



City of Westbrook

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

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**WESTBROOK PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2009, 7:00 P.M.
WESTBROOK HIGH SCHOOL, ROOM 114
AGENDA**

Present: Ed Reidman, (Chair) (Ward 5), Dennis Isherwood (Ward 2), Cory Fleming (At Large), Scott Herrick (Alternate), Paul Emery (Ward 3) Michael Taylor (Alternate)

Absent: Greg Blake (At Large), Anna Wrobel (Ward 4), Staff: Molly Just

Chairman Reidman called the Westbrook Planning Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Room 114 of the Westbrook High School.

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes

Ed Reidman the first item on our agenda is the approval of the minutes dated November 17, 2009

Michael Taylor moved to accept minutes as written

2nd by Paul Emery

Ed Reidman the item was moved and seconded, does everyone understand the motion? All those in favor?

The vote was unanimous in favor 6-0

Rene Daniel arrived at the Planning Board meeting 7:02 P.M.

Continuing Business

- 3. Subdivision and Site Plan – Spring Crossing – Sevee & Maher Engineers, Inc. on behalf of Westbrook Housing Authority/Westbrook Development Corporation for the construction of a 34-unit elderly housing building on an approximately 1.44 acre site located behind 783 Main Street. The two existing multi-family residential structures would remain for a total of 47 units. Tax Map: 33, Lot: 142A. Zone: City Center District, Village Review Overlay Zone, Downtown Housing Overlay and General Development Shoreland Zone.**

Update. Since the Planning Board last discussed this application changes have been made to address concerns expressed regarding site design and access. The primary changes are listed as follows:

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1. *Main Street access to the new building has been deleted as the steep slope of the driveway from Main Street to the building far exceeded the City's allowable maximum for slopes and posed a significant challenge for emergency vehicles trying to serve residents of the proposed building.*
2. *Primary access to the new building will be from Ash Street and the building will have an Ash Street address (19 Ash Street). Signage will be placed along Ash Street to direct visitors to the building.*
3. *Handicap access from Main Street to the new building would be provided via a paved walkway to the south side of the new building. Residents of the building would enter the building and could use the elevator to access their unit. In addition, exterior stairs would provide pedestrian access from the upper parking lot to the lower parking lot.*
4. *The common access way behind the to-be-built 21 and 19 Ash Streets and the post office would be one-way as it approaches the subject property and extends to the post office. The following measures would be taken to reduce cut-through traffic in this area:*
 - a. *A stop sign heading into the site from the post office parking lot would be constructed;*
 - b. *A raised speed table with 'elderly pedestrian crossing' signs would be erected;*
 - c. *A striped crosswalk would be erected;*
 - d. *The driveway would have a curvilinear alignment and parking lot to reduce long clear lines of sight; and*
 - e. *A mounded landscaping berm would be constructed at the driveway entrance from the post office parking lot.*

Summary *The subject building would be located at a new 21 Ash Street, behind two multi-family residential buildings fronting on Main Street and to the west of the Post Office. The proposed project includes a 4-story cement clapboard and brick multi-family building with vinyl windows and an asphalt shingle roof. The building is intended to provide rental housing for the elderly. The existing multi-family buildings also include rental housing. The subject property is being developed per a Joint Development Agreement between the owner, the City and Hi-Tech Builders to provide an access road between Ash Street and the Post Office property.*

The Spring Crossing plans have been designed to blend with the construction plans for the adjacent 21 Ash Street project. The applicant has been coordinating with the owner of 21 Ash Street to share storm drain piping along their shared property line and to streamline construction phasing between the two projects. Appropriate utility easements are being negotiated between the two parties.

John Gallagher I am the Executive Director of Westbrook Housing and President of Westbrook Development Corporation a nonprofit Housing Development Corporation located here in Westbrook.

We appreciate the time you gave us at the last meeting and what we are hoping to do during the several weeks that it has transpired is to go back and re-address some of the concerns that were raised during that initial meeting. Hopefully tonight we will be able to show you some of those changes and answer any additional questions that you may have.

