



Town of Hopkinton

Planning Department

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HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD MINUTES SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

Members present: Chairman Bruce Ellsworth, Vice Chairman Michael Wilkey, James Fredyma, Ex-Officio Anna Wells, Jane Bradstreet and Celeste Hemingson. Rich Steele and Alternate Clarke Kidder. Absent: Rich Steele and Alternates Timothy Britain and Clarke Kidder. Staff present: Planning Director Karen Robertson.

I. **Call to Order.** Vice Chairman Wilkey called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Hopkinton Town Hall.

II. **Review of the Minutes of August 13, 2019.**

Bruce Ellsworth, seconded by Celeste Hemingson, moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes of August 13, 2019, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **Conceptual Consultations.** There were no consultations.

IV. **Applications.**

Chase N' Paws, LLC: Aaron Wechsler of Aspen Environmental Consultants presented a request for Site Plan Review for the expansion of on-site parking for Apple Tree Animal Hospital at 662 Maple in the Industrial (M-1) district, Tax Map 227, Lot 2.

Mr. Wechsler explained the location of the limited parking spaces available at the facility and the expansion of the parking area towards the northeast corner of the property for a total of six new spaces. There will be no change to the curb cut at the street. Waivers requested were as follows:

- 1) Parking Surface (Zoning Ordinance 6.4.3) – The owner proposed a gravel surface instead of pavement.
- 2) Parking Space Dimensions (Zoning Ordinance 6.4.1) – Due to the size of the lot, location of the building, utilities, and wetlands, the owner requested that 9' x 18' spaces be allowed. The size is consistent with the existing parking spaces.
- 3) Landscape Plan (Site Plan Regulations 7.0) – There were no plans for additional landscaping. The existing landscaping was shown on both the existing conditions and site plans. It was suggested that the existing four-foot elevation change and stonewall, located in front of the proposed parking

Adopted: 10/08/2019.

spaces, will be a sufficient visual buffer between the street and the proposed parking area.

It was noted that the drainage analysis showed no negligible change in runoff as a result of the additional impervious area. All water will continue to be directed to a four-foot-wide grassy swale that runs along a shared boundary. A notarized agreement from the abutter was included with the application. The agreement gives permission to allow the continuation of drainage from the parking area to the existing swale that runs along the shared boundary.

At this time, there was brief discussion concerning the existing lighting and its limited cover of the proposed new parking area. Mr. Wechsler suggested that the proposed parking area will likely be used by employees.

Celeste Hemingson, seconded by Jane Bradstreet, moved to **ACCEPT** Application #2019-03 as complete and for consideration. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative (Wells, Bradstreet, Hemingson, Fredyma, Wilkey, and Ellsworth).

Vice Chairman Wilkey opened and closed the public hearing portion of the meeting, due to the fact that there were no members of the public present concerning the application.

James Fredyma, seconded by Jane Bradstreet, moved to **APPROVE** the requested waiver of the parking space dimensions. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative (Wells, Bradstreet, Hemingson, Fredyma, Wilkey, and Ellsworth).

Jane Bradstreet, seconded by Celeste Hemingson, moved to **APPROVE** the requested waiver of the landscape plan. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative (Wells, Bradstreet, Hemingson, Fredyma, Wilkey, and Ellsworth).

Jane Bradstreet, seconded by Celeste Hemingson, moved to **APPROVE** the requested waiver for the parking surface. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative (Wells, Bradstreet, Hemingson, Fredyma, Wilkey, and Ellsworth).

James Fredyma, seconded by Jane Bradstreet, moved to **APPROVE** Application #2019-03 as presented. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative (Wells, Bradstreet, Hemingson, Fredyma, Wilkey, and Ellsworth).

V. Other Business.

- a) Ex-Officio Anna Wells, Planning Consultant Stuart Arnett, and Jeff Donohue presented the Municipal Technical Assistance Grant (MTAG) Steering Committee's findings and recommendations for zoning amendments.

A brief over of the process by which Hopkinton's Economic Development Committee had applied for and received a Municipal Technical Assistance Grant

(MTAG) from PlanNH was provided. By receiving the grant, the Town was able to work with a planning consultant and the UNH Cooperative Extension in studying ways to support housing needs of multiple generations of residents. The area of focus was Hart's Corner (the intersection of Routes 202/9 and Route 127/Maple Street).

The MTAG Steering Committee conducted approximately 40 interviews with residents, officials, and business-owners to gather opinions about choices for home locations, design, and price-points. With help from UNH Cooperative Extension, the results of the interviews were compiled into a report to help guide town boards and staff in making recommendations for possible changes in land use regulations.

Mr. Arnett provided an overview of the key findings of the interviews:

- Hopkinton's location is ideal due to its access to I-89 and proximity to Concord, Manchester, and the lakes and mountains. It is believed that Hopkinton is an attractive place to live and do business.
- Hopkinton's rural character should be maintained; however, the Town should focus on broadening its tax base.
- Hopkinton has limited housing opportunities for starter homes, including homes for retirees to downsize into and rental units.
- Hart's Corner would be an appropriate location for an age restricted or senior living community.
- Hopkinton should encourage development that complements the Contoocook businesses and not displace them with similar businesses at Hart's Corner.

As a result of the interviews, the Steering Committee recommends areas of Hopkinton be rezoned. In addition, it is recommended that a new overlay district be established using the bounds of what is currently a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. The zoning amendments will offer incentives for the development of mixed affordable and market rate housing, such as smaller units for seniors and 1-2-bedroom market rate units. At the same time, a neighborhood center may be created with associated commercial components.

A power point presentation of a concept development of mixed housing and neighborhood amenities at the Hart's Corner location was shown. This included locations for residential development envelopes, planned open space, a neighborhood activities center, and site access from Route 202/9. Based on the TIF District Plan, an estimated 120 residential units between 800 – 2,000 SF and neighborhood commercial space that is roughly 16,500 SF could be developed. Examples of neighborhood commercial activities and services include outdoor public spaces, a fitness center, meetings rooms, and social spaces.

Another area in which rezoning was recommended involves the West Hopkinton area (former mill site). It is recommended that the area be rezoned from M-1

(industrial) to B-1 (commercial) to allow for “recreational-themed” development. While this area includes wetlands, conservation land, floodplain, and a water supply/discharge facility, the area provides an opportunity to connect Hart’s Corner with the Contoocook Village. Examples of “recreation-themed” development is that of Artisan’s Park in Windsor, Vermont. Artisan Park is a former industrial park with adjacent farm fields, like West Hopkinton. The Park includes a glassworks company, cheese company, distillery, outfitters store, and brewery. In addition, to adjacent productive farmland and a sculpture park.

A power point presentation of a concept development of the West Hopkinton area that included a destination/retail area, mixed housing and neighborhood amenities was presented. The concept showed potential areas for residential development envelopes, planned open space, neighborhood activities center, and site access from Route 202/9.

Lastly, proximity of Hart’s Corner and the West Hopkinton area, along with the available outdoor recreational resources, makes Hopkinton an attractive place to live and to do business.

Following the presentation, Planning Board members expressed support in the Steering Committee efforts and agreed that the Committee should continue to move forward in preparing proposed zoning amendments for Planning Board review.

Summary of recommendations:

- Revise the Table of Uses for the B-1 (commercial) district to permit additional uses, including multi-family dwelling units.
 - Rezone Hart’s Corner and West Hopkinton from an M-1 (industrial) to a B-1 (commercial) district.
 - Encourage the use of the natural resource in the West Hopkinton area.
 - Create an overlay district for Hart’s Corner that “encourages specific planning goals and outcomes.
- b) Master Plan Land Use Chapter revisions – Discussion was deferred to the October 8, 2019 meeting.
- c) Voluntary Merger of Pre-existing Lots – Merger of two (2) contiguous pre-existing lots owned by Eileen A. Story, Trustee of the Eileen A. Story 2000 Revocable Trust, 328 Gage Hill Road, Tax Map 238 Lots 11 and 12.

Bruce Ellsworth, seconded by Jane Bradstreet, moved to **APPROVE** the voluntary merger with a condition that a consent of mortgage holder be recorded at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds with the notice of merger. Motion carried unanimously.

- d) Reports from Board Members who serve on other Committees – There were no reports.

VI. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Hopkinton Planning Board is at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at the Hopkinton Town Hall.

Karen Robertson
Planning Director