

**SOMERSWORTH PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
JANUARY 20, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ron LeHoullier, Chair, Harold Guptill, Vice Chair, David Witham, City Council Representative, Bob Belmore, City Manager, Paul Robidas, Mark Richardson and Jeremy Rhodes.  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Aaron Fournier.  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Dave Sharples, Director of Planning and Community Development and Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** Belmore moved to accept the minutes of the meeting of October 21, 2015.

Seconded by Guptill. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

**Motion:** Guptill moved to accept the minutes of the meeting of November 24, 2015.

Seconded by Rhodes. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

**2) COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A) ZBA Report

Sharples referred to the attached report and stated that there was no meeting in November but there was a meeting in December where the Board heard the application of GEM Farms for a sober living facility. Stated that the request has been tabled.

B) City Council Report

Witham referred to the attached report and stated that there are two new At Large City Councilors, named Nancie Cameron and Jessica Paradis that have been sworn in. Stated that Cameron is the Council Alternate to the Planning Board. Stated that at the last Council meeting the Mayor announced a new task force to examine the reuse of the old Hilltop School. Stated that Council Dumont is the Chair of the new committee that the building is on the National Historic Register. Stated that at last night's meeting, Director Sharples gave a presentation on the idea of having a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in the greater downtown area. Stated that there is more work to be done, probably including a feasibility study. Stated that the lease for the Malley Farm Boys Home has ended and Sober Sisters Recovery has gone into that building.

C) Site Review Technical Committee Report

Sharples referred to the attached report and addressed the SRTC and Minor Field Modification (MFM) report at the same time. Stated that he and the contracted City Engineer approved a MFM for Roger Therrien for a small addition. Stated that the Staples proposal went back before the SRTC as required by the Planning Board conditions of approval for traffic issues. Stated that the SRTC approved a raised island with granite curbing off of Tri City Road and conditionally approved the right-turn off of High Street.

D) Minor Field Modification Report

See above.

E) Stafford Regional Planning Commission Update

See attached updates.

LeHoullier stated that there is still one opening for a Commission member on the SRTC and that anyone interested should contact the Planning Department.

F) Vision 2020 Committee Report

Sharples stated that there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow night.

**3) OLD BUSINESS**

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

None.

**4) NEW BUSINESS**

A) The City of Somersworth is seeking a courtesy review of the plan to renovate the Career Technical Center at property located on Memorial Drive, in the Residential Duplex (R2) District, Assessor's Map 14, Lot 43.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the SAU wanted to bring this plan to the Planning Board to get any comments on the renovation. Stated that the plan is for an interior renovation to the Career Technical Center (CTC) with no addition. Stated that the existing greenhouse will be removed for an outdoor work area. Stated that this is a courtesy review and is a nonbinding discussion.

**Jeni Mosca**, SAU 56 Superintendent, addressed the Board and thanked everyone for meeting to discuss the project. Stated that the architect is here to give a presentation to the Board.

**Chris Soloman** with Banwell Architects addressed the Board and referred to the plans. Stated that the project is for interior renovations to the CTC with some upgrades to the walkways and to remove the greenhouse. Stated that the administration office will be moved to accommodate the students that are bussed in from other communities. Stated that the gravel walkway will be paved and the playground and greenhouse will be removed. Stated that the existing playground area will be made into greenspace and the existing greenhouse area will be paved and will be used by building trade classes. Stated that some of the exterior doors will be upgraded and there will be a new gas meter just for the CTC. Stated that there will be a new theater program so there will be new theater space.

Witham stated that it looks like the café will be moved to the side and asked if will be open to the public.

Soloman stated that it will be for public use after hours like when the theater is open. Stated that there is a lockdown area so if a theater program is running the rest of the building can be locked off.

Witham stated that he is concerned with parking needs and the possibility of having more people at the building during theater programs.

Mosca stated that 75% of the project is funded through the State and they don't allow the money to be used for parking; it has to be used for programs. Stated that she feels confident that they will be able to create other parking.

Richardson stated that the lighting isn't the greatest and asked if the money can be used for that.

Mosca stated that the money can't be used for that either.

Richardson stated that the lighting is better at the main entrance but are bad in the back. Stated that the playground is being removed and asked what is happening with childcare.

Mosca stated that the program has changed and cannot be just about childcare but about teaching all levels. Stated that Topper Tots has moved to Maplewood School and the Headstart program is there as well.

Richardson referred to the broadcasting area on the plans and asked if there is an opportunity for public broadcasting.

Mosca stated that she is hoping so but that they are still working on that. Stated that channel 95 broadcasts interview and weather feeds but they would like to make it live and in real time.

Belmore asked if the broadcasting room is where the meeting will take place.

Mosca stated that if the meeting is being broadcasted then it would be from that room but there are still issues on how to get that live.

Belmore stated that he wants to know what room the broadcasted meetings will be in.

Mosca stated that there are options.

Belmore asked about the theater.

Soloman stated that it is a Black Box style theater that fits about 100 to 120 people.

Belmore asked how many cars there would be.

Soloman replied probably about 120 cars.

LeHoullier asked if there was a problem with the building settling.

Soloman stated that there was and a report was done on it. Stated that the issue was that the soil wasn't compacted properly but that the building is done settling now.

Richardson asked what the timeframe for the project is.

Mosca stated that the project is in two phases and that phase one will start in February. Stated that they are hoping to be completely done for the start of school in August.

Witham asked, regarding the outside work area, if they have a concern with the fields located nearby and people coming into the work zone.

Soloman stated that it will mainly be used for day-use construction but they will put up fencing if it is an extended project.

- B) John J. Flatley is requesting an extension of the approved site plan to construct three apartment buildings with associated site improvements for property located on Tri City Road, in the Business (B) District, Assessor's Map 39, Lot 03 SITE #12-2015.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the applicant is seeking an extension of their site plan approval and read from the Site Plan Review Regulations. Referred to the letter from Attorney FX Bruton asking for a four month extension, until June 1, 2016. Stated that the regulations have not changed so he has no issue with this request. Stated that their State permits are still pending so this extension would give them ample time to complete them.

Robidas stated that this is clear and very cut and dry that they are waiting for permits.

**Motion:** Robidas moved that the request of John J. Flatley for an extension to complete the conditions of approval for SITE #12-2014 be **APPROVED** until June 1, 2016.

Seconded by Guptill. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

- C) Twelve Month, LLC is seeking an amendment to SUB #05-2013 for a guardrail material change on property located at 301 Green Street and 31 Stackpole Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 19, Lot 01 and Map 20, Lot 05, SUB #05-2013.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the applicant is seeking approval to install a galvanized guardrail where the Board approved a Cor Ten guardrail. Stated that Cor Ten guardrail is weathered steel with a rustic look to it. Stated that some of the galvanized guardrail was already installed. Stated that Cor Ten guardrail is now considered unsafe and is being phased out of use because of a high fail rate. Stated that he asked for comments on the request from the City's contracted engineer DuBois & King and they do not recommend the use of Cor Ten. Stated that there are paint options to soften the look of the galvanized steel guardrail.

Witham stated that they did an excellent job with the wetlands crossing and that it looks excellent but that the galvanized rail stands out and he is concerned with aesthetics. Stated that he understands the reasoning for the proposed change because he found that the State of NH used Cor Ten and when they rehabilitated that area they didn't reuse it. Stated that the State did use a painted look on I93. Stated that he is fine with having something more appropriate but that he would like to see more. Stated that he would like to table this and see more options.

LeHoullier confirmed that Witham wants to see the guardrail painted a natural color.

Witham confirm.

Richardson stated that the issue is that if the paint is factory applied then do they replace what is already up or just paint what is there.

Belmore stated that the guardrail is in place now and he recommends tabling the request so that DuBois & King can look into the issue of replacing what is there or painting over it.

**Motion:** Belmore moved that the request of Twelve Month, LLC for a guardrail material change be **TABLED** until the February 17, 2016 Planning Board meeting.

Seconded by Witham. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

- D) Twelve Month, LLC is seeking the reduction of a bond that was established to cover all public improvements for SUB #05-2013 for property located at 301 Green Street and 31 Stackpole Road, in the Residential Single Family (R1) District, Assessor's Map 19, Lot 01 and Map 20, Lot 05, SUB #05-2013.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the applicant would like to reduce his existing bond to \$182,881.60, which is about a 1.1 million dollar reduction. Stated that the City's contract engineer DuBois & King recommends approval of the reduction. Stated that Dubois & King separated this into two phases but there is only one bond. Stated that this bond is for the first phase of the project and that other bonds will be required as more phases move forward. Stated that construction estimates were included that shows what has been completed and what still needs to be done.

Belmore asked if the remaining bond includes the cost of the guardrail or if it checked off as a completed item. Stated that he is very excited about the project and the partnership of all parties involved.