With that David Lloyd the architect will be making the initial presentation followed up by Mark Bergeron of Sevee and Maher.

David Lloyd the architect with Archetype Architects, the last time we were here we talked about the basic materials. I have a sample board here that I could pass along but I will explain the board. Basically we have a brick base and the cement clapboard siding. We have a brick base all along here in the front of the building, the middle section is a clapboard siding. The cornice is a FRP product, a fiberglass reinforced

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plastic. The building has actually improved through this process; meeting with the Village Overlay Board we have expanded the portico porch here in the front of the building so it gives a nice pleasant seating area. This change is to accommodate handicapped access up to Main Street. We had to jog the building out right here which kind of breaks down the mass. Actually it is a nice architectural feature. This door right here has been added on with a little porch roof over that. Now from Main Street you can walk down go into this door and then walk down the corridor and go on the elevator and then you are on this level right here. That will be a nice transition to the residence who wishes to go up to Main Street.

With that I will turn it over to Mark will go over the site plan.

Mark Bergeron Sevee & Maher Engineers, since the last Planning Board meeting as we mentioned we did have a couple of Staff meetings, we went to the Conservation Commission meeting and Talked about open space.

The package you have in front of you tonight is very similar to this plan. We have just added some color to define where the new parking is and to show where some of the landscape areas will be. The one thing that is not on your plan that is on this plan as shown by the crosshatched area basically to the north or to the right of the driveway connecting the parking lot that is going to be the easement area. That is going to be dedicated to the City of Westbrook for use as open space. So that has been added to the plans and we will certainly detail that up and get some language to Molly so that the City's Attorney can look at that.

The other major change since the last Planning Board meeting is the disconnection of what I call the upper parking lot and the lower parking lot. If you recall last time there was a driveway that connected Main Street with the main parking lot, in front of the new building. After discussions with the Planning Board and with staff and the fire department we thought a good solution might be was to take that driveway connection out so you would not have to drive down a steep slope is there could be maintenance issues with that. So what we have is a two-way driveway from Main Street, very similar to what it is today. The only difference would be this connection closer to the Spring Street intersection would be closed so residence would command to the six parking spaces here and to the one handicapped parking space there for sharing between the two existing buildings.

The rest of the site will be accessed from the Post Office parking lot or from Ash Street. In fact the new building will have a 19 Ash St. address and there will be signs installed on Ash Street directing visitors to the site from there.

From the Ash Street parking lot side that is a two way driveway, so that the inbound and outbound driveway from the site from the Post Office and from the east that is a one-way in driveway to the site. You will not be able to go from the site out into the Post Office parking lot towards Presumpscot Common.

You will also see that road looks curvier, the driveway is a little curvy in there that was very much on purpose. We wanted to make that is curvy as possible in order to reduce speeds and to reduce any extra cut through traffic through there. We have a speed table right near the property line with stop signs so if you are coming in from the Post Office side you will have to stop at the speed table. Across from there we have a 5 mile an hour speed limit sign on site. The signs posted for elderly residents that there is pedestrian crossing from the building down to the pathway leading to the River Walk.

The other thing that we did that shows on this drawing is a little green jellybean type shape... that is going to be a raised landscaped island with a mixture of low shrubs and some taller trees to again cut down on the site line through there so it is not a straight through opening. We think with all those measures in there that will certainly help control speeds through there as well.

Other than that the site is pretty much the same as it was before. We do have a retaining wall here now that will hold up what I call the upper parking lot. The area just below that will be used for snow

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storage but it will also be landscaped around the edges so the housing authority can haul snow off of the property right into the grassed area there.

The other thing as David has mentioned we have the stairway connecting the upper part of the site with the lower part of the site. We have a handicapped accessible ramp to the south end of the building, so that residents and visitors can come from Main Street directly into the building and take the elevator from there.

