

The Planning Board for the Town of Derry held a public meeting on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was broadcast from the Derry Municipal Center, 14 Manning Street, Third Floor meeting room.

Members physically present: Lori Davison, Chair Pro-Temp; Mark Connors, Secretary Pro-Temp; Richard Tripp, Town Council Liaison; Jim MacEachern (7:12 p.m.), Mark Grabowski, Members

Members digitally present: Randy Chase

Absent: Dave Granese; John O'Connor

Also present: George Sioras, Planning Director, Elizabeth Robidoux, Planning & Economic Development Assistant, Mark L'Heureux, Engineering Coordinator (meeting room); Beverly Donovan, Economic Development Director

Ms. Davison called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting began with a salute to the flag. Ms. Davison advised the listening public that because of the pandemic and because some members of the Board are not physically attending the meeting due to health or other reasons, they are participating via Zoom. Others are physically present in the meeting room. She provided the appropriate links for members of the public to join the meeting virtually via a MAC, PC, or by phone.

Ms. Davison introduced members of the Board and staff.

Mr. Connors was appointed Secretary Pro-Temp.

Escrow

#20-18

Project Name: Site Plan Redevelopment Crystal Plaza

Developer: 23 Crystal Avenue, LLC

Escrow Account: A W Rose Construction

Escrow Type: Performance Bond

Parcel ID/Location: 32030, 23 Crystal Ave

The request is to approve a final release in the amount of \$19,504.80 for the above noted project. The amount to retain is zero. (Bond #9981191 – Westfield Insurance Company).

Motion by Tripp, seconded by Grabowski to approve as presented. The motion passed with all in favor

Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the August 05, 2020, meeting.

Motion by Tripp, seconded by Grabowski to approve the minutes of the August 05, 2020, meeting as amended.

Connors, Davison, Tripp, Chase, and Grabowski voted in favor. The motion passed with Chase abstained.

Correspondence

Mr. Connors advised the Board has received a resignation from David McPherson effective August 06, 2020. Mr. McPherson expressed he has enjoyed his time on the Board. Two escrow reminder letters have been sent for Letters of Credit and Performance Bonds that expire in October for the Valerie Estates project and the Alyssa Drive/Mill Road project. The Town of Hooksett Zoning Board of Adjustment has forwarded a notice of public hearing to be held on September 08, 2020, regarding a request to extend the approval date for a variance granted in 2018.

Other BusinessReview of mural design – 1.5 East Broadway

Alana Wentworth, co-owner of Cask & Vine, Doire Distilling and Daydream Brewing, along with Karen Lincoln, local artist, presented.

Ms. Wentworth advised the current mural (left side) was created by the Walldogs, a traveling mural company. It was commissioned last year. There is 28 more feet on the wall to the right. They spoke with Ms. Lincoln and conceptualized a design. This area is in one of the first Cultural Districts in New Hampshire so they thought this would be a good opportunity to incorporate some of the historic buildings in the downtown. The Halligan Tavern was originally the central fire station; Benson's Hardware, a generous contributor to the town, has also been featured as well as the Hood Creamery. Abenaki symbols have been incorporated into the Presidential Range shown to the rear, as well as the State tree, bird and the flowers near the fountain. Ms. Lincoln said they thought this concept was a good way to represent Derry and the history of New Hampshire within this piece, as well as being appropriate for the Cultural District.

Mr. Connors asked who would be painting the mural. The painting would be done by Ms. Lincoln and a small group of volunteers to keep everyone safe as there is a need for scaffolding. Ms. Wentworth said they hoped to have the mural completed by the end of October. Ms.

Davison asked for a description of the process. Ms. Lincoln explained they first came up with the illustration, which was superimposed onto a photo of the wall. The wall will be power washed and primed. They will project the image onto the wall, and the image will be traced in three parts and then it would be like a “paint by numbers” project using brushes and rollers with exterior paint. It is anticipated the entire project will take about one week of work. There is a lane between Cask & Vine and Sabatino’s – there is room for a rolling scaffold. They would be using about a sidewalk’s width of activity to accommodate the paint and rollers. Ms. Wentworth advised Sabatino’s is aware this work will take place and they intend to perform the bulk of the work on hours when Sabatino’s is not open. The paint will be the same as used on the first mural.

Mr. Connors asked if the color would be as depicted. Ms. Lincoln explained they wanted to use a sepia tone to represent nostalgia but found the design needed more color, which has been added. Ms. Wentworth noted funding will be via SpudCrow sales, GoFundMe and grants.

Mr. Tripp asked if there had been any issues with the paint on the first mural. Ms. Wentworth said not to date; this is also not a south facing wall, so they believe the paint will last longer. They will need to tweak some of the mural, but not because it is failing. Mr. Tripp said he was not so certain about the mountains in the background. He did like the fact that the first mural identified the buildings and years in the image. Has there been any consideration to add dates or anything to the new mural so that people can identify the images? Ms. Lincoln said that was an interesting idea, but this is not set up as a map in any given time frame and she would like to alleviate any complaints. Ms. Wentworth noted that people take a lot of selfies and it might be nice to label the fountain for identification of place. Ms. Lincoln said there is also room in the road area. Businesses, individuals, or families who contributed to the fundraising could potentially have their name memorialized in the road cobblestones or have their portrait painted into the mural. She likes the idea of having Derry represented someplace in the mural so that Derry can be promoted when people take pictures of it. Mr. Tripp said he hopes that Ms. Lincoln signs the artwork.

Mr. Grabowski thanked them for the artwork; it makes Derry seem more authentic, not just Anywhere, USA. He confirmed the artwork will be on the side of Cask & Vine.

Mr. Connors asked why this was before the Board this evening – was it informational only or is there a requirement? Mr. Sioras said there is a requirement in the Traditional Business Overlay District to bring exterior changes before the Board for review. The architectural regulations require a high level of compliance.

Mr. MacEachern was seated.

Conceptual Discussion – West Running Brook Village– 1 - 4 Humphrey Road

Mr. Sioras stated this project is located in the new West Running Brook district. The land is owned by the Butterfield family. At the last meeting, the Board reviewed the plans for the Siragusa property. Mr. Sioras, Mrs. Robidoux and Mrs. Donovan have been meeting with Dr.

Butterfield and his team to go over conceptual ideas for the properties located on either side of Humphrey Road. Tonight is the first step in the process and they are here to present the conceptual plan to the Board for comment. No votes are required.

Attorney John Cronin of Cronin, Bisson & Zalinski and Shane Gendron of Edward N. Herbert Associates, presented. Dr. Butterfield and other members of his team were in the audience.

Atty. Cronin stated this project has been in the works for quite some time and they compliment the town on its creativity and innovation in creating this new district. They appreciate the opportunity to come in at the beginning of the process conceptually as the cost to engineer and design the projects architecturally can be expensive. This should be looked at as a combined neighborhood. There are two lots that sit on the north and two lots on the south; combined the four lots are just under 15 acres in size. The thought at this point is to develop both sides at or near the same time. It makes most sense to get all of the infrastructure done first. They reviewed the ordinance; throughout it speaks to developing with an eye to maintaining the character of the area. He expects they will ask for at least one more conceptual discussion to review architectural. Before they get to that point, they want to provide an idea of what the project entails with regard to scope, magnitude and number of buildings.

On the south side of Humphrey Road they are proposing two buildings. The front building is planned be a pub style restaurant, behind it there is interest from a business that is similar to the Legal Test Kitchen with catering capability and space to try out different recipes. That particular use would not front on Route 28, but it would have great access and exposure. It would be complimentary to the restaurant and other uses. It is likely Dr. Butterfield will partner with different people to make this project a reality. To the north, in the rear of the site, there is a depiction of 18 townhouses. They are estimated to be 1800 square feet with two garages and two spaces out front. They are also considering personal elevators in these units, which can be done and still maintain a colonial façade. In the center of the northern portion, there is a large building. In general, if a management company is taking care of the building, the target is to have 100 or more units. In speaking with staff and obtaining initial feedback on the concept, he would agree a five-story building may be too large for this project. It could be scaled back to four stories which is more compatible with the site. They would lose about 20 units but pick up parking. Toward the front, in the northeast corner is another restaurant pad. There is a series of flex space for professional office, commercial or retail. The spaces could be divided if necessary. There are 277 parking spaces provided on this side of the project, using a calculation of 2 spaces per unit. They believe this works well. This zone does not allow for studio apartments, so it may be that they will end up with 30 one-bedroom apartments. That will be an item for discussion with the Board. Studios are well received in the market and live/work/play environment. They will need quality tenants to make this project work. Office space will take a further hit; Amazon has had an impact on retail becoming more of a digital presence. Housing has been deemed essential to attract quality restaurants and retail.

This project, and the project across the street, creates an opportunity to provide a ripple effect on the corridor to the traffic circle. The layout of the project, with the right architectural design is

manageable to build and will be well received by the market. The plan is not yet concrete and they would like to hear from the Board with regard to any pros or cons on the concept.

Mr. Connors said he was glad to hear the five-story building would be scaled back. He would have liked to have seen some façade renderings to get an idea of the aesthetic. He confirmed the two buildings to the front of the northern lot will be commercial and are not planned to be residential; the buildings are planned to be single story. No residential is planned for the southern lot.

Atty. Cronin explained the multiplex building would not be entirely residential. The first story would contain amenities for the tenants such as a gym, bike storage, and coffee bar; there would be uses that one would expect in a live/work/play community. There is also an extension to the existing trail system planned, connecting to the park. Mr. Connors noted the trail location has some steep ledge and they should be prepared to blast to extend the trail. Is there any plan to create a trail connection or sidewalk to the old Grandview site? He would want to be able to connect these developments to the Robert Frost Farm. Atty. Cronin said they would take that under consideration. The Humphrey Road access points have been designed to handle the queues on Route 28. He suspects at technical review, staff may want to see some cross alignment of the driveways. There are some sidewalk opportunities that should be explored. Mr. Connors noted it would be nice to have a safe way for kids to walk to school.

Mr. MacEachern commented that as a Board, they like to see some consistency in an area, so the area looks fairly similar. Breaking up the larger building with different roof angles to make it look staggered would look more like a village than one large building with a lot of apartments. This plan has plenty of parking for the facilities that are proposed. Maybe parking could be hidden a little more with the buildings to the front of the lot and parking to the rear. Are the apartments planned to be one and two bedroom? Five stories is too much as this land is at one of the high points in the district; the consistent line of sight needs to be maintained. He thought it was a good point to have townhomes with elevators, but it would be nice to know if there would be one to two-bedroom units with an office. He thought the back gazebo area and green space with the dog park was a good feature. West Running Brook runs along the edge of this property. As they develop, they should be aware of the 100-year floodplain. In general, it is tough to comment fully on the concept without seeing architectural renderings.

Atty. Cronin stated these were good comments about the roofline, but they need to be cautious about overdesigning the building as it could make it very hard to construct. Mr. MacEachern said he is familiar with large apartment buildings that have very bland façades and he does not want to see that here.

Mr. Connors recalled when the Board was creating this district they struggled with the height restriction and decided based on the topography they may need to restrict some buildings to three stories. The topography of the land will dictate the height. The proposed building for this project is large – larger than the Fairways buildings which are not taller than three stories. The Board really needs to see the architectural rendering, but they don't want to see a large, square, flat building. Otherwise, the layout of the project is good and he felt it would work on Humphrey Road.

Atty. Cronin clarified the townhomes will have two bedrooms with granite, large closets and a place to work. Would the Board entertain studios in the apartment building and how would that be handled? Mr. Sioras advised that would be waiver request, not a variance. Atty. Cronin explained the reason he was asking was because occasionally when the roofline is modified, it can affect the space and it might work better to have studios in those areas when the roofline has been broken up. Mr. Sioras said when the Board members looked at the topography of the land in this area, they noted the topography varies greatly in this district and the height of buildings should vary with the topography. There are beautiful views as one looks north to Pinkerton Academy and he would not want to see those views blocked looking north from the southern lot and have the aesthetic for this project ruined.

Mr. Gendron commented there are sidewalks planned along Route 28 and Humphrey, and they will add a 6' walking trail with a crosswalk on Humphrey Road to make a connection between the two parts of the project.

Mr. Connors asked if there are plans to connect to the playing field at West Running Brook School. Mr. Gendron said the bike trail extends to the Don Ball Park. The garden area to the back will have benches and tables. Mr. Connors asked if that area would have open access from the tails, or will it be fenced off. Atty. Cronin said he would not recommend public access to the garden area because of the liability. There will be some sort of fence to separate the area. Mr. Gendron added the bike path will have public access to Don Ball Park that is separate from the main property.

Mr. MacEachern asked if they could consider breaking up the large building into two to three smaller buildings with some green space in between. He is sure they considered placing the residential on the southern end and leaving the north side all commercial, but it is nice how they have the uses separated. There needs to be a balance between the economics of construction and the aesthetic. He hopes to see that in the next rendering of the concept.

Atty. Cronin wanted to address the existing homestead. It was constructed around 1793 and realistically, the building can't remain on the site. They would like to see it relocated and preserved if possible and would be willing to discuss that with any interested parties.

Mr. MacEachern asked if the phasing of the project could be addressed at the next meeting. The Board does not want to see residential components constructed first. Atty. Cronin said they will be fine tuning the plan. The infrastructure needs to be in place to get the townhomes started. He does not feel there will be much phasing. They would prefer to get most of it done all at once.

