



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

Community Development Department

6 Baboosic Lake Road

Town Hall - Lower level - East Wing

Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

603 424-3531

Fax 603 424-1408

[www.merrimacknh.gov](http://www.merrimacknh.gov)

## MERRIMACK PLANNING BOARD

### APPROVED MINUTES

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017**

Planning Board members present: Robert Best, Alastair Millns, Tom Koenig, and Alternates Nelson Disco and Dan Ricker.

Planning Board members absent: Michael Redding, Lynn Christensen, Desirea Falt, Paul McLaughlin, and Alternate Vincent Russo.

Staff present: Planning and Zoning Administrator Robert Price and Recording Secretary Zina Jordan.

#### **1. Call to Order**

Robert Best called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and designated Nelson Disco and Dan Ricker to sit for Michael Redding and Lynn Christensen, respectively.

#### **2. Planning & Zoning Administrator's Report**

None.

#### **3. Discussion of Capital Improvement Program for Town of Merrimack**

Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Paul Micali presented the 2018-2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), explained the needs, sources of funding and years the work would be done. Public Works Director Kyle Fox answered Planning Board questions about road construction projects. Chairman Best and Alastair Millns made the case for sidewalks and for more roundabouts at intersections. Discussion ensued concerning how boats at canoe launches would be kept clean to prevent milfoil and the best location for a new ramp/launch. Paul Micali explained the rationale for combining the fire and police stations into a public safety complex.

The Board deferred making priority recommendations to later in the meeting.

#### **4. KNA Associates, Inc. and Charles H. Hazen (applicants) and Richard P. and Juliana D. Hazen (owners) - Request for an extension of final approval of a Lot Line Adjustment and Subdivision Plan for a five parcel minor subdivision. The parcels are located at 90 & 94 Wilson Hill Road in the R-1 (Residential) and Aquifer Conservation and Flood Hazard Conservation Districts. Tax Map 4B, Lots 114 and 114- 02. This item was conditionally approved at the June 20, 2017, Planning Board meeting.**

Brenton Cole, Project Engineer, KNA Associates, Inc. said the applicant met all but one of the June 21, 2017, conditions. The only condition remaining is the one regarding

finalization of easement documents and deeds, which is currently in progress but more time is needed to complete the documents and have them reviewed.

**The Board voted 5-0-0 to grant a six-month extension, on a motion made by Alastair Millns and seconded by Nelson Disco.**

- 5. Synergy Self Storage, LLC. (applicant/owner)** - Continued review for acceptance and consideration of a waiver of full site plan review for modifications to the previously approved site plan regarding access and parking. The parcel is located at 403 Daniel Webster Highway in the I-1 (Industrial), Aquifer Conservation and Elderly Housing Overlay Districts. A portion of the parcel is subject to the Flood Hazard Conservation District. Tax Map 4D-3, Lot 084- 01. **This item is continued from the October 17, 2017, Planning Board meeting.**

The applicant is requesting a continuance to allow more time to accommodate the Planning Board's request for engineered plans

**At the applicant's request, the Board voted 5-0-0 to continue this item to February 6, 2018, on a motion made by Alastair Millns and seconded by Nelson Disco.**

- 6. 4 Executive Park Drive Realty, LLC. (applicant/owner)** — Conceptual Discussion regarding an upcoming site plan to construct 280 multi-family residential units, clubhouse and other associated site improvements (formal application scheduled for January 2, 2018). The parcels are located at 4 & 6 Executive Park Drive in the C-2 (General Commercial) and Aquifer Conservation Districts and 100-year Flood Hazard Area. Tax Map 4D, Lots 076 & 077.

Dan Ricker recused himself from discussing this item.

Attorney Greg Michael, Bernstein Shur, Sawyer & Nelson, stated that per the Board's request, the applicant located a development similar in size with one egress point in order to study traffic flow and compare to the ITE estimates provided for the proposed Executive Park Drive development. Waterford Place in Manchester was chosen. The study confirmed that ITE's traffic figures are high. The applicant will appear before the Merrimack Conservation Commission (MCC) on January 22, 2018.

Austin Turner, Bohler Engineering, said the design incorporates Planning Board and Town department comments. Proposed are 280 one- and two-bedroom units in five buildings (three on Parcel 4 and two on Parcel 6) and a clubhouse. The clubhouse would have an Internet Café with coffee and donuts and would not be open to the public. He explained the driveways, water systems (redundant supply), and stormwater infiltration, recharging and treatment. Austin Turner explained the sewer system, which ultimately goes under the F.E. Everett Turnpike.

Parcel 4 could utilize some Woodspring Suites parking thanks to an existing parking easement. A parking waiver will be requested for Parcel 6. The applicant is asking what the Board thinks is an appropriate number of parking spaces. Attorney Michael said that, although there is a 49 space easement with the neighboring D'Angelo's property, the applicant wants to make the parking comply without including that in the

calculations and to ensure that commercial activity is allowed. The easement could be used if necessary. Austin Turner added that there would be some under-building garage parking. The applicant is asking the Board to consider the parcels separately in terms of the parking requirement, since Parcel 6 would effectively stand-alone from Parcel 4 by design (residents of Parcel 6 would not park on Parcel 4 as it would not be convenient).

Chairman Best asked the applicant to do something for the tenants of Parcel 6, which is separate from the amenities located on Parcel 4. He suggested an internal connection or breaking up the parking with green space or putting some parking behind the building. He did not want people to see so much parking when entering the area. Austin Turner stated that connecting all five buildings would require too much environmental work and that the Fire Department wants access behind the buildings. Attorney Michael said the applicant is constrained by wetlands. Chairman Best suggested not exactly aligning the buildings in Parcel 6 and adding landscaping.

