

PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
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GREENFIELD PLANNING BOARD Minutes of November 10, 2010 Greenfield Middle School Auditorium, 195 Federal Street

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Roxann Wedegartner, Chair; Linda Smith, Vice-chair; Mary Newton, Clerk; Clayton Sibley; James Allen; and alternate Joshua Parker.

Also present were Mayor William Martin; Eric Twarog, Director of Planning and Development; Jeff Terrell of WHAI; and members of the public.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Moved by Smith, seconded by Allen and voted 5:0 to approve the meeting minutes from October 21, 2010.

Public Hearings

- a. (Continued from September 2, 2010) - Greenfield Investor's Property Development, LLC, Proposed 135,000 square foot retail store off French King Highway (Tax Map R04, Lot 44; Tax Map R05, Lot 23)

Wedegartner continued the public hearing at 7:10 p.m. The following project proponents were present: Tim Sullivan of Goulston & Storrs; Rick Dupuis of VHB; and Donna MacNicol of MacNicol & Tombs, LLP. Wedegartner explained the rules of the Board's public hearing process to the audience and announced that the public hearing is being recorded and asked if anyone else was recording the hearing. Jeff Terrell of WHAI responded yes.

Tim Sullivan of Goulston & Storrs gave a presentation to the Board responding to the Board's questions and comments to include the following: buffering and screening, views, consistency with the commercial corridor, water/wastewater estimates, and sustainable design commitments (PowerPoint slide handout dated November 10, 2010 is hereby made a part of the record). Newton asked Mr. Sullivan if the view of the top of the proposed building is still objectionable, would they be willing to plant additional evergreens to further block out the view of the top of the building. Mr. Sullivan responded yes. Allen asked about the proposed porous concrete sidewalks and whether the entire area of impervious surface could be done by porous material(s). Mr. Sullivan responded no due to potential contaminants from vehicles in the parking areas flowing into the groundwater. Wedegartner asked Mr. Sullivan if he knows of any similar projects that have preserved 18 acres of land. Mr. Sullivan responded no. Smith asked if the Board could be shown where the project impacts buffer areas. Mr. Sullivan showed the Board existing conditions and generally where buffers are impacted. Smith asked what percentage of the proposed retail operation would be grocery. Mr. Sullivan responded that it is difficult to answer this question as there are varied types of food products that would be sold, but that this information could be provided after some additional consideration. Wedegartner asked how the developer is marketing this proposed retail operation. Mr. Sullivan responded that given the current economic environment, that the most important consideration for a potential tenant is the attainment of the major local permits. Smith asked how approvals are dealt with without a tenant. Wedegartner stated that approval would be given with conditions requiring the applicant to come back before the Board once a tenant

is secured to ensure compliance with the approved site plan and to review the final architectural design and signage. Mr. Sullivan stated that approvals without a tenant are common and compared such approvals to an office park or subdivision approval. Mayor Martin asked if fill will be brought in to the site. Mr. Dupuis responded that they would utilize the existing sand on the site near the proposed access drive as well as bringing in fill to reach the final grades. Newton asked if they considered alternate designs of the proposed building or are they waiting for suggestions. Mr. Sullivan responded yes to both and that they have started looking into making the building look more “New England”. Wedegartner instructed the Board to look into potential designs for the building for a future meeting. Newton asked about the “green” design elements of the project and whether solar panels have been considered. Mr. Sullivan stated that specific “green” design elements are tenant-based. Mr. Dupuis stated that they did consider solar panels but due to shading considerations that solar panels may not be efficient. Sibley asked where the extended sewer line will be installed. Mr. Sullivan responded down French King Highway. Sibley asked about pedestrian access to the site and stated that there are no sidewalks from Loomis Road to the site. Mr. Sullivan stated that there are no sidewalks existing in this area but that they could look into this further. Mayor Martin suggested a bicycle/pedestrian walkway down Gill Road. Mr. Sullivan responded that due to traffic considerations, that Gill Road may not be the most appropriate location for such a walkway. Wedegartner instructed the project proponents to seriously consider pedestrian access to the site and get back to the board on this at a future meeting.

Public Input Portion of Public Hearing:

Al Norman - 21 Grinnell Street, Representing the Abutters

Mr. Norman stated that comparing this project to an office park project or subdivision is not valid. He stated that the project proponent had six years to identify a tenant. Mr. Norman brought up the following issues: night views not shown, views from Route 2 not shown, existing sand bank will be destroyed, only one access to and from the site which is an issue for emergency situations, restoration of Wetland #4, project not meeting the Stretch Code.

Al Dray – Deerfield

Wedegartner stated that the discussion of traffic will take place at the November 18, 2010 Planning Board meeting.

Sandra Boston - 15 Abbott Street, Greenfield

Stated that “New England” feel is downtown Greenfield and asked for a definition of “New England feel”.

David Singer – 41 Burnell Street, Greenfield

Stated that he is speaking as a Town Councilor. Stated that to date the issues addressed by the board are good but asked the Board to consider the economic impacts of the proposed project as well as traffic impacts.

Wedegartner responded to Al Norman’s comment on the Stretch Code by stating that the Building Inspector would not issue a building permit unless the project met the requirements of the Stretch Code. Wedegartner responded to Councilor’s Singer’s comments on issues addressed to date by stating that what was addressed tonight was at the request of the Planning Board. Smith asked if perspective views could be submitted coming from Route 2 further up. Mr. Sullivan responded yes. Smith inquired whether the project proponents will be responding point by point on the Corridor Design Guidelines. Mr. Sullivan responded yes but in writing.

Margo Jones – 308 Main Street, Greenfield

Stated that what will actually be seen is the rooftop with mechanical equipment so seeing the full building would actually be better in terms of aesthetics. Ms. Jones stated that the proposed parking is excessive and questioned whether sand can be used as fill for grading.

Mr. Dupuis responded by stating that they have a geo-technical engineer working on the team and that sand can be used as fill for grading purposes.

Jim Hutchinson - 136 Main Street, Greenfield

Stated that the proposed store is too large and asked what the time frame is for MDR approvals.

Wedegartner responded 90 days from the close of the public hearing.

Michael Slahejka – 7 Factory Hollow Road

Supports a smaller size store. Stated that a survey was recently done in Greenfield asking if the person supports a Wal-Mart store in Greenfield. He stated that the majority responded no.

Larry Clark – 40 Peabody Lane, Greenfield

Inquired on when the peer review of the fiscal impact statement by Larry Koff and Associates would be available to the public. Stated that it is curious where the project proponents decided to show views of the site.

Wedegartner responded that the peer review from Larry Koff and Associates will be available in about a week or so.

Bob Sunderland – 11 Linden Avenue, Greenfield

Stated that the Board will not know how the size of the proposed store will affect the community without issuing a permit.

Al Norman – 21 Grinnell Street, Greenfield

Stated that the site is not walkable and should not be portrayed as such.

Mary Poirier – 75B Wells Street, Greenfield

Spoke for the project and thanked the Board and project proponents.

Michael Slahejka – 7 Factory Hollow Road

Stated that he walks this area often and that it is a beautiful area and a great corridor to preserve. He also stated that the proposed retail store should be downtown.

*** Copy can be viewed at the Department of Planning and Development located at 114 Main Street, Greenfield, MA.**

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Sibley, and voted 5:0 to continue the public hearing on the application of Greenfield Investor's Property Development, LLC to November 18, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Greenfield High School Cafeteria.

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Smith, and voted 5:0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Twarog, AICP
Director of Planning and Development