Witham stated that he echoes the City Manager's comments and that he has driven out to the property and it is a very nice approach. Stated that it is going to be a terrific development. Stated that image is important and that the City is working on it and that projects like this will help. Stated that he is looking at the cost estimates and that there is only \$20,000 for the upgrades to Millennium Park but that it seems like there was more work than that to be done.

Sharples mentioned some of the upgrades to be done to Millennium Park such as removing the horseshoe pits, putting in a new swing set and bringing the bathrooms up to ADA accessibility.

Witham stated that the upgrades are going to be a lot of money and that what is included in the bond doesn't seem like enough.

Sharples stated that he can look into that and discuss it with the developer and see what is needed for bonding.

Witham stated that he is not against reducing the bond but he is just not sure by how much.

Robidas asked if the bond amount has to be represented by numbers on paper or can they choose a number that everyone is comfortable with.

**Joe Falzone** of Twelve Month, LLC addressed the Board and stated that he has already reached an agreement for each number. Stated that he prefers Cor Ten but that use of it has stopped. Stated that he has discussed the guardrail but safety is a concern. Stated that the first he has heard of painting the guardrail is tonight and he will look into it. Stated that the numbers have been set and that the City is also holding 10% more. Stated that there is nothing to worry about with me or Severino. Stated that if he doesn't get approval then his premium will go up. Stated that they can increase the money for the park but that these are numbers that were set before starting the project. Stated that he paid to have the City's third party engineer review the numbers and they were okay with it.

**Motion:** Robidas moved that the request of Twelve Month, LLC to reduce their bond from \$1,288,478.40 to \$182,881.60 be **APPROVED**.

Seconded by Richardson.

Witham stated that he is okay with reducing the bond but that a Councilor raised a question last week regarding the conditions of approval. Stated that the completion of some of these items were conditions of approval and asked those with Certificates of Occupancy (CO) being issued.

Sharples stated that regarding the park improvements, it was specified that they had to be done prior to a CO being issued unless a bond for the improvements is established. Stated that the improvements to the sewer on Stackpole Road took longer than expected and pushed everything back. Stated that they are going to work on Millennium Park in the spring.

Witham stated that regarding Sunningdale Drive and Firefly Circle, the piece that the City holds is that they cannot be approved as City roads until all the improvements are done.

Belmore stated that this is a good partnership with the City and he is trying to be flexible but that this would be like checking off the guardrail as being 100% done and it is not done. Stated that he is okay with releasing the money for everything that is done but the guardrail is not done. Stated that this isn't the way to be doing approvals.

Sharples stated that he looked for the cost of the guardrails in the construction numbers and feels that holding on to \$200,000 would cover the remaining items.

Robidas **amended his motion** that the bond be reduced to \$200,000.

Richardson stated that he accepts the amendment to the motion.

Belmore stated that they are amending the motion because there is an item documented as being complete that isn't actually complete.

Witham stated that he is okay with this and that it protects the City.

Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

- E) Key Auto Group, on behalf of Mareld Company, Inc. is seeking an extension of the approved site plan to re-develop the site for a vehicle repair and reconditioning facility on property located at 100 Tri City Road, in the Business (B) District, Assessor's Map 39, Lot 01, SITE #11-2014.

Sharples reviewed his memo (see attached) and stated that the applicant is seeking an extension of their site plan approval and read from the Site Plan Review Regulations. Stated that they are seeking an extension until July 1, 2016. Stated that the regulations haven't changed so he has no problem with the Board approving the request. Stated that they still want to move forward with the project but there was environmental cleanup discovered and that has to be taken care of first.

**Motion:** Witham moved that the request of Key Auto Group for an extension of the approval for SITE #11-2014 be **APPROVED** until July 1, 2016.

Seconded by Guptill. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

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

Sharples stated that a voluntary merger request was received and reviewed his memo (see attached). Stated that the request is to combine two lots on Salmon Falls Road and no public notice or public hearing is required. Stated that the law says the Board shall approve the request unless it creates a violation but he researched the request and this actually creates a

more-conforming situation. Stated that the parcels are owned by the same entity and he recommends approval.

**Motion:** Richardson moved that the request of Michael O'Malley for a voluntary merger be **APPROVED**.

Seconded by Robidas. Motion carried with a 7-0 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 Guptill. Motion carried with a 7-0 vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted:



---

Tracy Gora, Planning Secretary  
Somersworth Planning Board