Chairman Best stated his confidence that the traffic numbers are accurate.

Alastair Millns looked at a peer-to-peer synchronized traffic system in Massachusetts during rush hour. He noted that two cars that ran a red light blocked the intersection and stopped the system for a bit. However the system works very well and he supports installing one here. Attorney Michael noted that the State is very anxious to work with the applicant.

Adam Wagner, Founder/Partner, Market Square Architects, said the fitness center cybercafé in the clubhouse would be for residents only. Residents could rent the clubhouse for private parties/functions.

Austin Turner said there would be 192 units with 260 bedrooms on Parcel 4. Parcel 6 would have 88 units. Most units would have one bedroom. Because he does not anticipate many school age children, he did not design a playground.

Attorney Michael stated that all rents would be at the market rate.

### **Public comment**

Dan Ricker, 12 Merrill Road, questioned the math behind the parking waiver request. Chairman Best explained that a waiver would reduce the number of cars. Dan Ricker showed a brief video of traffic coming off Route 3 at Exit 11S at 5:30 p.m. It took 7 minutes and 38 seconds to travel 0.2 miles. He said that, although people leave for work at different times, they all return home at the same time. Alastair Millns noted the video showed people blocking the intersection, which is the same thing he saw in MA. He echoed his concern that the same issue will occur here and prevent the proposed peer-to-peer system from functioning as intended. He suggested installing cameras and ticketing offenders, but the State does not allow that. Chairman Best suggested imposing very high fines. He said the video shows that the cause of the stacking is that the lights are not synchronized. Today's traffic is a man-made disaster.

Rene Bourgeois, 23 Bigwood Drive, is a general contractor who sees many issues with the plan. He questioned the number of parking spaces, how the handicapped would

exit Parcel 6, how to build a sewer system across a stream, whether building structures within the 100' buffer would require grading cuts in the rear, how the Fire Department could access the rear, whether there must be a retaining wall and removal of trees, and why the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) granted a Special Exception to permit a residential use in a commercial district.

Attorney Michael repeated that studies and the facts show that the improvements would make the traffic situation better, although it would not solve all the problems. Austin Turner said having fewer bedrooms would reduce the amount of parking. The number of spaces would be in the mid-500s rather than the required low 600s because of the more conservative bedroom count. People could walk on the property without going onto driveways and parking spaces. There could be connectivity among the five buildings, perhaps with sidewalks. The buildings could be moved forward a little for Fire Department access in the rear. The applicant will ensure that no drainage goes into Naticook Brook. There would be hardy landscaping that requires no care. There would be a management company. It took a lot of work over the last 1-2 years to determine the need for so many apartments.

Chairman Best noted that the Master Plan says there must be housing to attract companies and jobs for young professionals. Tom Koenig added that commercial facilities would expand.

## **7. Discussion/possible regarding other items of concern**

Dan Ricker returned to the Board.

Chairman Best said that Community Development Director Tim Thompson is looking at options for getting public input on the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) Sidewalk/Pedestrian Master Plan that the Board would discuss in either January or February 2018. Comments should be directed to Tim Thompson. Nelson Disco said he is writing something to incorporate into NRPC's Phase 2. He suggested including the Department of Transportation (NHDOT) in the process. Chairman Best said the same concept areas should be considered for the Sidewalk Master Plan as the Town Master Plan. The NRPC should be asked at what point they will begin billing for the work they've done/are being asked to do. The Board should not over-use them. Nelson Disco explained that they are part of Merrimack's dues, so they are not really free.

Discussion of CIP items:

Public Safety Complex: Alastair Millns objected to moving the Police Station and preferred to build a \$65,000 four-bedroom house on the lot for the South Fire Station. Chairman Best said it is good for the Police Station to be in the center of Town with other Town facilities and liked the idea of a public safety complex. Both the Fire and Police Departments like the plan. Space studies are still being done. Tom Koenig described how bad the Police Station and its parking situation currently are.

Merrimack River Boat Ramp: Nelson Disco opined that it would be very expensive because of the amount of excavation necessitated by a 30' drop.

All Library items: The Planning Board wants to see a forward-looking plan, not just for a building to house books and asked why the Town is being asked to fix a building if a new one is wanted.

Athletic fields: The Planning Board opined that they would be too costly and prefers to spend the money on other priorities.

**The Board voted on the recommended rankings of all Town Capital Improvement Program items:**

**“Urgent”: Bridge Replacement – US 3 (DW Highway) Baboosic Brook.**

**“Necessary”: Public Safety Complex, Stormwater Drainage Improvements, Paving – Infrastructure Improvements, Paving – Infrastructure Improvements – Gravel Roads, Seaverns Bridge Canoe Launch Ramp Access Improvement, Daniel Webster & Woodbury Sidewalks, Sewer Line Extensions (Mayflower & McQuestion Sewer Basins), Library Drainage Trench by Children’s Windows, Relocate Sewer Connector under Everett Turnpike (FKA Executive Park Pump Station), Wastewater Treatment Plan Phase III and Pump Station Upgrades.**

**“Desirable”: Paving – DW Highway, Wire Road Intersection Improvements, Turkey Hill Intersection Improvements, Daniel Webster & Baboosic Lake Sidewalks, Baboosic Lake Road Sidewalk, Baboosic Lake Road Sidewalk (Joppa Road to Madeline Bennett), New Library.**

**“Deferrable”: Merrimack River Boat Ramp Access Improvement, Library Sidewalk, Library Slate Roof, Library Elevator.**

**“Premature”: New Athletic Fields.**

## **8. Approval of Minutes - December 5, 2017**

Tabled.

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 p.m., by a vote of 5-0-0, on a motion made by Alastair Millns and seconded by Nelson Disco.