Mr. Tripp asked for the length of the proposed apartment building. The current plan shows it at 70 x 336 feet. He felt that was fairly large and he was looking for a sense of a New England village. His other concern is that the only green space provided is to the rear of the project. He could see adding some green space between buildings if the larger building was split in two - it would give people a place to go without having to walk to the back of the property and make the project more visually appealing. With regard to the single story buildings to the front, do they

have any idea what the front and rear of those buildings will look like, because as they are proposed, the rear of the building faces the apartments. Will there be loading docks?

Atty. Cronin expected there would not be large delivery trucks, but they will look at that. Their residents are not going to want to look at loading docks or dumpsters. The traffic volume for the project has not yet been estimated. Mr. Tripp thought there was good flow through the south side of the project and ability for traffic to get around on the north side. This is an interesting project. He is not sure that the larger building is what the Board was looking for in this district.

Mr. Gendron advised they have been working with the town on the buffer zone. This land is currently field and there is opportunity to create outdoor passive recreation space for the residents.

Mr. Grabowski said he likes what he is hearing so far. He confirmed a school impact study has not yet been done. Architecture is very important in this district. Building height and architecture were hot points for the Board and he is interested in seeing what they come up with. He suggested taking a look at the apartment building on the corner of Kendall Pond and Fordway; it has some interesting architectural elements. Atty. Cronin advised they will work with Mark Fougere, who is a noted expert in the planning field when it comes to economic impacts, to come up with those numbers for the project. Typically, one would see ~~1.50.15~~ children per unit; that would be 15 children if they constructed the 100 units. Most communities are experiencing declining enrollment, especially in the grade schools. They will look at that. The townhomes would generate fewer numbers.

Mr. Connors understood there needed to be a residential component to make the commercial work. Is there something that could be done with the office building to make it residential. Atty. Cronin said currently the project is 2/3 residential to 1/3 commercial. If they remove a story, that creates a more equal balance between the two. They did not think about putting residential along Route 28 because they did not think that was the Board's intent for the district. Second floor retail to commercial does not work. At grade with living above may work if it looks commercial. They can provide options for the Board to review.

Mr. Sioras provided the information that the school district did a ten-year facilities plan, which is available for review. This could give the developer a good grasp of what they can expect over the next ten years. There is some capacity available in the schools.

Mr. Chase said the whole concept of the district was to put in commercial and retail with some living space. To eliminate commercial to the front in order to remove a story of residential is against what the Board envisioned. It would make the lot strictly residential which is what the Board did not want to see. He would be against that. He feels the large block building with no breaks in it is not what the Board thought would be constructed. It needs to be more aesthetically pleasing. Otherwise, the concept looks good. With regard to parking to the frontage of the lot, they will need to do what they need to do to facilitate the grades; that will dictate the location of the buildings.

Mr. MacEachern advised he had a text message from the Chair John O'Connor who was home recuperating. Mr. O'Connor asked the developer to keep in mind the regional impacts and the potential for the Board to consider impact fees. The Board will need to look at the impact of the multiple projects. He would have liked to see more with regard to drainage; they should make sure that is mapped out. He asked if they would consider keeping the commercial buildings to the front but adding residential above, making those three-story buildings. That keeps the scale of the project even and allows the larger building to be broken up and scaled down. It would shift the 100 apartments but may help with the economics of the project.

Mr. L'Heureux had comments with regard to drainage. The engineering team should look at the terrain and do some test pits. His experience with the area shows there is a lot of ledge. The development team will need to pay close attention to the drainage requirements in the LDCRs, especially to the location of the pipes – they take up a lot of space and they will need to be aware of that as they are planning out the utilities.

Ms. Davison noted Route 28 is a State road at this location. Are there any limits on the curb cuts or crosswalks? Mr. L'Heureux said they will need a state permit for the curb cut, but the state can't restrict one developer over the other. Usually it is first come, first served.

Mr. MacEachern noted the Siragusa lot is just south of this. It might be nice if the restaurant could be lined up with the Siragusa entrance. He would not want to see three curb cuts that are 'out of kilter'. Atty. Cronin advised NH DOT will work with them on the curb cuts; they would not want to shift the access on Humphrey south; it would be too close. Ms. Davison felt a traffic study would be informative. Mr. Tripp felt developments of this type were a good shift to get younger people back into the area.

The Board had no further comments

Atty. Cronin said the comments this evening have been helpful and a good resource.

There was no further business before the Board.

Motion by Connors, seconded by MacEachern to adjourn. The motion passed with all in favor and the meeting stood adjourned at 8:27 p.m.
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Approved by: _____

Chairman/Vice Chairman

Secretary

Approval date: _____