

TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
PLANS/REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2020 SPECIAL MEETING

The meeting commenced at 8:05 AM through Zoom Video Conferencing

Present: Subcommittee Members Michael Botelho, Sharon Purtill, and Robert Zanlungo; Khara C. Dodds, AICP, Director of Planning and Land Use Services, Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner

2577 MAIN STREET and ASSESSOR'S LOT W-38A MAIN STREET properties – proposal for parking lot expansion at St. Paul Church – Town Center Zone – Megson, Heagle & Friend, C.E. & L.S., LLC – Alter & Pearson, LLC – The Community of Saints Isidore and Maria at St. Paul Church, applicant

Attorney Meghan Hope explained that the proposal before the Subcommittee was to expand the parking area on the west side of the site. She said that proposal was part of a larger plan that includes an expansion to the church building. The building expansion would happen in a subsequent phase of the project.

Attorney Hope reported that the applicant has been working with the Conservation Commission / Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency to develop a plan that not only addresses wetlands impacts but also upgrades onsite stormwater treatment.

She then said that an analysis of the existing parking shows that the site does not meet the minimum parking requirements for an assembly use and that many parishioners have to park on Main Street for weekend church services. Further, Attorney Hope explained that parish consolidation and church closures would exacerbate this issue. She said that the required number of parking spaces to bring the site into compliance, and to account for the future church addition is 262 spaces. The applicant is proposing to have 272 spaces to provide extra parking, if needed. There will also be landscaped islands and 16-foot pole-mounted light fixtures. Attorney Hope stated the rationale for the build-out of the entire parking area before the building expansion is to minimize wetlands disturbance.

Chairman Purtill said that while she understood the reasoning behind creating all of the parking in the first phase of the project, she had concerns about the amount of pavement generated. She questioned the need for specified number of spaces and if the second phase would even be constructed. Chairman Zanlungo also questioned whether church attendance would ever return to pre-COVID19 pandemic levels and if the parking demand would be there. He asked about the status of the portion of the site that is a commuter lot operated by the State. Attorney Hope noted that the State is discontinuing the commuter lot. There was a discussion among the group about alternative parking sites, such as the Saint James parking lot, the CVS parking lot and along Main Street. Commissioner Botelho stated that he was in support of the parking plan because he did not want church patrons to have to park off-site. Chairman Zanlungo wanted to ensure the church addition would be constructed before he would be comfortable with the parking expansion. Attorney Hope said that she would find out more information from the church pastor.

The subcommittee agreed that the applicant should come back before them before going to the full Commission.

39 NEW LONDON TURNPIKE – proposal for additional signage at Glen Lochen – Town Center Zone – Gerian Williams, permit expediter - Julie Tse, owner - Darin Senna, Hartford Sign & Design, LLC, applicant

Darin Senna of Hartford Sign and Design presented the project to the subcommittee. He explained that the owner of the building would like to install an additional monument sign along New London Turnpike to accommodate signage for those tenants who currently do not have signage. Julie Tse, owner of the building, stated that she would be willing to remove the monument sign with the words “Glen Lochen” in exchange for a monument sign for the tenants. Commissioner Zanolungo directed staff to work with the applicant on a monument tenant sign that would incorporate the words “Glen Lochen” for approval by the Subcommittee.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP