

**SOMERSWORTH PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron LeHoullier, Chair, Ernest Gallant, Vice Chair, Dave Witham, City Council Representative, Aaron Fournier, Harold Guptill, Paul Robidas, Mark Richardson, Chris Cortez, Alternate and Don Berrios, Alternate.
MEMBERS ABSENT: Bob Belmore, City Manager.
STAFF PRESENT: Dave Sharples, Director of Planning and Community Development and Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

LeHoullier appointed Cortez as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Guptill moved to accept the minutes of the meeting of August 20, 2014. Seconded by Cortez. Motion carried with a 7-0-1 vote with Robidas abstained.

2) COMMITTEE REPORTS

A) ZBA Report

Sharples referred to the attached report and stated that there were no applications for review so no meeting was held.

B) City Council Report

Witham reviewed the attached report he submitted and stated that the Downtown Improvement Project continues to progress with curbing and paving. Stated that the intersection at High/West High/Washington Streets will be repaved and there will be new traffic signal arms going up. Stated that Thursday night the Somersworth/Berwick Bridge will be closed but that the work is ongoing with that project. Stated that the southerly side has been opened and there are decorative elements. Stated that the repaving of High Street from the Dover City line to Ellswick Street is scheduled to begin next week and Pike Industries will be doing the work. Stated that the Council will be voting on Monday to allow for night work. Stated that the project should be done by the end of October. Stated that some work has begun and that it is about a 2.2 million dollar project. Stated that there has been interest in redeveloping the former Police Station. Stated that the City Manager has been authorized to begin negotiations with interested developers.

C) Site Review Technical Committee Report

Sharples referred to the attached report and stated that the Committee approved a minor site plan application for Somersworth Falls, LLC to expand their parking.

D) Minor Field Modification Report

Sharples stated that there was one request from Next Level Church to change the parking lot lighting to LED style, which was approved.

E) Strafford Regional Planning Commission Update

None.

F) Vision 2020 Committee Report

None.

3) OLD BUSINESS

A) Any old business that may come before the Board.

None.

4) NEW BUSINESS

A) Roger Therrien is seeking site plan approval for a building addition on property located at 371 Route 108, in the Commercial Industrial (CI) District, Assessor's Map 48, Lots 20 & 20B, SITE #09-2014.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the application is for a 6700 square foot building addition with additional pavement for access. Stated that the application was reviewed by the SRTC but they would like it to be reviewed by CLD Consultants. Stated that a task order was sent to the applicant but that no funds have been received so the review has not begun yet. Recommended tabling the application for CLD review. Stated that the applicant is requesting a waiver from appearance standards for a metal sided building. Stated that some building drawings have been submitted but it is not everything that the Board needs. Stated that additional waivers may be needed depending on the outcome of CLD review.

Geoff Aleva with Civil Consultants represented the applicant and addressed the Board. Stated that they are looking for two actions from the Planning Board-one for the site plan and one to approve the voluntary merger request. Stated that there are currently two lots but that they want to merge them so there are no setback issues. Stated that they will not change the driveway. Stated that they are proposing an addition to the existing 8200 square foot building to expand the business. Stated that the business, Roger's Auto, moved to Somersworth from Rollinsford and that now they need more area. Stated that the addition will be over a paved area and dense gravel. Stated that he has submitted drainage calculations to the Planning Department. Stated that they will keep the driveway entrance the same. Talked about doing improvements and landscaping around the sign. Stated that they are working with the NHDOT for an updated driveway permit. Stated that an auto body shop has different traffic characteristics from a service station and that traffic generation is lower from a general maintenance shop. Stated that they will expand the drainage area to the east. Stated that the last site plan required a small detention basin and that there will be more flow there now. Stated that there is a mass of broken pavement that will be removed and replaced with landscaping. Stated that he doesn't have a lot of information on the pre-engineered building that they will use but that he did a "mock" rendering of what it would look like from Route 108. Stated that they are requesting a waiver from appearance standards because they want to use metal siding to match the existing building. Stated that they will meet the regulations for roof top units. Stated that the applicant wants the garage doors to be on the front of the building but that he is trying to talk them out of that. Stated that the building has been there for a while and that the current owner bought the property out of foreclosure.

Witham stated that he supported that addition in the past. Stated that he remembers a concern from an abutter on West High Street about sight lighting, noise and smell and asked Aleva to address that.

Aleva stated that the prior user of the building was also auto body and had the same kind of machinery. Stated that on the eastern side, there is a 100-foot vegetative buffer that won't really be impacted. Stated that those properties area actually about 200 feet away. Stated that there will be a paint booth but that fumes are contained. Stated that garage doors will probably be open in the summer but that the foliage should deaden the noise.

Witham confirmed that they are not proposing any new pole lights.

Aleva stated that they are not.

Witham stated that after the last site plan approval, there were some wetlands filled without permission and restoration was needed. Asked if that was done.

Aleva stated that he heard that there was a restoration plan completed.

Sharples stated that is correct and that the State signed off on a restoration plan.

Witham stated that he is generally in favor of approving the waiver for metal siding when tying into an existing building. Stated that he would like more detail on the placement of the garage doors. Stated that many properties on Route 108 have a lot of landscaping but that this one doesn't so he is interested in seeing the landscaping improved on this parcel. Stated that the prior owner built a "vehicle perch" that has fallen into disrepair and that that it should be enhance or removed.

LeHoullier asked if the prior owner met the requirements of their site plan.

Sharples replied yes.

Robidas stated that he wasn't sure if he would like the garage doors being on the front but that there are close neighbors and that if the garage doors were nice it might affect the neighbors less. Asked if there is a way to break up the look of the metal siding like Stratham Tire did. Stated that their painted band enhanced the building. Stated that he supports the waiver but that he would like to see it more decorative to break up the blue color.

Sharples asked the applicant to bring elevations for at least the front and side of the building.

Motion: Robidas moved that the request of Roger Therrien for a site plan for a building addition be **TABLED** until the October 15, 2014 Planning Board meeting.

Seconded by Witham. Motion carried with an 8-0 vote.

Aleva stated that he would like to hold off on review of the merger request until the next meeting.

B) Any other new business that may come before the Board.

Sharples stated that the City is applying for a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant and passed out an aerial photograph of the area for the project (see attached). Stated that there is about 5.5 million dollars for New Hampshire but that about 76 letters of intent were received so this grant is highly competitive. Stated that the grant application is due next week and asked if the Board has questions or if they would supply a letter of support for the application. Reviewed the aerial photograph and stated that the area for the project is Government Way, John Parsons Drive, down Main Street and up Washington Street. Stated that this project would replace the sidewalks and that they are not ADA accessible. Stated that sidewalks would be widened and that there would be a little bump out for a pedestrian area.

LeHoullier stated that rehabilitating the area across from General Electric will help bring along businesses in that area.

Witham stated that he fully supports the City applying for this grant and that this area offers connectivity to work that is going on in the downtown. Stated that the sidewalks are in need of improvement. Stated that Washington Street has a fair amount of elderly housing without a lot of vehicles so good, ADA accessible sidewalks are a must here. Stated that Washington Street is highly traveled so this work needs to be done there. Stated that there have been discussions at Council about furthering the construction work down Main Street but that it is a large price tag to do that. Stated that he fully supports this grant application and that he would like a letter of support from the Planning Board to go with the application.

Berrios stated that he supports the application and that he would like to see the area go further down Main Street to the museum.

Richardson asked if the sidewalks will be concrete.

Sharples stated that the map that he passed out wasn't complete and that the area goes down to Fair Court and not Fayette Street. Stated that the maximum grant award is \$800,000 so it is hard to extend it too far.

Witham stated that extending the project down Main Street may be better than doing Government Way or John Parsons Drive because Main Street is more heavily traveled. Stated that years ago the Council set up a capital reserve fund for sidewalk repairs and that they have discussed using that for Constitution Way.

Sharples stated that he will look into extending the project to Fayette Street. Stated that he has to look at ADA accessibility because he thinks that it may already be ADA accessible. Stated that the project is not eligible if it is just in disrepair but would have to be out of compliance. Stated that he will inspect that area.

Motion: Witham moved that the Planning Board endorse the Transportation Alternatives Program grant application outline by Director Sharples and have the Planning Board Chair sign a letter of support.

Seconded by Guptill. Motion carried with an 8-0 vote.

5) **WORKSHOP BUSINESS**

A) Any workshop business that may come before the Board.

None.

6) **COMMUNICATION AND MISCELLANEOUS**

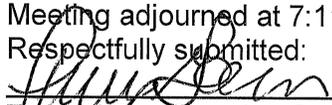
None.

Motion: Robidas moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Gallant. Motion carried with an 8-0 vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary
Somersworth Planning Board