional housing for veterans. Board Member Glassman confirmed that everything presently there will be torn down.

Ms. Clarke added that transitional housing is no longer supported by HUD, who now prefers permanent housing to ensure independence.

Ms. Davison explained that each building will be treated differently. Though part of the same ownership and management, each building is not part of the same project, i.e. someone renting a two-bedroom unit versus the building with the enhanced SRO's. She then went over the floor plans of each building, including patios and public lobby on the first floor, and the 5 residential units on the 2nd floor, with laundry and storage lockers, with additional residential units on the remaining two floors.

Ms. Davison then went over the smaller building floor plans, including the residential units and laundry area. She also explained plans for the outer buildings and materials.

Timothy Beehan, Engineer, went over the plans for this mixed-use zone project consisting of three lots. He explained the planned removal of the present building and foundation, accompanied by cap off measures. He then went over the proposed site plans. He stated they have increased parking to eighteen spaces with two ADA spots. He also noted the proposed driveway location.

Mr. Beehan then went over storm water, run offs, and the infiltration and drainage systems. He noted the revision to be made due to DPI requests/comments. He then covered utility plans, again done in coordination with DPI.

Mr. Beehan then addressed the landscape plan, including street trees, arborvitae, rose bush and planting bed locations.

Board Member Duff inquired as to the green space between the buildings. Mr. Beehan explained it is currently planned to be lawn and small annual planting beds. Board suggestions were welcomed.

Chairperson Dawicki noted the steep grade between the buildings.

Board Member Cruz asked for a review of the storm water calculations and any increase in impervious area. Mr. Beehan stated that currently the property has no storm water controls. He also stated the amount of impervious area will lessen post construction, as will run off volumes.

Board Member Duff asked for the definition being used for permanent. Mr. Harrison stated a year lease will be signed. Presently there are no leases for transitional units. The average stay is hoped to be up to 5-10 years. From a management prospective it is desirable that tenants stay as long as possible, per income limits.

Ms. Clarke added that transitional housing under HUD is typically 0-24 months of tenancy, with emergency shelter of no more than 30 days. The present goal being to have people stay long enough to stabilize and remain in permanent housing.

Board Member Glassman inquired as to the percentage of tenants with cars. Mr. Harrison stated that most tenants do not have vehicles and use public transportation, and as such even with staff and visitor parking they feel the plan to be adequate.

Board Member Cruz confirmed that the three lots would be combined into one parcel with one ownership. Chairperson Dawicki noted that was included in DPI comments.

Chairperson Dawicki confirmed that all DPI comments were satisfactory to the applicants.

With regard to parking and circulation, Board Member Duff asked if there was internal circulation between the two buildings. Mr. Beehan noted there are no sidewalks in that area due to the sloping.

Ms. Clarke added that conversation was had with the applicants regarding the connectedness between the two buildings, and will eventually be worked out with the commissioner.

Board Member Cruz raised question with regard to the striping in front of the dumpster and the five foot aisle for the ADA van accessible spot. The applicant agreed to look further into compliance on the issue.

Board Member Cruz confirmed that the Pleasant Street Driveway was a one-way entrance.

With regard to landscaping and lighting, Ms. Duff stated she was appreciative of the proposed site improvements. She requested that the street trees be coordinated with Parks and Recreation and DPI.

At Chairperson Dawicki's request, Mr. Beehan reviewed the lighting plan, noting four parking lights, as well as building entrance lighting. He added the applicant supplied a photometric plan. Mr. Beehan and Mr. Harrison explained the lighting schedules, and again welcomed board suggestions.

Board Member Cruz suggested the applicant consult their engineers with regard to an additional light to address the substantial lighting drop off.

With regard to storm water and drainage, Board Member Cruz stated he did not see any major issues. Ms. Duff confirmed that the water would run off the roofs and be treated under the parking area, and then into a line to the manhole.

Board Member Cruz requested tactile warning strips on the onsite and offsite ramps, and discussed the room on the accessible ramps.

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to open the public hearing.
Motion passed unopposed.

In response to Ms. Dawicki's invitation to speak or be recorded in favor, James Papas, an abutter, stated he was in favor of the project. He inquired as to the present and proposed number of tenants. Mr. Papas also inquired if tenants would be strictly veterans. He asked if the public lobby would be only for tenants. He also raised a concern about parking in front of his rental properties. He stated that with families living in the building, he expects there will be more cars. He asked if the transitional tenants now at the facility would be going somewhere else or staying in one of the buildings.

There was no response to Ms. Dawicki's further invitation to speak or be recorded in favor.
There was no response to Ms. Dawicki's invitation to speak or be recorded in opposition.

The public hearing was suspended.

Ms. Dawicki read into the record a letter of support from Councilor Linda Morad.

Chairperson Dawicki invited the applicant to address the concerns raised.

Mr. Harrison explained that family units would likely consist of a veteran who could be in an SRO and his wife and child would need to be housed in a family unit or a returning veteran's parents live with him. He again noted that transitional housing is being eliminated. Mr. Harrison stated they do not expect any parking problem, but encouraged Mr. Papas to notify property management.

Mr. Harrison stated there are presently 25 residents, with the number varying at times. He stated the proposal involves 30 units. He stated that by law, under Fair Housing, the housing cannot be limited to strictly veterans, but can have a veterans' preference as long as service programs are provided, which they will be. He stated the lobby will serve VTH clients and will act as a resident meeting area. He further stated it will be open to veterans who are or have been in the VTH program.

Jason Stripinis, business manager of Veterans Transition House, stated he agreed with the answers given, but elaborated that the parking reduction is only a reduction in code. He stated they are actually going from 15 to 18 spaces. He stated last month there were 32 residents, and under the new building footprint 100% occupation would be 38 people. He noted they would not be operating any type of public soup kitchen.

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to close the public hearing. Motion passed unopposed.

Chairperson Dawicki went over the factors to be considered.

After brief discussion on motion contents and criteria, a motion with regard to Case #31-16 was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to approve with conditions a request by applicant for site plan approval for new construction of veteran's housing and support services on a 0.51 acre site, located at 20 Willis Street, (Map 66, Lots 167, 168 & 33) in the Mixed Use Business (MUB) zoning district.

The Planning Board found this request to be in accordance with City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9, Section 5400. As a result of such consideration, the Board moved approval on

the subject application with the following conditions:

- That the applicant coordinate with City Offices DPI and Parks and Recreation regarding the type of street trees to be planted along Willis and Purchase Streets;
- That the applicant confirm the ADA compliance with the handicap accessible parking space entering Building A, in particular the use of the space in front of the dumpster area for the unloading zone, and enlarging the ramp area to make certain it is easily accessible into the building entrance;
- That the applicant agree to have the lighting engineer check the continuation of proper and safe lighting levels from the parking area into the building entrance area.

In addition to these stipulations the planning board further conditions its decision as follows:

- That the project shall be undertaken according to the plan submitted with the application with adherence to all notes on the plans as reviewed by the planning board on this date;
- That the applicant will honor all DPI recommendations in a memo dated 11/3/2016;
- That the applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Planning Division in the following format: One 11x17 plan set and one CD or USB of plan set in PDF format, and shall ensure that these same plans are properly submitted to DPI;
- That the applicant shall provide a copy of the Notice of Decision certifying no appeal has been brought forward signed by the Office of the City Clerk for the Planning Division case file folder;
- That the applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the city planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this board for further review;
- That the rights authorized by the granted plan approval must be exercised by issuance of a building permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from date granted or they will lapse.

Motion passed 5-0

A motion was then made (KD) and seconded (AG) with regard to Case #32-16 to approve with conditions a request by applicant for Special Permit for parking reduction from 35 spaces to 18 spaces on a 0.51 acre site, located at 20 Willis Street (Map 66, Lots 167, 168 & 33) in the Mixed Use Business (MUB) zoning district.

The Planning Board found this request to be in accordance with City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9, Section 3000, 3100, 3110, 3120, and 3130 – Appendix C. As a result of such consideration, the Board moved approval on the subject application. This application has been found to be in accordance with City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9, Section 5300, because the board found that the benefit to the city and the neighborhood outweigh the adverse effects of the proposed use, taking into account the characteristics of the site and of the proposal in relation to that site.

In consideration of the following sections, the board found social, economic and community needs served by the proposal, traffic flow and safety, including parking and loading, adequacy of utilities and other public services, neighborhood character and social structures, impacts on the natural environment, and potential fiscal impact, including impact on the city services, tax base and employment.

In addition to these stipulations, the planning board further conditions its decision as follows:

- That the project shall be undertaken according to the plan submitted with the application with adherence to all notes on the plans as reviewed by the planning board on this date;
- That the applicant will honor all DPI recommendations in a memo dated 11/3/2016;
- That the applicant shall submit one final plan revision to the Planning Division in the following format: One 11x17 plan set and one CD or USB of plan set in PDF format, and shall ensure that these plans are properly submitted to Department of Inspectional Services;
- That the applicant shall provide a copy of the Notice of Decision certifying no appeal has been brought forward signed by the Office of the City Clerk for the Planning Division case file folder;
- That the applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the city planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this board for further review;
- That the rights authorized by the granted plan approval must be exercised by issuance of a building permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date granted or they will lapse.

Chairperson Dawicki noted that all the sections of the Code of Ordinances were things the board found the applicant to be in compliance with.

Motion passed 5-0.

ITEM - 3 – (NOTE: The following cases were heard simultaneously and voted upon individually)

Case #33-16: Highland New Bedford Associates Limited Partnership – Request by applicant for modification of Site Plan approval for Case #26-13 located in the New Bedford Business Park at 200 Theodore Rice Boulevard in the Industrial C zoning district.

ITEM - 4 - Case 34-16: Highland New Bedford Associates Limited Partnership – Request by applicant for Site Plan approval for New Ground Sign located in New Bedford Business Park at 200 Theodore Rice Boulevard also in the Industrial C zoning district. Applicant’s agent is Field Engineering Co., Inc., 11 D Industrial Drive, P.O. Box 1178, Mattapoisett, MA 02739

Chairperson Dawicki invited the applicant to focus on the differences in the plan.

Rich Riccio, Field Engineering, displayed the prior approved plan. He stated with regard to the request for modification, changes include the parking layout and a reduction in overall impervious paved surface. He noted that previously they were approved for 415 parking spaces required for N-Star and presently are 311 spaces for the building’s proposed uses by four tenants, the Lottery, Headgear, Massachusetts Health and Human Services, and the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Mr. Riccio noted site drainage changes, subsurface piping that has been replaced with a swale, and the elimination of the front bio retention areas replaced with landscaped areas. He displayed a curb cut and paved surface being eliminated. He noted minor alterations to westerly traffic circulation due to the addition of a recessed loading dock. Mr. Riccio stated that pedestrian circulation was also modified. He then explained the parking areas for the specific tenants. He stated front parking lot lighting had been added, as well as a bike rack.

Mr. Riccio displayed the locations of the two ground signs proposed. He went over minor modifications in site landscaping, including the elimination of the front trees to be replaced by shrubs for visibility reasons. He stated landscape islands will be maintained. He stated there will be 62 trees and 90 shrubs in addition to

flowering annuals. He was agreeable to the planting schedules and suggested completion by June 1st.

Mr. Riccio stated they had received an amended order of conditions from the Conservation Commission for the modifications and a three year amended Order of Conditions.

Mr. Riccio discussed the proposed signs requested. He offered a correction of 82 sf as the accurate non-lighted sign measurement.

With regard to site approach visibility comments, Mr. Riccio stated they would revisit the issue prior to the signs being put in. In response to Ms. Duff, he explained the roof had not yet been done.

Ms. Clarke suggested some advice from the Traffic Commission, though this is a private property. Mr. Riccio stated the signs comply with by law requirements regarding setbacks.

Board Member Cruz confirmed the alteration of storm water plans, noting the elimination of the back pavement for the planned storage area. Mr. Riccio confirmed the only modification is the bio retention in the front, replaced by a storm ceptor in a different location for pre-treatment.

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to open the public hearing. Motion passed unopposed.

In response to Ms. Dawicki's invitation to speak or be recorded in favor, Derek Santos of New Bedford Economic Development Council, serving as managing entity for the Industrial Foundation, stated the foundation has deed restrictions on property within the New Bedford Business Park which companies are required to comply with. He stated some of the regulations pertain to site design, parking and signage. He stated he had worked closely with Mr. Riccio on the modifications, and the foundation is happy the building is put into essentially full utilization. He stated the proposed landscaping is equally as good as that originally planned. He added that the signage meets the park's regulations and are similar to other signs in the park and limited lighting for businesses without a third shift. He stated the Industrial Foundation maintains security in the park. He stated the foundation must issue a letter of approval to be recorded at the registry of deeds. He again expressed the foundation's support of the plan. He inquired as to recourse in the event the landscaping completion date is not met.

Ms. Clarke stated any unmet condition will hold up sign off and issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

There was no response to Ms. Dawicki's further invitation to speak or be recorded in favor or opposition.

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to close the public hearing. Motion passed unopposed.

After brief discussion on board conditions, a motion made (KD) and seconded (AG) with regard to Case # 33-16, to approve with conditions a request by applicant for modification of Site Plan approval for Case #26-13 for commercial and industrial use located in New Bedford Business Park at 200 Theodore Rice Boulevard (Map 136, Lots 323, 354 & 466) on a 27.36+/- acre site in the Industrial C zoning district.

The Planning Board finds this request to be in accordance with City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9, Section 5400 and section 5436. As a result of such consideration, the Board moved approval on the subject application with the following conditions:

That the project shall be undertaken according to the plan submitted with the application with adherence to all notes on the plans as reviewed by the planning board on this date;

- That the applicant agree to cut the islands in as per the landscaping plan and that the landscaping be installed by June 1, 2017;
- That the applicant agree to install curb stops along the front and side of the building at the proposed parking area;
- That the applicant agree to add two additional accessible handicap parking spaces meeting ADA requirements at the northwest corner of the building;
- That the applicant agree to all previous conditions as outlined by this board on the first site plan approval;
- That the applicant agrees to staff recommendations, to Conservation recommendations, and to DPI recommendations.

In addition to these stipulations, the planning board further conditioned its decision as follows:

- Due to the volume of traffic entering the business park at the gateway and proximity to Phillips Road, site approach visibility lines at the east and west driveways should be evaluated by the City of New Bedford Traffic Commission or similar city authority for public safety reasons before the City Planner can sign off on the permanent installation of signage at the east and west entrances;
- Pedestrian circulation between parking areas and building entrances is not clearly marked or defined on the plan. For pedestrian safety, walkways and circulation pathways should be shown on the plans and delineated;
- Rear parking lot lighting is not shown on the modified plan submittal sheets. The lighting shall be shown on final plan revisions for city planner review and approval;
- Given the north /south orientation of the site and related parking areas, the heat island created by the hardscape shall be mitigated by the use of robust landscape design, installation of landscape islands, and construction of a white high reflective roof;
- The applicant will provide written clarification of use and intent of loading areas by tenants for the planning division case file for historical reference;
- The applicant is asked to complete landscape installation by June 1, 2017;
- The landscape plan shall have a note stating period of planting to be March 15 – May 15 and September 15 - November 15, weather permitting;
- Revised and updated plan sheet N-1 listing the name of current owner applicant shall be presented with the final submittal documents for review and approval of by staff;
- Revised plan sheet N-1 notes shall include the standard notes as presented on Page 7 of the staff report for this case;
- Reference to hay bales or use of hay shall be changed to straw on all plans notes;
- Areas prepped for planting should be stabilized with mulch or straw for winter season;
- The structure's primary building shall utilize/install a high reflective and/or white membrane roof material as stipulated in the notes of decision for Case #26-13;
- That the project shall be undertaken according to the plan submitted with the application with adherence to all notes on the plans as reviewed by the planning board on this date;
- The applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Planning Division in the following format:

One 11x17 plan set and one CD or USB of plan set in PDF format, and shall ensure that these plans are properly submitted to Department of Inspectional Services;

- That the applicant shall provide a copy of the Notice of Decision certifying no appeal has been brought forward signed by the Office of the City Clerk for the Planning Division case file folder;
- That the applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the city planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this board for further review;
- That the rights authorized by the granted plan approval must be exercised by issuance of a building permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date granted or they will lapse.

Motion passed 5-0

A motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) with regard to Case # 34-16 to approve with conditions a request by applicant for site plan approval for a New Ground Sign located in New Bedford Business Park at 200 Theodore Rice Boulevard (Map 136, Lots 323, 354 & 466) on a 27.36+/- acre site in the Industrial C zoning district.

The Planning Board finds this request to be in accordance with City of New Bedford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 9, Section 5400, Section 5427, and Section 3200. As a result of such consideration, the Board moves approval on the subject application with the following conditions:

- That the existing lottery sign be removed once the new signs are installed.

In addition to these stipulations, the planning board further conditions its decisions as follows:

- Due to the volume of traffic entering the business park at the gateway and proximity to Phillips Road, site approach visibility lines at the east and west driveway should be verified and evaluated by the City of New Bedford Traffic Commission for public safety reasons before the City Planner can sign off on the permanent installation of signage at the east and west entrances;
- That the project shall be undertaken according to the plan submitted with the application with adherence to all notes on the plans as reviewed by the planning board on this date;
- Revised plan sheet N-1 notes shall include the standard notes as presented on Page 7 of the staff report for this case as applicable;
- The applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Planning Division in the following format: One 11x17 plan set and one CD or USB of plan set in PDF format, and shall ensure that these plans are properly submitted to Department of Inspectional Services;
- That the applicant shall provide a copy of the Notice of Decision certifying no appeal has been brought forward signed by the Office of the City Clerk for the Planning Division case file folder;
- That the applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the city planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this board for further review;
- That the rights authorized by the granted plan approval must be exercised by issuance of a building permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date granted or they will lapse.

Motion passed 5-0

OTHER:

ITEM 5 – Planning Board Meeting Calendar

Ms. Dawicki informed the board to review the Planning Board meeting calendar.

ITEM 6 – Pending Election of Planning Board Officers

Ms. Clarke reminded the board of upcoming elections at the December meeting.

Ms. Clarke stated she had reviewed notices from abutting towns regarding actions taken by their respective boards. The same are available for public view in the Planning Division Office.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, a motion was made (KD) and seconded (AG) to adjourn. Motion passed unopposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING
Wednesday, December 14, 2016