



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
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***Town Planner's Recommendation***  
**Wednesday, May 13, 2020**

- X. ***Public Hearing - Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity.*** 18 Garrison Avenue (formerly UNH's Elizabeth DeMeritt House). Site plan and conditional use application to establish fraternity, expand building, and further develop the site including additional parking. Richmond Property Group, c/o Sarah Layton, owner. Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering. Isaac Schlosser, Krittenbrink Architecture. Map 2, Lot 12-12. Central Business District.
- I recommend approval as stated below if final issues can be resolved or continuing to May 27 if there are remaining concerns.

Please note the following:

- **\*\*\*Accessibility plans?** We are trying to figure out how to handle handicap access into the building. The code requires 60% of the entrances be accessible which is challenging with the levels of the existing building and addition and grades on the site. I am waiting for a revised site plan. If this can be addressed quickly and presented to the board in a way that is clear and the other issues are adequately addressed the application could be approved on Wednesday. Otherwise, we will need to continue to May 27. A draft notice of decision is given below.
- **Conditional uses.** *I recommend approval of the conditional uses.* The Conservation Commission found that the buffer criteria were met. The board will need to go through the conditional use criteria – 8 general and 4 specific for WCOD – for these conditional uses: a) to establish a fraternity, b) for building height to exceed 30 feet; and c) for construction within the 75 foot wetland buffer – driveways, utilities, fencing, retaining wall, sidewalks, building addition, and other accessory structures.
- **Alcohol.** The lease says the premises shall remain alcohol free everywhere. Is this definitely the plan? Should this be included in the conditions below?
- **Fencing.** Should the fencing around the dumpster be chain link with slats, stockade vinyl, or stockade wood?
- **Scooter parking.** The applicant will need to pay a parking impact fee for the shortfall of parking spaces. This will be \$9,512 by my calculations. The applicant asked if they get any credit for the 10 moped parking spaces shown on the plans. Does the

board think that allowing credit for the moped spaces is appropriate under the regulations? If so, how much credit should be granted?

- Jamie Silverstein of UNH stated, “My other comment to one of the documents is to echo Chief Kurz and say that I would recommend making sure that they build a private house directors suite and look to hire a full time house director that lives at the house to be a liaison to the chapter/chef/cleaning team and housing corporation. The chapters that have live in directors (adults to manage the physical structure and policies) have a longer lasting organization while housed.” Will there be one?

**\*Draft\***

**NOTICE OF DECISION**

**Project Name:** Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity – Site Plan and Conditional Use  
**Action Taken:** APPROVAL  
**Address:** 18 Garrison Avenue  
**Property Owner:** Richmond Property Group, LLC  
**Engineer:** Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering  
**Map and Lot:** Map 2, Lot 12-12  
**Zoning:** Central Business District  
**Date of approval:** May 13, 2020

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*[Office use only. Date certified: \_\_\_\_\_; CO signed off \_\_\_\_\_;  
As-built's received? \_\_\_\_\_; All surety returned: \_\_\_\_\_]*

“Applicant,” herein refers to the applicant and his/her/their/its agents, successors and assigns.

**PRECEDENT CONDITIONS**

All of the conditions below must be met by the applicant prior to the plans being certified by the Town Planner. Certification of the plans is required prior to issuance of a building permit or performance of any significant site work. Once these conditions precedent are met and the plans are certified the approval is considered final.

Please note. If all of the precedent conditions are not met within one year to the day of the board’s approval – by May 13, 2021 (or as extended) - the Planning Board's approval will be considered to have lapsed. Extension(s) may be granted by the Planning Board for reasonable cause. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant (or his/her agent) to ensure that the precedent conditions are met by this deadline. See RSA 674:39 on vesting. No changes to the plans that were reviewed and approved by the Planning Board on May 13, 2020 may be made except for the specific required changes that follow.

### Plan Modifications

- 1) Plan modifications. Make the following modifications to the plan set that were reviewed and approved by the Planning Board (Items do not need to be physically constructed as a precedent condition):
  - a) Accessibility. Finalize plans for accessibility into the building, including any changes in grade and designs for ramps, and possible relocation of accessible parking spaces (with possible loss of one overall parking space) to be approved by the Code Administrator and Town Planner. At the Town Planner's option the plans will be submitted to the Planning Board for approval (without notices nor a hearing but with allowance for public comment).
  - b) Porous pavement. Show two locations for porous pavement signs at appropriate locations. Include detail for sign with this language or equivalent: "Porous Asphalt Pavement. Use of sand shall be minimized. Semi-annual vacuuming and periodic reporting to the Town of Durham is required. Seal coating and heavy load vehicles are prohibited. Contact Town Planning Department with any questions."
  - c) Transformer. Clarify whether any transformers or ground-mounted utility structures are needed on site. If so provide appropriate landscaping/fencing to screen them.
  - d) Electric. Clarify whether a new pole will be added to the site near the existing pole at the northeast corner of the site.
  - e) Architectural plans. Make the following changes/notes on the plans:
    - Provide colors and materials for clapboards, trim, shutters, chimney, and porch (The applicant expects the colors to be generally white and black). A slightly contrasting color for the trim is recommended.
    - Note that the new siding will be used on the existing building as well
    - Note that the columns are square
    - Pull in the entablature over the porch so that the frieze is even with the column
    - Make transom window panes slightly vertical
    - Identify the color that the foundation will be painted
    - Widen the corner trim slightly
    - Clarify the width/reveal of the clapboard siding. It should be 4" +/-.
    - Add extra wide mullions in the middle of all double and triple windows
    - Show fascia board under eave resting on corner board (not as continuous L)
    - Clarify design of window grilles (interior grid only?)
  - f) Garrison Avenue. Show vertical granite curbing at the street edge instead of sloped granite curbing, adjust width of on street spaces as appropriate, increase greenstrip next to curb to 6 feet +/-.
  - g) Miscellaneous. Note that existing overhead electric on westerly side will be removed. Delete "preliminary" from note 2 on sheet C2. Note on sheet C2 that all sidewalks

are to be concrete. Delete guard rail note on sheet D5. Clarify height of seagreen juniper on Sheet C3. Clarify height of stop sign. Show a unit for recycling within the dumpster area and include a detail of the unit/receptacles proposed.

- h) Fence. Submit design for fence behind retaining wall.
- i) Bike racks. Submit designs for 15 bike racks and for shelter including placement of at least 6 under a roof.
- j) Approval block. Change the approval block on each page of drawings to read: “Final Approval by Durham Planning Board. Certified by Michael Behrendt, Town Planner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_”

**Notes on Plans**

- 2) Notes on plans. Add the following notes on the plans/plan set that were reviewed and approved by the Planning Board:
  - a) Occupants. The site is approved for 44 occupants/fraternity members plus a resident manager. This number may not be exceeded unless approved by the Planning Board.”
  - b) Inspections. All inspection/observation services for the installation of water, wastewater, stormwater management, and other infrastructure shall be performed by authorized representatives of the Town of Durham as stipulated by the Durham Department of Public Works. The Developer shall reimburse the Town for all associated inspection/observation costs.”
  - c) Fertilizer. Low phosphorus/slow release nitrogen fertilizers for landscaping materials shall be used.”
  - d) Additional information. For more information about this site plan, or to see the complete plan set, contact the Town of Durham Planning Department, 8 Newmarket Road, Durham, NH 03824. (603) 868-8064.”
  - e) Notice of decision. It is the responsibility of the applicant, site contractor, and building contractor to follow all requirements related to this site plan approval. Please review these plans and the Planning Board Notice of Decision carefully. Contact the Durham Planning Department at (603) 868-8064 with any questions or concerns.”
  - f) SWPPP. This project may disturb over one acre of ground or meets other thresholds related to permit criteria for EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance. The site contractor is responsible for development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), submission of a Notice of Intent (NOI) to EPA, inspection and

maintenance of sediment control measures, documentation of maintenance activities, and submission a Notice of Termination (NOT) to EPA. The site contractor is also responsible to comply with all other Federal, State and Local stormwater or NPDES requirements."

- g) "Erosion and sedimentation. All erosion and sedimentation control structures shall remain in place and be maintained until vegetation is established and the ground surface is stabilized. Erosion and sedimentation control measures shall be monitored by the applicant on a periodic basis during construction and any deficiencies shall be corrected as soon as possible."
- h) "Blasting. Blasting and on-site chipping (of stone) is restricted to the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday."

**Other Conditions Precedent**

- 3) Other permits. Any required state permit shall be obtained with a copy delivered to the Planning Department.
- 4) Natural gas. A letter of approval from Unitil must be issued for use of natural gas.
- 5) Town Driveway and Road Permit. The permit from the Durham Department of Public Works for relocation of the driveway and activity within the Garrison Avenue right of way must be obtained.
- 6) Energy checklist. Submit energy checklist and meet with Town Planner, Code Administrator, and representative of Energy Committee to review. The applicant is encouraged, but not required, to meet as many provisions as possible.
- 7) Irrigation. Provide simple plan for how landscaping will be irrigated.
- 8) Utility connection. A utility connect permit application with necessary plans and specifications shall be submitted to DPW for review and approval by the Town in accordance with the Durham Water and Wastewater ordinances.
- 9) Electric service approval. Obtain written confirmation from Eversource Energy that the plans for electric service to and on the site are acceptable.
- 10) Construction Guarantee. The applicant shall post a surety in an amount to be approved by the Town Engineer to ensure the completion of all infrastructure/improvements or reclamation of site with written approval for the Town to use the surety to enter and reclaim the site if necessary.
- 11) Porous pavement oversight. Provide plan for oversight of installation of porous pavement by a qualified professional (such as Robert Roseen).

- 12) Porous pavement reporting. Provide plan for regular and perpetual reporting of maintenance and vacuuming of porous pavement acceptable to the Town Planner and Town Engineer including a strategy to ensure that the requirements for treatment of porous pavement and reporting are clear to the managers of the fraternity in perpetuity.
- 13) Lighting. Clearly key each light to specific cut sheets and model. All lights must be shielded and dark sky compliant.
- 14) House Director. Clarify whether there will be a house director, the role of this person, and whether they will live on site.
- 15) Final drawings. The following complete sets of final approved drawings shall be submitted for signature (except the electronic version) by the Town Planner: a) one large set of black line drawings (plus a second set if the applicant wants a signed set); b) one set of 11"x17" drawings; plus c) one electronic version by pdf. Each individual sheet in every set of drawings must be stamped and signed by the land surveyor, engineer, or architect responsible for the plans. *Please note*. If there are significant changes to be made to the plans, as specified above, one full size paper check print must be sent to the Planning Department for review prior to producing these final drawings. (The primary set of plans was last received April 24, 2020.)
- 16) Signature. Signature by the applicant at the bottom acknowledging all terms and conditions of this approval herein.

### **SUBSEQUENT CONDITIONS AND GENERAL TERMS**

All of the conditions below are also attached to this approval. All work shall be completed and all required conditions shall be met prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy unless otherwise specified or a surety acceptable to the Town is posted.

#### **Construction Management**

The following conditions apply to construction of the site:

- 17) The applicant/contractor shall meet with the Building Official at least 30 days prior to the start of construction in order to discuss the building process and to plan for the proper submittal of all structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and other plans. The Building Official may reduce this timeframe at his reasonable discretion for good cause.
- 18) The applicant/contractor shall hold weekly meetings with the Town Engineer and other appropriate Town departments to discuss the construction process and the schedule for the upcoming week or as specified by the Town Engineer.
- 19) Best management practices shall be followed for the protection of existing trees and vegetation that are planned to be preserved. Also, the provisions of Section 175-123 –

Protection During Construction under Article XXII - Landscaping of the Durham Zoning Ordinance shall be followed.”

- 20) Debris. No cut trees, stumps, debris, junk, rubbish, or other waste materials shall be buried in the land, or left or deposited on site at the time the certificate of occupancy is issued, or at any time after that.
- 21) Fire access. Access into the site for fire apparatus shall be maintained at all times during the construction process. Please contact the Fire Department at 868-5531 with any questions about access requirements.
- 22) Invasive Plants. The applicant will remove the invasive plants in accordance with the email from Bruce Scamman and plans submitted on April 24, 2020. The two Norway Maple trees in front of the existing building will be preserved.

**Conditions to be met prior to commencing site work**

- 23) Site work. No significant site work (including any significant clearing of the site) or ground disturbance may be undertaken until:
  - a) all of the precedent conditions are met;
  - b) the preconstruction meeting with Town staff has taken place (Contact Michael Behrendt, Town Planner, to arrange for the meeting);
  - c) limits of clearing have been established in the field and approved by the Public Works Department; and
  - d) all appropriate erosion and sedimentation control structures are in place.

These erosion and sedimentation control measures and designation of the limits of clearing must be in place prior to the pre-construction meeting in order that they may be inspected at the meeting.

**Conditions to be met prior to issuance of any certificate of occupancy**

- 24) Parking fee. The applicant shall pay the parking impact fee under Section 175-112 A. 1. of the zoning ordinance. It is estimated to be \$9,512.
- 25) As-built drawings. One set of full size, one set of 11” x 17”, and one electronic copy of as-built (“record”) drawings of all buildings, structures, infrastructure, utilities, drainage structures, roads, parking areas, and other pertinent elements shall be provided prior to the certificate of occupancy (unless a surety to cover the cost of the as-built drawings is given). The plans shall be stamped and signed by the Engineer or Surveyor and include the following language or comparable: “This as-built drawing substantially conforms with the final plans approved by the Town of Durham Planning Board and certified by the Planning Department except for the following significant modifications:

....”. If no significant modifications were made simply state “none”. Otherwise, itemize the modifications on the as-built or on an accompanying letter.

- 26) Improvements. All on-site and off-site improvements – including the crosswalk, restriping of parking spaces, and curbing within the Garrison Avenue right of way - included in this approval shall be completed prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy unless an acceptable surety is posted.
- 27) Fees. Any outstanding fees must be paid.
- 28) Utility Connection Permit. The Durham utility connection permit must be issued.
- 29) Other applicable requirements. All other applicable requirements of this site plan, this Notice of Decision, and other terms and conditions must be satisfied prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- 30) Maintenance Guarantee. The applicant shall post an acceptable surety to be approved by the Town Engineer (and the Town Business Manager for form and type) to guarantee that all site work is installed in a correct and workmanlike manner. The surety shall be in an amount of two percent of the estimated site improvement costs and shall remain in effect for two years after site improvements are completed. If repairs are subsequently needed and are not satisfactorily installed by the developer, then the surety may be used to complete/install the improvements. A cash deposit or letter of credit is an acceptable form.
- 31) Landscaping Guarantee. The applicant shall post an acceptable surety to guarantee the success of the landscaping materials. The guarantee shall be for a period of two years commencing from the time the certificate of occupancy is issued or installation of the landscaping materials, whichever occurs later. If replacements of any materials are subsequently needed, as reasonably determined by the Town Planner, within this two-year period then the applicant shall promptly replace those materials (subject to weather constraints). This guarantee and/or the other guarantees specified above may be combined at the discretion of the Business Manager.

**Other terms and conditions**

- 32) Recycling. Single stream recycling is required.
- 33) Recording. This notice of decision must be recorded at the Registry of Deeds within 14 days of certification of the plans.
- 34) Snow storage. If there is not sufficient room on site to store snow then the owner shall remove the snow to a legal location off site.
- 35) Energy Code. Building construction shall be in compliance with the energy efficient standards of Chapter 38 of the Town of Durham Code of Ordinances.



- 36) Litter and property maintenance. The site shall be properly maintained with any litter, debris, and rubbish on site removed in a reasonable timeframe.
- 37) Radio coverage. The requirements of the Durham Public Safety Amplification ordinance, Section 68-4 F., regarding installation of a radio repeater system for emergency service, shall be satisfied. Coordinate with the Fire Department during the building application process to determine if this ordinance applies.
- 38) Waste management. The waste management plan shall include single-stream recycling. The property owner's waste management hauler's name, account number, and phone number shall be provided to the Durham Building Official/Health Officer (DHO) so that the DHO can call and order an emergency pick up if necessary. The DHO is authorized to request this service at the applicant's expense should it be deemed necessary. The DHO is authorized to contact the waste management hauler only after first contacting the property owner and allowing the property owner to order a pick up.
- 39) Wetland, buffer, and invasive species. The ATO site contains a wetland, a wetland buffer, certain invasive species, and other environmental resources and challenges. The Town of Durham encourages Alpha Tau Omega and its members to embrace the special character of this site and to work regularly to preserve and enhance these resources, including the removal of invasive species.
- 40) Parking permits. The applicant shall not sell or otherwise provide parking permits to non-tenants unless approved by the Planning Board.
- 41) Plan changes. Changes to the approved plans may be approved as described in the Planning Board's Rules of Procedures, including minor changes which may be approved by the Town Planner.
- 42) Site maintenance. All elements of the site, including but not limited to landscaping, sidewalks, porous pavement, utilities, architectural elements, and lighting shall be maintained in perpetuity.
- 43) Execution. The project must be built and executed exactly as specified in the approved application package unless changes are approved by the Town as provided in this document.
- 44) Approval. All of the documentation submitted in the application package by the applicant and any requirements imposed by other agencies are part of this approval unless otherwise updated, revised, clarified in some manner, or superseded in full or in part. In the case of conflicting information between documents, the most recent documentation and this notice herein shall be determining.

- 45) Violations. In the event of any violations of these conditions of approval or of any pertinent local, state, or federal laws the Town reserves the right to take any appropriate action, including, but not limited to, assessing a fine, withholding the building permit, withholding the certificate of occupancy, withholding the driveway permit, revocations of permits/approvals, referring violations to other agencies, and calling of sureties.
- 46) Conditional uses. The Planning Board approved these conditional uses: a) to establish a fraternity, b) for building height to exceed 30 feet; and c) for construction within the 75 foot wetland buffer – driveways, utilities, fencing, retaining wall, sidewalks, building addition, and other accessory structures. Pursuant to Section 175-22 E of the Zoning Ordinance *the conditional use approvals will expire if a certificate of occupancy is not issued by September 12, 2022*. The Planning Board may extend this timeframe for good cause.
- 47) Variances. Variances were granted for parking in the front court and for parking within the wetland buffer.
- 48) Waivers. The following waivers were applied for and granted:
- a) for the foundation planting strip;
  - b) for a portion of the parking to be forward of the building;
  - c) for fewer than the required number of parking spaces and payment of the parking fee;
  - d) for planting trees along the road and
  - e) to reduce the width of the drive aisle from 24 to 22 feet.
  - f) A waiver is also needed to retain the existing electric line across Garrison Avenue leading to the pole at the northeast corner of the lot.

These waivers were granted upon a finding that specific circumstances relative to the site plan or the conditions of the land in the site plan indicate that the waiver will properly carry out the spirit and intent of these regulations.

- 49) Tax Implications. It is recommended that the applicant contact Jim Rice, Durham Tax Assessor, to learn about any tax implications of this project. You can contact Mr. Rice at (603) 868-8064 or [jrice@ci.durham.nh.us](mailto:jrice@ci.durham.nh.us)
- 50) University Standing. Jamie Silverstein, who oversees fraternities for UNH, stated in an email to the Town Planner on February 14, 2020: “Alpha Tau Omega is in good standing and an official recognized chapter at UNH. I had been in the original planning meetings when they were looking to build onto the remaining structure as well. Thank you for sending over these plans. I have no reservations and believe they are a wonderful addition to our community (the new version of this chapter) and will have a good oversight advisory board and housing corporation overseeing the house. I know they will have their national house corporation overseeing the management of the property and use best practice in making sure this will become a place of community and brotherhood rather than just a place for social events.”