Other than that we have added a couple of benches to the site, one down here where the new pathway will meet the River walk then one up above the rain garden. We changed the light fixtures little bit so that it will match the exterior site poles, the light fixtures for Presumpscot Common, kind of tying the site in together. That is the summary of changes and would be happy to take any questions that you may have.

Ed Reidman Molly the application is complete?

Molly Just the application is complete.

Ed Reidman may I have a motion to accept the application is complete?

Michael Taylor moved to find the application complete

2nd by **Cory Fleming**

Ed Reidman everyone understands the motion that is procedural? All those in favor?

The vote was unanimous in favor 6-0

Ed Reidman this being a new project would anybody like to take a Site Walk?

Dennis Isherwood yes

Ed Reidman seeing no one else wishes maybe you could view the property on your own? Public Hearing?

May I have a motion to have a public hearing on the 15th? Molly on the 15th can we make it?

Molly Just yes

Dennis Isherwood moved to schedule a public hearing on December 15, 2009

2nd by **Cory Fleming**

The vote was unanimous in favor 6-0

Ed Reidman we will see you on the 15th. Do any Board members have questions now?

Dennis Isherwood I see the work you have put into this. I like what you did with the street but why did we make it one way coming out instead of one way going in? That was my biggest concern that it being a continuous street from Main Street going west instead of the other way. If the entrance at the Post Office

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were one way going the other way you probably would never get cut through traffic on that street. The people could exit and go to the Post Office if they wanted then swing around the block and come back. I am puzzled as to why you made it going one way that way, in that direction.

John Gallagher that was a concession that we looked at a while ago with the neighbors. They were concerned about dumping more traffic through the Foster Street parking lot out onto Foster Street and Cloudman. Rather than having more traffic funneled that way, my understanding of the discussion other than no traffic anywhere was that this might be something that would limit the traffic towards the east, towards Foster Street. The other issue that you do have is the Post Office does own that triangle piece. They looked at it as a traffic mitigation; a good compromise to mitigate the traffic into the neighborhood and steering into the more commercial area of downtown.

Dennis Isherwood I see it as just the opposite. I see it as funneling more traffic through your area then not having it go through. Now you have access to Bridge Street from Main Street. You could go from the Park on back roads to Bridge Street through your area, where most of the traffic is coming. The traffic in the morning is going in the opposite direction and is staggered fairly well and there is not a lot of traffic that would cut through there. Going the other way, I think you could have a major cut through there. You could go from anywhere on Main Street from the ballparks all the way down to your area to Bridge Street. Not only would you see allot more traffic, if you turn those arrows the other way and had people exit that little tiny street, I think you would eliminate 90% of your traffic.

John Gallagher again, we were trying to come up with what we thought we were hearing from the last meeting. It was suggested that people would cut through from Bridge Street, going through all the parking lots and coming through this way. We could spin it either way. Again, all I was trying to do was to accommodate the comments I heard from the neighbors, more in tune with the Foster Street residents. Thinking that putting traffic toward the commercial end or downtown area would be less objectionable to people. The other concern would be what the Fire Department feels would be the best access. That would be my only other caveat to that.

Dennis Isherwood do not think the Fire Department would have any issue going down a one way street, that short. My major concern with this entire project is that street going down in that direction. I think if you changed the direction, there would be so much less traffic on Cloudman and Foster Streets by turning the arrows around.

John Gallagher we would be glad to look at it. I imagine that there will be some Public Comment about one or the other, for any of it. Certainly from our perspective it was more of a compromise trying to help mitigate some issues that were raised by people on Foster Street and Cloudman as far as directing traffic going through their neighborhood. That is the only reason we did it and reduced it from two way to one way, to help mitigate the traffic going in opposite directions.

Dennis Isherwood I do not think you are going to create a lot of traffic from that project but a cut through that is for sure.

John Gallagher we will talk to staff about it and obviously at the hearing on the fifteenth will probably give us more direction and whatever the Planning Board puts forth as conditions.

Ed Reidman anyone else have any questions?

Cory Fleming not a question, but a request that you be prepared at the Public Hearing to discuss the landscaping plan especially given the proximity to the river walk.

John Gallagher yes

Ed Reidman Westbrook Housing Authority has the old High School. How much of the land do you actually own? Do you own to the back side of the parking lot, to the river?

John Gallagher we lease the ground underneath the old High School and the old VOC building. We maintain the parking lot but the City actually owns it.

Ed Reidman so if you came down Foster Street and took a left hand turn headed towards the river, going into your parking lot; it would be on what is essentially City property? You would come to the far end of it and tie into the driveway that would take you across the Post Office land.

John Gallagher correct

Ed Reidman is it you that would have an easement to cross the Post Office land?

John Gallagher no the City has the Four party agreement on the right of way. The legal piece has not been worked out as of yet.

Ed Reidman the other step is the piece of property that you are talking about tonight; will the City have rights to go across that?

John Gallagher yes

Ed Reidman future enforcement problems are eliminated. Thank you. Are there any more questions?

No questions

Ed Reidman items 4 and 5 will not be heard this evening as they are not prepared to be heard.

New Business

- ~~4. Site Plan Amendment – One Thomas Drive – Terrence J. DeWan & Associates, on behalf of The Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, for floodplain restoration in the Long Creek Watershed. This amendment includes no new construction but the proposed site changes require an amendment to the approved site plan on property located 1 Thomas Drive. Tax Map: 3, Lot: 125. Zone: Industrial Park District.~~
- ~~5. Site Plan Amendment – Fifteen Thomas Drive – Terrence J. DeWan & Associates, on behalf of The Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, for floodplain restoration in the Long Creek Watershed. This amendment includes no new construction but the proposed site changes require an amendment to the approved site plan on property located 15 Thomas Drive. Tax Map: 3, Lot: 124. Zone: Industrial Park District.~~

6. Land Use Ordinance Amendments – Section 101 Purpose, Section 201 Definitions, Section 202 General Provisions, Section 301 City Center District, Section 305 Prides Corner Smart Growth Area, Section 404 Signage, Section 407 Downtown Housing Overlay, Section 500 Subdivision and Site Plan Review Standards, Section 705 Flaglots. The intent is to update the Zoning Ordinance, which was completely rewritten in 2004, to make changes that have been identified as necessary through use of the ordinance and to reflect current best practices.

Summary. Staff proposes general updates to the Land Use Ordinances based on experience using the Ordinances adopted in 2004. The 2004 version was a complete rewrite and the ensuing five years has given us the opportunity to use the Ordinance and identify adjustments that need to be made in order to make the provisions better reflect their original intent. Attached are a summary table of the proposed changes and the required underline and strike-thru of all changes. The proposed changes are not substantive and are intended as housekeeping measures. The changes impact the following sections of the Ordinances:

*Section 101 Purpose;
Section 201 Definitions;
Section 202 General Provisions
Section 301 City Center District;
Section 305 Prides Corner Smart Growth Area;
Section 404 Signage;
Section 407 Downtown Housing Overlay;
Section 500 Subdivision and Site Plan Review Standards; and
Section 705 Flaglots.*

Ed Reidman you have the documentation in your packet. Ultimately we will have a public hearing on this item. I personally am not sure that with the volume of items that are on here, that we ought to just jump into it, maybe we should put a workshop on it then let anyone come out of the wood work that wishes to speak. I have a few comments... but at the very end we talk about doing something with the Zoning Board of Appeals... My question right off the top is have they reviewed this?

Molly Just they are aware and are in support of this measure. It should not be anything more like an appeal or a variance. It is allowed type of development, it should be with the Planning Board and really administrative unless it needs to go to the Planning Board for subdivision, so they are aware of this.

Ed Reidman is anyone ready to discuss this tonight? What is the agenda on the 15th look like?

Molly Just this would make two items.

Ed Reidman we will workshop this item on the 15th.

Rene Daniel so moved

Ed Reidman we will not vote on that.

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7. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted by Linda Gain PECE Administrative Assistant

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