

Minutes of the Planning Board Meeting of August 9, 2016

Pursuant to a notice filed with the Town Clerk, the Planning Board met at 7:00 p.m. on August 9, 2016 in the First Floor Meeting Room, 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA.

Present:

Brooke Whiting Cash
John Cratsley
John Canally
Rob Easton
Matt Johnson
Allen Sayegh

Absent: Gary Kleiman

Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner
Nancy Hausherr, Administrative Assistant

The meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m. and was audio-recorded. Chair Whiting Cash announced to the audience that anyone recording the meeting should inform her.

The Board welcomed new member Allen Sayegh who participated but did not vote.

Minutes

The minutes of the July 12, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Canally moved that the Board approve the minutes as written. Mr. Johnson seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

At 7:02 p.m., Ms. Whiting Cash recused and stepped out of the meeting room. Mr. Cratsley served as Chair in her absence.

Recommendation to the Board of Appeals

Concord Museum

200/216/226 Lexington Road &

9A/73 Cambridge Turnpike

Ralph Earle, of the Board of Governors for the Concord Museum; Mary Ann Upton and Bob Miklos, of Design Lab Architects; Lisa Giersbach, of G. Design Studio LLC; Michelle Callahan, Jeff Parenti, and Steve Ventresca of Nitsch Engineering appeared before the Board to discuss the application of the Concord Museum for a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval, under Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.4, 6.2.11, 7.7.2.12, 11.6, and 11.8, for relief from height and parking requirements, to demolish an existing structure (Davis Building) and construct an addition to the existing museum for educational and philanthropic uses at 200/216/226 Lexington Road & 9A/73 Cambridge Turnpike (Parcels #0109, 0108, 0107, 0106, & 0105).

The Board heard a presentation by the Applicant's representatives. Mr. Earle introduced the development team, gave an overview of the master plan for the site, explained how the project will further the mission of the museum and provide community benefits. Discussed were the existing conditions and the proposed landscaping, proposed pathway connections and sidewalks, lighting, curb cuts on Cambridge Turnpike, bus turnaround areas, visitor parking areas, and sight lines at the access points on Cambridge Turnpike and Lexington Road.

Also, Ms. Callahan from Nitsch Engineering explained the proposed stormwater management plan. She explained that the Applicant is adjusted the plans in response to the comments received from the Town Engineer.

Mr. Johnson asked if an increase in the number of visitors to the museum is expected post-development. Mr. Earle replied that a slight increase in daily individual visitors to the Museum is expected, but no increase in the number of visitors arriving by bus or in the number of students as part of the educational programs.

Mr. Johnson asked what is proposed for the ranch house on the site after the project is completed. Mr. Earle explained that it will never be used as a residence; it is intended for collections storage and swing office space.

Mr. Canally noted that currently there is not sidewalk along the Lexington Road side of the site. He urged the Applicants to create pedestrian connections from the Town Center, if possible.

Mr. Cratsley asked if the Museum intends to remain open during construction. Mr. Miklos said yes and explained the proposed construction schedule and phasing.

Mr. Sayegh asked why the Davis building is not proposed for renovation. Mr. Miklos explained that the building is proposed for demolition for a number of reasons, due chiefly to structural and accessibility concerns.

Mr. Cratsley asked for comments from the audience.

Irmingard Doane, 248 Lexington Road, expressed concerns about safety for vehicles making left-hand turns exiting the driveway at the Lexington Road access point. She also asked if the Museum could arrange for buses to use the Orchard House overflow lot to park after dropping off students. Mr. Earle explained why the driveway at Lexington Road is proposed to allow both right and left hand turns at that access point. He said that the Museum could look into her request about the bus parking.

Town Planner Hughes explained the Applicants upcoming meeting schedule with the other necessary Town Boards. Discussion of this application was continued to the September 13, 2016 Planning Board meeting.

Amendment to Condition #11 regarding landscape plan for Town Solar Project (at former W.R. Grace property) 214 Main Street

At 8:13 p.m., Ms. Whiting Cash returned to the meeting and resumed the role of Chair.

The Board acknowledged receipt of a letter dated 8/9/16 from Jerry Hughes of 23 North Branch Road with his concerns about the potential of amending Condition #11 without the opportunity for the public to review the landscape plan at a Planning Board meeting. Mr. Hughes, present in the audience earlier, was not present at this time. Town Planner Hughes offered to contact him to let him know the outcome of the meeting.

Town Planner Hughes explained that Condition #11 of the Site Plan for the Town Solar Project at 214Y Main Street states that “prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, the Applicant shall submit to the Planning Board for review and approval a landscape plan showing additional evergreen landscaping in the existing cleared area on the eastern side.” Referring to her memorandum to the Board (Item #2) dated 8/4/16, she explained that the Applicant has provided a proposed landscape plan for review. Ms. Hughes informed that Board that during the pre-construction meeting, she reviewed with the Natural Resources staff and the Contractor the proposed location for landscaping. She commented that if any planting was installed in the existing cleared area of concern, it is unknown whether it would provide any screening as was intended. She recommended that the condition be amended to allow the landscaping location to be determined in late winter/early spring prior to any leaves on the trees and after installation of the solar field and trimming of the adjacent trees. This would be done following a site visit by the Planning Board to determine if additional screening is needed and the best location. Ms. Hughes further recommended that if landscaping is required, then the Contractor would provide the Planning Board a plan to review and approve at a meeting so there could be public comment.

Ms. Hughes noted that the Contractor has expressed concern with having an open ended condition that does not specify a limit on the number of trees to be planted. The Planning Division staff thinks this is a reasonable concern and after discussion on the potential types of evergreen plantings that may be used and constraints of installing landscaping on the eastern side of the solar field following construction recommends a maximum of 20 evergreen trees of 10 to 12 feet in height.

After discussion, Mr. Canally moved that the Board amend Condition # 11 for the Town Solar Project Site Plan Approval as follows: “11) Prior to April 1, 2017, the Applicant shall meet on site with the Planning Board before the leaves are on the trees to determine if additional evergreen landscaping in the existing cleared area on the eastern side is required, and if so, the best location for plantings. Plantings shall be a maximum of 20 evergreen trees of 10 to 12 feet in height. The Applicant shall then prepare a landscape plan for review and approval by the Board. All required planting shall be installed prior to June 1, 2017.” Mr. Cratsley seconded. All **VOTED** in favor.

Committee Liaison Reports & Staff Updates

Mr. Cratsley reported on the upcoming Community Preservation Committee informational meeting in September which kicks off the 2016 application funding schedule.

Mr. Easton reported on the July HATs meeting which Director Rasmussen attended. Topics discussed at the meeting included regional transportation issues and traffic management.

Town Planner Hughes reported on the recent Comprehensive Long Range Plan Committee meeting.

Ms. Whiting Cash reported on the Tree Preservation Subcommittee's (TreePS) activities since their June meeting with the Planning Board. She requested the Board's input on the timeframe the Subcommittee should be given to present any potential warrant articles to the Planning Board for consideration. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to direct TreePS to conclude their work and present any warrant article by mid-September so that the Planning Board had sufficient time to vet the information.

List of documents presented which are on file in the Planning Division Office at 141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA:

- Town Planner's agenda memorandum dated 8/4/16
- Letter dated 8/9/16 from J. Hughes re: 214Y Main Street

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Canally, Clerk Pro Tem

Minutes approved on: 8/23/16