

**THE GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2021**

The Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission with John Mullen, AICP, Planner, in attendance held a Special Meeting via Zoom video conferencing.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present

Mr. Robert Zanolungo, Jr., Chairman
Ms. Sharon Purtill, Vice Chairman
Mr. Keith Shaw
Mr. Raymond Hassett
Mr. Michael Botelho, Secretary
Mr. Christopher Griffin
Mr. Scott Miller, Alternate
Ms. Alice Sexton, Alternate

Commission Members Absent

Vacancy

Chairman Zanolungo called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING

CGS 7-159 Pre-Application Review of Use of Property at 2283-89, 2333 and 2341-2355 Main Street (Town Center Zone) – Alter & Pearson, LLC 2283-2289 Main Street, LLC, Main Street Developers, LLC, and Main Street Glastonbury 2341, LLC, owners

Attorney Peter Alter of Alter & Pearson, LLC announced that this is an informal and preliminary meeting to receive guidance from the commission on how to proceed with the proposal. Immediately following this meeting with the Town Plan & Zoning Commission, there will be a meeting for public review and comment. Mr. Alter explained that the site is 9.73 acres, comprised of three parcels. The proposal is to raze all of the existing buildings and replace them with mixed use properties. The proposed property to be developed runs from south of the Daybreak Coffee Roasters building to Rankin Road. The plan is designed to be pedestrian-friendly and to make use of the center green and connect to developments on Hebron Avenue and Main Street. The site is outside of the Historic District. There will be a parking discussion to meet the zone and development requirements. They are conducting a traffic study and the design team has studied the environs.

Attorney Meghan Hope of Alter & Pearson, LLC reviewed the planning directives and zoning requirements. Commercial uses will be on the first floor and the upper floors will be residential. The mixed-use development is a permitted use within the Town Center Zone, so they will need a Special Permit with Design Review from the TPZ. She explained the various commission meetings they will need to attend and seek approval from before returning to the TPZ. She noted

that they will be increasing the commercial space, as the regulations do not allow them to decrease commercial space.

Mr. Alter added that the parking spaces will be wider and a circularity of access will be created so that patrons of Daybreak and the new development will have an easier time entering and exiting the properties. Mr. Alter commented that there will be zero impact to the existing wetlands, and they are about 20% less than the floor area ratio (FAR) allowed by the regulations. The height of the building satisfies the regulation requirements. Currently, there is 28,500 square feet of commercial space. They propose 28,958 square feet. They are required to have 441 parking spaces, but they will ask the commission for a 13% reduction, for a total of 387 parking spaces: with 329 on site, 15 on the Rankin Road extension, and 43 in front of the site, along Main Street. Mr. Alter reiterated that they would maintain that Daybreak retains all of its parking spaces. He then reviewed the front setback. Two of the existing buildings (Willard and Kaman) sit over the property line. The applicant will ask the ZBA for a special exception to allow constructing buildings closer than permitted under the zoning regulations.

Will Walter, P.E. from Alfred Benesch & Company, stated that parking will be around the entirety of the site. The topography of the site is such that the grade at Main Street is 12-15 feet higher than the back of the developed portion, which is by the wetlands. It drops down about one and a half stories.

Mr. Walter then reviewed the traffic circulation, noting that they will widen the curb cut at Daybreak, which will serve as an entrance. The curb cut north of Daybreak will be exit only because they need to get tractor trailers for delivery. The other curb cut is the existing Rankin Road extension, which will continue to be a two-way entrance. They will prepare a traffic impact report, which will be submitted as a part of their application. He echoed Mr. Alter's statement that their stormwater design will not disturb any wetlands. They have analyzed the soils on site with the Environmental Planner and are actively checking levels of groundwater. Proposed is a series of above-ground biofiltration areas that will sit between the impervious areas of the parking and the wetlands.

Robert McCall, Principal Architect of JKRP Architects in Philadelphia, explained the architectural components of the site. He noted that, instead of one big block, there will be smaller areas, like plazas, to not only activate the Main Street side, but also the secondary level of pedestrian access. He then spoke on the ground plan of the site. In order to maintain the allowable building height, the mean where they start their elevation is at minus 5 feet. He explained that they did not want to have a mass of a building as a wall on Main Street, so they tried to break the scale of that building, in order to be more sensitive to the pedestrian experience. The residential is all-access via a common lobby.

Mr. McCall noted that they will use multiple architectural styles throughout this site, explaining that while they are not trying to mimic the architecture in the surrounding area, they will try to mimic the same palette, so that it could be a good neighbor. The smaller scale retail faces the plaza. They liked the architecture of Addison Mills, but it will be located off of Main Street, not directly on it. Its design will retain the red brick and windows and balconies. There will be access to parking underneath the site. The building that mimics Daybreak would be a smaller

piece with a rooftop on it. The goal is that it would be a restaurant. Mr. McCall then explained that, while they intend to meet the building height requirement, they want the roofline to fit well with the adjacent architecture. From the south looking north, the architecture of the corner building is switched out to not have the same theme running out all around the site. They pushed the face of the retail store front into the building, so that it creates a covered arcade. Whereas on the plaza side, they had the face of the retail aligned with the building as outdoor plazas.

Secretary Botelho asked how wide the access points are and how traffic would be flowing within the site and exiting the site. Mr. Walter stated they are 12 feet wide two way, so 24 feet. The residents will park near the elevators/stairs and patrons will park on Main Street and Rankin Street first. The parking deck down below meets the zoning regulations. He clarified that the entire parking garage is open, so there are no access points, per say. Secretary Botelho asked if there will be an egress by Daybreak. Mr. Walter said that will be made exit only to get delivery trucks inside the site and out. Secretary Botelho noted that he gets very concerned when an applicant asks to reduce parking. He asked if there are any spots dedicated to residents only. Mr. Alter said that they have not gotten that far into the discussions yet, but they would need 259 spaces to meet the residential needs, and they have 329 spaces onsite. He feels that they have more than enough spaces proposed to accommodate both residents and retailers. Secretary Botelho expressed dissatisfaction with the color of southern corner building, noting that the grey brick sticks out.

Vice Chairman Purtill is disappointed in the proposal. She shared that if there were no requirement for commercial space, she feels that the whole development would have been an apartment building. She noted that their goal is to keep retail and commercial space vibrant downtown and to throw in some mixed use. The Willard property is a historical structure which provides a transition from the historic homes into that southern district. Like Secretary Botelho, she does not like the southern corner building, neither the style nor the color of the grey brick. She also does not care for the Mill House in the back because it seems out of place. The architecture as a whole does not thrill her. Vice Chairman Purtill is not in favor of granting a parking waiver, noting that the commission has not granted major parking waivers in the downtown business district for some time because they have a parking issue. The parking in the back seems almost hidden for the tenants and to the exclusion of retailers. She then asked how many spaces will be compact and where they will be located.

Vice Chairman Purtill explained that she would like to keep the 20-foot setback. The rear part of the site is undevelopable because of the wetlands. The applicant's proposal to move closer to the street is only allowing more density for residential and parking that she does not think is necessary. She would like to see the FAR of the portion of the parcel that is being developed with the wetlands, rather than the entire piece. The tractor trailer going in and out at Daybreak will be difficult because it will add a tremendous amount of traffic in an area where they are trying to push more pedestrian walking. She asked where the dumpsters will be located for the commercial and retail space. She concluded by stating that the blend of the residential and the downtown needs to be done in harmony and in such a way that the residential component will not have to deal with commercial lights, noise, and activities that are not fair to them.

Commissioner Hassett is happy to hear that there will not be any large business entities in the site. However, he is disappointed about the amount of parking. He does not feel there will be sufficient parking on the site. He is also interested in the traffic study and whether a new signalization will be needed in that area. He concurred with many of the statements previously expressed by Commissioners Botelho and Purtill. Commissioner Miller echoed Vice Chairman Purtill's sentiment and observation that this is a residential project. He believes that the proposal is designed backwards. The part he is most concerned about is the transition to the Historic District, from the south to the north. He echoed his fellow commissioners that he does not like the building on the southeastern corner. He is not a fan of the recessed lights, which look dark and ominous. He also does not understand the traffic flow. Using the access point to the north of Daybreak with all of the traffic there now is very cumbersome, let alone a tractor trailer going in and out of there. On building heights, he would like a sense of scale from the southwestern views.

Commissioner Shaw feels that this will be a potential game changer to the area and the Town of Glastonbury. He likes the frontage design and layout. He is concerned about the number of apartments because it looks quite dense. He also expressed concern about the egress from Daybreak. He is not thrilled at the fact that there will be only 40 parking spaces in the front, as it may not be available to people who want to use the site. The underground parking is not convenient for retailers and patrons, especially if it is below grade.

Commissioner Griffin generally likes the concept and design, as well as the way it hides the parking. He agrees with the comments expressed on the building on the south end. He also agreed with Commissioner Miller that there is an opportunity for a better transition into the Historic District. His main concern is with the density of the parking and the traffic that it will generate. Chairman Zanolungo asked if the residential properties will all be rental or will there also be condos, and whether or not there will be affordable housing on site. He would like to know what the construction timeline will be. He concluded by expressing excitement for the prospect of this development, which will change the Town Center for 50-70 years.

Mr. Alter thanked the commission for their input and reiterated that there will be a Town Hall session immediately following this meeting, where members of the public can voice their opinions, comments, questions, and concerns.

Motion by: Commissioner Hassett

Seconded by: Commissioner Shaw

MOVED, that the Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission adjourn their special meeting of March 30, 2021 at 8:46 P.M.

Result: Motion was passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

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Recording Clerk