NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

May 5, 2020

The Planning Board Virtual Meeting using Zoom was remotely called to order by Martin Jacobs, Chairman, on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, at 7:15 p.m. with Messrs. Alpert, Owens and Eisenhut and Ms. McKnight, as well as Planning Director, Ms. Newman and Assistant Planner, Ms. Clee.

Mr. Jacobs took a roll call attendance. He noted the Needham Farmer's Market De Minimus Change has been postponed to the 5/19/20 meeting. The Article 1 map change scheduled for a 7:30 p.m. public hearing has been dealt with and is off the agenda.

He noted this is an open meeting that is being held remotely because of Governor Baker's executive order on March 12, 2020 due to the COVID Virus. All attendees are present by video. He reviewed the rules of conduct for zoom meetings. This meeting will allow public comment. He noted if any votes are taken at the meeting the vote will be conducted by roll call.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a roll call vote of the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to automatically continue the meeting to 5/19/20 at 7:00 p.m. with the same zoom ID number if any technical difficulties arise that keep the Planning Board from continuing this meeting.

Request to Withdraw Application on ANR Plan – 766 Chestnut Street, LLC, Petitioner (Property located at 766 Chestnut Street, Needham, MA).

Mr. Jacobs noted a letter from Attorney Robert Smart, dated 4/28/20, to the Planning Board requesting withdrawal of the application without prejudice.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a roll call vote of the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to allow withdrawal without prejudice of the application for ANR for 766 Chestnut Street.

Request to Extend Action Deadline: 390 Grove Street Definitive Subdivision Amendment: Elisabeth Schmidt-Scheuber, 390 Grove Street, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 390 Grove Street, Needham, MA).

Mr. Jacobs noted a letter from Attorney George Giunta Jr., dated 4/28/20, to Ms. Newman requesting the hearing be continued to 6/30/20 or the next earliest meeting of the Planning Board and to extend the action deadline to 7/30/20.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a roll call vote of the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to accept the request to extend the action deadline on 390 Grove Street to 7/30/20.

Minutes

Ms. McKnight noted she has reviewed and drafted changes for the 2/18/20 minutes. She will create a PDF of the mark up and email it to the Planning Director and Board members. She will do the same with the 3/6/20 draft when she is able to review them. Mr. Jacobs stated the other members should do the same if they have comments.

Correspondence

There is no correspondence.

Public Hearing: **Article 2: Amend Zoning By-Law – Pediatric Medical Facility in New England Business Center Business District.** ***Please note: This hearing has been continued from the April 15, 2020 meeting.***

Mr. Jacobs noted this is a continuation of a request for a Citizen's Petition. Ms. Newman gave an update. There were 2 unresolved issues – a parking generation report and a trip generation report. BETA, a peer reviewer, was hired to look at the parking and trip generation numbers. Children's Hospital needed to look at the outstanding questions. The hospital has answered the questions and provided documents. The peer reviewers have looked at the numbers also. Sean Manning, of VHB in Boston, stated he will not present anything tonight. The information is identical to what was presented in April. He had some back and forth with BETA and has a follow up memo from BETA. He feels they have closed out the issues.

Timothy Sullivan, of Goulston and Storrs, gave a copy of the information from the last meeting. He stated he was only at the meeting to answer any questions. Attorney Robert Smart, representative for the applicant, commented they are asking for a favorable recommendation. Jeff Maxtutis, of BETA, gave a document review summary. He feels they have addressed the comments at this time and all information appears reasonable.

Justin Curewitz, of BETA, covered the peer review comments. He noted there were 7 original comments for parking demand and all have been addressed. There were 7 original comments for trip generation and all those have been addressed. He gave a quick summary from the previous meeting of the parking demand summary which is 3.52 average per 1,000 square feet. There would be 1,592 spaces required. He noted for the trip generation summary there would be 282 additional peak trips in the a.m. and 361 additional peak trips in the p.m. This is acceptable based on their review.

Ms. McKnight stated the last version was confusing. In BETA's 4/30/20 memo summarizing all, the applicant responded to the concern that the traffic counts were taken when the PTC building may not have been occupied. She would recommend monitoring over time. She wants to be clear there may be some updating at the time of the Special Permit request. She wants a condition that there could be traffic and parking counts in the future. Mr. Sullivan stated there is often a monitoring requirement. He will work with the Board on that. He agrees that the conclusions in the reports are useful for reference but none dictate what should be done here.

Mr. Owens stated he has no comments. He agrees with Ms. McKnight. This is a piece of data but not definitive. Mr. Eisenhut echoed what Ms. McKnight said regarding future monitoring but the Special Permit request would be the time to discuss that. He is more concerned with traffic generation than parking. Mr. Alpert stated he is on board with Ms. McKnight's comments. He is focused on parking and is satisfied the parking requirement is a reasonable number at 1 space per 290 square feet. He commented VHB and BETA both did outstanding jobs presenting to the Planning Board.

Mr. Jacobs stated he had no comments. He feels the same way as the others. Lisa Hogerty, Senior Vice-President of Children's Hospital, thanked the Board for their input and the BETA team for being as precise as they needed to be. Mr. Smart stated it is a good Article as redrafted. Mr. Jacobs noted there are no public comments. He stated there was a request from either the Select Board or the Town Manager to delay a vote or recommendation until the PILOT agreement was resolved. Ms. Newman stated it was recommended to her the Planning Board take no action until the Town has finalized the agreement.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Ms. McKnight, it was by a roll call vote of the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to close the hearing.

Report from Planning Director and Board members.

Ms. Newman gave an update on upcoming projects. The Planning Department is continuing with the permitting process electronically. She has received 2 subdivision filings. A 6 lot subdivision off Chestnut Street involves one parcel that is part of the ANR that was just withdrawn. Also, there is a Planned Residential Development proposal at the end of that. She is distributing information to the different departments to get feedback. Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital has a de minimus change to their Special Permit to extend the life of a trailer behind their facility during the period of the pandemic. The project redevelopment of the Carter building to provide for assisted and individual living is moving forward. She anticipates proposed zoning changes and fiscal impact and traffic studies. It is on the agenda for 5/19/20. Ms. McKnight asked if the use is not similar to the previous use. Ms. Newman stated the use is similar but the change is not around use. The building is non-conforming as to height. The applicant wants to put a 4th story on a small portion in the back.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Ms. McKnight, it was by a roll call vote of the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker

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Jeanne S. McKnight, Vice-Chairman and Clerk