

TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION  
PLANS REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2020 SPECIAL MEETING

*The meeting commenced at 8:00 AM in Meeting Room A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall.*

**Present:** Subcommittee Member Michael Botelho, Sharon Purtill and Robert Zanlungo; Richard Johnson, Town Manager, Khara C. Dodds, AICP, Director of Planning and Land Use Services, and Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner

**109-117 NEW LONDON TURNPIKE – revisions to the architectural elevations for the proposed Chase Bank branch – Town Center Zone - Alter & Pearson, LLC – Bohler Engineering – TPG Architecture, LLP - Ferfeldt Investments LLC, applicant**

Attorney Meghan Hope explained that the proposal was to demolish the existing office buildings at 109 – 177 New London Turnpike and construct a 1-story Chase Bank branch. Attorney Hope stated that the applicant changed the design of the building in response to the comments received from the Subcommittee at the December 4, 2019 meeting. She stated that the applicant hoped to set a high bar with the design of the building.

Attorney Hope then oriented the Subcommittee members to the site plan. She explained that access to the site would be through the existing shared curb cut on New London Turnpike and a new curb cut at the southeast corner of the lot off Hebron Avenue. The site layout allowed the applicant to retain nine street trees along Hebron Avenue. Attorney Hope also pointed out the location of the dumpster enclosure and stated that the site would have 12-foot tall light poles.

Chairman Purtill expressed concern that the proposed building would be too close to the roundabout and that it could create a tunnel effect. Jeff Bord of Bohler Engineering explained that the proposed building location in relation to the road was similar to that of surrounding buildings. Commissioner Purtill asked if there was an entrance to the building on the Hebron Avenue frontage. Attorney Hope stated that while there will be walkways with connections to town sidewalks on Hebron Avenue, the main entrance to the building will be on the north wall of the building facing the parking lot. She stated that entrance location was chosen for safety reasons.

Commissioner Botelho asked if the Engineering Department had reviewed the plans. Mr. Bohler stated that Engineering had reviewed the plan with several rounds of comments. Chairman Zanlungo asked if there was a possibility of sharing parking with property to the north. Attorney Hope stated that she would look into the easement language to see if shared parking was a possibility.

Attorney Hope then stated the air-handling units would be located at the southwestern corner of the site and would be screened with landscaping. She explained that originally, the units were supposed to be on the roof of the building but due to the change in design of the roofline, the units had to be placed on the ground. Commissioner Purtill stated that the applicant should consider an alternate location for the units.

Kelly Mejia of TPG Architecture went over the architectural design of the building. She stated that materials for the building would be cement board, brick veneer and asphalt shingles. Commissioner Purtill asked if the materials would hold up over time to which Ms. Mejia replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Purtill stated that she wanted to ensure that the design of the building is timeless. Chairman Zanlungo echoed Commissioner Purtill's statement by saying the site is a focal point for the town and the building should have good design. Commissioner Purtill asked Mr. Johnson if he had any input. Mr. Johnson agreed that the site is a focal point for the downtown area and he wanted to make sure that applicant had a timeless building design. Mr. Johnson also stated that the applicant should have a plan to screen the building utility connections. Ms. Dodds stated that the TPZ has been including screening for mechanicals and utilities as a condition of approval. Attorney Hope stated that the applicant could eliminate the pedestrian walkways on the east side of the building to accommodate screening for utility connections. Attorney Hope then summarized what she understood to be the key points from the meeting:

- Utility location and screening
- Move the building location slightly to the north, away from the roundabout
- Add more greenspace along New London Turnpike and Hebron Avenue
- Consolidate the dumpster location with the building to the north

Commissioner Botelho suggested reducing the number of parking spaces on site and increasing greenspace. Commissioner Purtill recommended that the applicant supply material samples at the public hearing. Chairman Zanlungo added that the applicant should also bring renderings to the public hearing.

### **636 CHESTNUT HILL ROAD – proposal for an accessory apartment – Residence AA Zone – The Rockfall Company LLC, applicant**

Henry Racki of the Rockfall Company explained the proposal, which is to construct an accessory apartment off the rear of the house. He distributed site plans and elevation drawings to the Subcommittee members. There was a discussion between the applicant and the Subcommittee about access to the apartment and the floor plan. The Subcommittee had no issue with the proposal.

*Commissioner Botelho left the meeting at 9:15 am.*

### **141 HEBRON AVENUE – proposal to amend an approved sign package – Town Center Zone – Karin Knobel, Graphik Identities, applicant**

Karin Knobel of Graphik Identities explained the proposal, which is to alter the approved sign package for 141 Hebron Avenue to allow for a logo and a “channel box” in addition to channel letters for one tenant space. There was a discussion between the Subcommittee, staff and the applicant regarding the approved sign package for the building and the proposed changes. Chairman Zanlungo recommended that the sign for the subject tenant space could be approved administratively with the proposed changes. He then stated that if the applicant wanted to change the sign package for the entire building they would have to come before the entire Commission.

### **DISCUSSION of Zoning Text Amendment Priorities**

Ms. Dodds presented a list of the sections of the Building Zone-Regulations that could potentially be amended. The Subcommittee instructed staff to start by amending Section 6.2 of the regulations regarding excavation. They also instructed staff to look at the parking regulations.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP