

**THE GLASTONBURY ARCHITECTURAL & SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2023**

The Glastonbury Architectural and Site Design Review Committee, with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Planning and Land Use Services and Gary Haynes, Planner, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 5:00 P.M in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street with an option for Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

1. ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present

Mr. Brian Davis, Chairman
Ms. Debra DeVries-Dalton, Vice Chairman
Mr. Jeff Kamm
Ms. Amy Luzi

Commission Members Excused

Mr. Mark Branse, Secretary
Mr. Robert Shipman
Mr. David Flinchum

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 5:03 P.M.

2. OTHER BUSINESS *None*

3. 769 HEBRON AVENUE – proposal for installation of a solar canopy over existing parking – Planned Employment & Flood Zones – Jonathan Sczurek, Megson, Heagle & Friend C.E. & L.S., LLC – Rob Liflander, Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC, applicant FINAL

Jonathan Sczurek of Megson, Heagle & Friend, represented the applicant, Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC. He explained that the site is 1.8 acres. The proposal is to create a solar canopy over a portion of the existing parking lot. The drainage will tie into an infiltration trench created by the island between the two parking areas. He presented canopy examples. Regarding landscaping, the applicant proposes screening along the frontage of Hebron Avenue and a couple arborvitae along the northwest corner. Tree plantings will include eastern red cedar, eastern redbud, oxydendrum, and witch hazel. Mr. Sczurek explained that no DOT permitting is required for this project. He has sent the plan along to District 1 anyway but has not heard back.

Chairman Davis asked about the possibility of using tube steel as opposed to utilitarian structure shapes. Rob Liflander of Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC, responded that Mr. Branse sent them two different canopy designs to consider. One was a timber structure from a company based in Minnesota. The other was a hollow steel structure from a company out west. Mr. Liflander spoke with both companies and received approximate quotes for the design and installation of those structures. While he agrees that they are very attractive, they would more

than double the cost of the project. He noted that 99% of the carports in the US are built with the type of construction that is proposed here. He hopes that the screening of the carport with seven trees will improve the streetscape.

Mr. Davis asked if any trees would be removed. Mr. Sczurek replied yes, a couple on the island will be removed. In total, four trees would be added to the site. Mr. Kamm noted that the parking lot on the east side is higher than the parking lot on the west side. Mr. Sczurek explained that the contours slope down in the island at an angle from the east side towards the west side. All the grades will be kept the same. Mr. Davis asked about the possibility of keeping the pitch of the carport zero throughout. Mr. Liflander explained that they would have to consult with the vendor of the carport. Mr. Davis stated that it might actually make the construction easier.

Mr. Kamm pointed out that Mr. Branse recommended those two companies as an example, not as the only choices to consider. Ms. Luzi is concerned that their charge is to make Glastonbury look a certain way, and this proposal falls short of that image. She would love for the carport to be steel. Mr. Liflander explained that the cost of doing this project in the current method is about \$380,000. The cost of doing it with the hollow steel structure would be about \$600,000. The cost of doing it with the timber would be about \$670,000. While he appreciates that the hollow steel structure or the timber may be more attractive, their cost prohibitive nature may eliminate any solar carports from being built in Glastonbury.

Ms. Dalton asked what their breakeven point is on the electricity that is raised. Mr. Liflander responded that carports are more expensive to build than rooftop projects. With current incentives, the breakeven point for a project of this size is probably 8 years. Mr. Haynes asked if they were considering coating. Mr. Liflander would prefer to powder coat rather than paint it, which would cost about \$40,000 to \$60,000. Mr. Luzi asked if this system comes from a certain manufacturer. Mr. Liflander clarified that the subcontractor who is designing, engineering, and installing the carport is called Polar Racking, which is based in Toronto. He does not know where the actual steel is being fabricated but can find out. Ms. Luzi finds it hard to believe that the shape of the steel doubles the price.

Mr. Kamm asked why arborvitae is added on the northwest corner of the building. Mr. Liflander explained that when the power is connected into the electric service of the building, certain equipment on the outside of the building must be accessible to Eversource. Ms. Dalton read Mr. Flinchum's comments in absentia. He suggested extending the arborvitae hedge into the eastern parking lot and wrapping it around the corner. Ms. Luzi agrees with the powder coating to match the existing colors and agrees with keeping it level, but she would like to look deeper into finding a better cost estimate for a tube steel structure.

Charles Putnam of Gemma Power Systems, LLC explained that the initial thought behind the solar canopy was to create a more sustainable community for power generation. They did not know that a solar canopy would be looked down upon and would have to be hidden. Ms. Luzi countered that they do support solar canopies, but there are more aesthetic options than what is proposed. Mr. Liflander said younger families moving in want to see solar panels and carports. A compromise may be to powder coat the carport a bronze color, but he finds that people's view of

Glastonbury will be improved if they see a carport. Mr. Davis asked for the following: to level the pitch, to powder coat, and to have a more sensitive and thought-out landscape plan that addresses the multiple concerns raised. The committee's preference is to have tube steel.

4. 2815 MAIN STREET, PEOPLES BANK – proposal for a new building and site work – Flood Zone and Planned Business Development (PBD) – Kathryn Mease for Tecton Architects – Attorney Meg Hope FINAL

Attorney Meghan Hope of Alter & Pearson, LLC presented on behalf of the applicant. This is their second meeting before the committee. At the last meeting, no architects were present. They have submitted a detailed response to comments received at, and after, that meeting. Architect Kathryn Mease explained that this building is tailored to the site. The positioning of the drive-through was intentional and may not be able to be changed. They are trying to minimize how much they are taking out of the site.

Ryan Deane, landscape architect at Benesch & Company, explained that the building had to be pulled up out of the flood plain. They have added screening on the southwest corner and elevated the drop-off area. Ms. Mease explained that the number of signs has been reduced and a vinyl chain link fence is proposed. The side light and the door have been matched. The water connections are on the front of the building, and the electrical has been moved to the back wall to obscure visibility. She explained that the mechanical units are inside. The verticality of the entrance was very intentional.

Mr. Deane then explained the hardscape changes. They have created a raised crosswalk from the street to the building and added crabapple trees between the parking lot and fire station. The Fire Marshal has requested that all the ash trees along the edge be removed. They will reintroduce something similar. Ms. Dalton asked to replicate what is done on the south side of the driveway to fill in that gap. This will ameliorate the heat island effect. Ms. Luzi prefers not to add chicken wire to the fence. A black vertical fence would be fine as well. She would also like the ability for other properties to use the light. Ms. Mease explained that they have evaluated that, but the drive-through would almost be creating an accident condition. They have changed the detail of the upper window on the exterior of the building so that it can be backlit at night. For bank security and employee safety, there are false windows on-site.

Ms. Dalton asked about putting in shade trees to frame the building. Mr. Kamm added that, in older towns, there is typically a larger tree there. Mr. Deane will think of what to put there. Mr. Kamm likes the idea of connecting the sidewalk, but he would have done it on the south side of the entryway. Mr. Deane explained that the grade naturally slopes up, so they did what made sense. Mr. Kamm questioned whether the row of arborvitae across the building's rear needs to be that far south. He also noted that the light range is huge. The building lights could be a lower output. He asked if the LED lights are on during business hours or all the time. Ms. Mease stated that they are on at the same times as the building signage.

Mr. Davis remarked that there would be a lot of aesthetic advantages if the applicant could find a way to move the drive-through to the back of the building. This would provide a lot of

opportunity for visible landscaping. He appreciates the idea of transitional architecture and branding, but it goes counter to what they seek to create in Glastonbury. Ms. Mease asked if changing up the materials would help. Mr. Kamm stated yes, even a modern interpretation would serve well. Right now, the proportions need work to fit the Glastonbury aesthetic. Ms. Caltagirone explained that the committee will have more time with this project.

5. 2800 MAIN STREET, 21 & 37A SPRING STREET – proposal to renovate existing building with related site improvements for uses including restaurant and medical office – Attorney Meg – Matt Wittmer, AIA, Phase Zero Design – Kevin Johnson, PLA, ASLA Close, Jensen & Miller – Sam Lyman for LYMAN FLEX, LLC, applicant PRELIMINARY

Attorney Meghan Hope of Alter & Pearson, LLC explained that all three sites combined are a little over one acre. There is an existing building on-site that was approved in the 1970s. She reviewed the various site constraints. A watercourse cuts through the site and goes underground to Salmon Brook, so there are some wetlands. The building is not currently handicap-accessible. They will pull the stairs out to the building exterior. The existing curb cut will be maintained and the parking to the east will be expanded. There will be a designated spot for cars to turn around. They propose a handicap ramp and steps at the easterly and westerly corners. The pedestrian connection from Main Street will be moved south, and a patio is proposed. The two uses for this site are a medical office and a restaurant, on the southerly portion.

Kevin Johnson, landscape architect at Close, Jensen & Miller, explained that there are basically two sites here: the existing site (2800 Main Street) and the two undeveloped sites (21 & 37A Spring Street). 2800 Main Street is devoid of trees. The Spring Street sites are filled with dead and diseased trees. They plan to introduce trees, ornamentals, and ground cover. There will be a retaining wall with shrubs along Spring Street, as it is too narrow to put in any trees. The connecting driveway between the Main Street and Spring Street sites will include native species and a difference in foliage color.

In the parking area, a buffer will be created for the residences adjacent to the property. They will maintain the existing deciduous trees and lower the parking grade. A six-foot fence will be installed along that property line with deciduous shrubs. Mr. Davis asked if the fence had been discussed with the neighbors. Mr. Johnson stated no, it is something that they are offering. Ms. Hope added that there will be a meeting with the neighbors to hear what they would like to see. Mr. Johnson noted that a water quality basin is proposed. Ms. Hope stated that the building will likely hold two tenants, but the plan is to build it out for the possibility of four tenants in the future.

Matt Wittmer, architect at Phase Zero Design, reviewed the concept designs. They will keep some of the existing red brick and use a HardiePlank siding. Mr. Kamm stated that the facade coming from the north, down Main Street, has nothing on it. He asked why it looks like there is a walkway sneaking along the edge of the property line. He worries about the white pines over parking areas because they grow very tall. Ms. Luzi would like to see windows on the north side

and against the ramp. In the parking lot, there are two entrances up to the platform. She would like one to be located more centrally, rather than on either end.

Ms. Luzzi asked about the material of the sidewalk platform in the rendering. Mr. Johnson stated that it is concrete. They had drawn it in stone, but stone was proving difficult. He can revisit it. Ms. Luzzi does not find concrete to be appropriate for the location. Ms. Dalton likes the selection of natives, but the spacing on the trees is tight. She would put a special note on the barberry ground cover, to add 50% sand to the planting material. She likes the street trees along Main Street because it is barren there. She asked if it is possible to get a third street tree between the two maple trees. Ms. Luzzi would like to see a connection between the parking lot next to the ramp and Dairy Queen.

With no further comments or questions, Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan
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Recording Clerk