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Town Planner's Project Review
April 29, 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 the board hold the public hearing, discuss the project, and continue to May 13.

Please note the following:

Process

- 1) **Timeframe**. There are a number of issues to finalize, though mostly small ones, and it would be helpful to get an updated set of plans so we are not ready for final action at this meeting. We should be ready for final action at the next meeting on May 13. It would be best to finalize at that time as the following regular meeting will not be until June 10 (The workshop will be on May 27).
- 2) **Site walk**. The board is holding a site walk on the application on Wednesday, April 29 at 4:00 pm.
- 3) **Conservation Commission**. The conditional use application is being presented to the commission on April 27. I will let the board know on Tuesday what action is taken.
- 4) **Staff comments**. We have not heard concerns from the departments other than Audrey Cline working with the applicant about accessibility. We will need comments from April Talon about stormwater management, utilities, and changes to the right of way.
- 5) **Planning Board comments**. It would be helpful to go around the table and ask each board member to share their comments so the applicant has an opportunity to address any remaining concerns.
- 6) **Conditional uses**. The application will require conditional uses for: a) a fraternity; b) for building height (a height over 30 feet is allowed by conditional use) of ~34.5 feet; c) to place the building addition, utilities, driveways, retaining wall and other structures within the 75 foot wetland buffer. The building is allowed by conditional use which allows nonresidential buildings (A fraternity is an institutional use). The applicant

addressed the eight general criteria and four specific criteria for the Wetland Conservation Overlay District. ***Does the board have concerns about the conditional use proposal that the applicant should speak to now?***

- 7) Waivers. The applicant has requested the following waivers: 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; d) for trees along the road *and e) to reduce the width of the drive aisle from 24 to 22 feet. This will allow pulling the parking lot in a little more from the wetland buffer.*
- 8) Earlier review. Please see my review from April 15 for additional information. This project was presented to the Planning Board as a preliminary design review on February 12 and March 11.
- 9) Outstanding issues. The following are the outstanding issues that I see. As many as possible should be addressed prior to Planning Board action. A limited number can be addressed afterward as precedent conditions by staff provided there is not significant discretion involved. It is also acceptable for the board to approve a project and include precedent conditions that particular items be brought back to the board later to be approved by the board. It may be helpful to obtain one set of revised drawings from the applicant prior to Planning Board action tentatively planned for May 13 (early enough for staff review and submission to the board for that meeting). ***Are there any issues remaining beyond these?***

Traffic and Parking

- 10) Porous pavement. The entire parking lot is proposed to be porous pavement. A sign will need to be installed on the property about maintenance of porous pavement. A maintenance schedule will need to be set up.
- 11) Garrison Avenue. There will be a new crosswalk across Garrison Avenue and some changes in the parking spaces since the entrance to the parking lot is moving. The design engineer should coordinate with Public Works on these items and the exact design of Garrison Avenue with sloped granite curbing, drainage, the narrow planting strip, and relocation of the sidewalk.
- 12) Stop sign. Can the sign be lower than 7 feet high? The applicant will check.
- 13) Bike storage. We will need more information about bike storage, whether inside, outside, or covered including a detail of the storage structures (an inverted U-shape is acceptable)
- 14) Sidewalks. We will clarify what material will be used. Concrete is preferred.
- 15) 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? *See parking fee at the end.*

General Site Issues

- 16) Electric. The applicant will remove the existing line crossing Garrison Avenue. Everything will go off a new pole to be placed in front of the building. It will go underground from there. The design engineer will look into whether a transformer will be needed. If so it should be carefully sited and screened.
- 17) Management plan. The applicant submitted a hard copy of the lease agreement. This is probably sufficient. We need an electronic version with pertinent sections highlighted to forward to the board and Chief Kurz. It says that the premises shall remain alcohol free. Can we count on this? Should this be a condition of the site plan and conditional use approval?
- 18) Recycling. The applicant should meet with Public Works and a representative of the IWMAC, if available to develop a recycling plan.
- 19) Construction management. A sheet showing the construction schedule, locations for materials, and staging should be submitted.
- 20) Stormwater Management Plan. Town Engineer April Talon will review the plan.
- 21) Snow storage. Snow storage is shown on the plans in the wetland buffer. Is there a concern with this plan? Is there a way to mitigate the impact of snow, which can contain adverse materials, being piled near the wetland?
- 22) Dumpster. The dumpster is shown. What is the preferred screening? Vinyl, wood, chain link with slats?
- 23) House manager. The applicant should clarify if the house manager will live on site. This would affect the parking requirement.
- 24) Landscaping. Add some low evergreen shrubs (up to a height of 3-1/2 feet) at the entrance to the parking lot to buffer the view of the lot from Garrison Avenue while accommodating necessary sight lines. Sloped curbing or another method will need to be incorporated to protect three elm trees to be planted (now shown only adjacent to one elm tree).

Building

- 25) Architecture. The site is subject to the Town's Architectural Regulations. I think the plan for the addition looks good and meets the requirements with a few small adjustments. Assuming it is acceptable to the board I will offer several minor changes to the architect as a precedent condition (e.g. narrower canopy over the entrance, slightly wider corner boards, etc.). Details on the windows should be provided.
- 26) Building. As part of the formal review it will be determined whether an elevator and sprinklers will be needed.
- 27) Energy checklist. I will arrange for a meeting with the architect/applicant with the Code Administrator and a representative of the Energy Committee. The architect is completing the checklist.

- 28) Accessibility. Code Administrator Audrey Cline is discussing a few accessibility issues with the architect (both regarding the building and the site). This should be resolved prior to Planning Board action as it could affect the site plan. It would be desirable to remove the unsightly ramp in front of the building if possible. Otherwise, it should probably be painted white.
- 29) Siding. Bruce Scamman said the siding on the existing building would be removed and the new hardiboard siding would be installed on the entire building. This would be great. It should be confirmed. The new clapboards should have a reveal of 4" +/- . We should coordinate with the applicant on the color of the hardiboard and the trim. What material will be used for the trim? It would be better to do this prior to final action. What material will be used for the shutters?
- 30) Heating. How will the building be heated?

Parking fee.

See scooter parking above. Here is the language from the Zoning Ordinance. The Site Plan Regulations require 1 parking space per resident. Parking spaces are to be designed for automobiles. There is no mention of moped spaces.

175-113. Central Business District Special Conditions.

Exemptions. All proposed new development (including construction of new buildings and additions to existing buildings) may be exempt from the parking requirements for the number of spaces specified in the Site Plan Regulations within the Central Business District, provided that:

1. A one-time parking impact fee (as established in the Master Fee Schedule) is paid by the owner and/or developer for the number of spaces required less the number of on-site spaces provided.
2. The existing number of required parking spaces is not reduced by any proposed development unless approved as part of a property redevelopment plan by the Planning Board; and
3. The Planning Board waives the requirement for the number of parking spaces specified in the Site Plan Regulations, as part of the Site Plan Review based upon pertinent information provided by the applicant, Planning Department and any other interested party and an analysis of the parking demand of the use(s), parking capacity available from municipal parking and the parking capacity of other property owned by the applicant for the use(s). The parking demand of the use(s) may vary from the parking requirements specified in the Site Regulations. The waiver should be granted only if it is demonstrated that adequate parking exists and the impact on municipal parking by the proposed uses(s) will not be materially detrimental to existing uses in the CB District.