

**Technical Review Group (TRG)**  
**Tuesday, April 7, 2020**  
**Town Council Chambers**  
**NOTES OF MEETING**

**ATO Fraternity – Garrison Avenue**

TRG members present:

Michael Behrendt, Town Planner  
James Bubar, Planning Board Representative (via remote)  
Audrey Cline, Building Official (via remote)  
Dave Kurz, Police Chief  
Jessica Plante, Fire Department (via remote)  
Christine Soutter, Economic Development Director  
April Talon, Town Engineer (via remote)

Applicants present:

Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering

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Bruce Scamman presented the application. He said ATO is in good standing with the university. It is now a non-house fraternity. They are expanding the existing structure. They will use porous pavement for the parking area. They received two variances for parking and made several waiver requests. The biggest concern is for a conditional use to build in the wetland buffer. They have pushed the pavement away from the road. There is less runoff in the new design than now. They have scooter parking. They added a dumpster. There is a retaining wall with a fence to prevent students from falling over the wall. They should still have this even though there is a guardrail in front of the wall. The fence won't be chainlink.

Audrey said there is an access issue. People need to be able to get to the different levels on the inside rather than having separate accessible entrances on the outside. Michael suggested removing the existing handicap ramp in front if possible. Maybe access could be provided through the rear. Bruce said he will look at the elevations to see what can be done. There is a 9 foot difference between the finish floor level of the addition and the rear parking lot so adding a ramp there would need to be around 85 feet long to meet the maximum slope. He will ask the architects to look at this.

Christine asked about the porous pavement. Are there downsides to using this? Bruce said ten years ago there were issues. It was not that strong and would unravel with trucks. Now the asphalt is stickier. You use less salt with porous pavement. You can't use sand; that is a shortcoming. You salt it when there is ice but you get less ice than with regular pavement because the water drips through the pavement. He said porous pavement provides better treatment than a swale or detention basin because the entirety of the runoff from the pavement is treated below with a 1:1 ratio (a swale or basin has less area than the area being

treated to the ratio is less than 1:1). But you have to vacuum the porous pavement 2-4 times each year to prevent clogging. Traditional pavement also has some maintenance needs. Christine asked how this will be enforced. Bruce said there will be a maintenance plan. There may be reporting requirements like under the MS4 stormwater requirements. April echoed that comment.

Michael asked if property owners ever buy their own vacuuming equipment. Bruce said he did not know anybody with a site this size that has their own vacuum cleaner. It is easy to find contractors. You get a regular maintenance contract. There are half a dozen in the area. April asked if Bruce had contacted the UNH Stormwater Center. He said he is working with Dr. Robert Roseen (who used to be part of the stormwater center). Dr. Roseen spoke at the ZBA hearing. He will oversee the installation. Installation is the most important thing. If you over compact you can close the voids. It cannot be too cold when the pavement is installed. April asked about a sign on site about the porous pavement. Bruce said they don't have a location yet. It could be placed on the right side as you enter the parking lot but there is a tree going there.

Bruce explained the sewer. They will remove the existing line to the manhole and install two new lines – one from the existing section and one from the addition which will serve the kitchen and have a grease trap. There will be no work in the wetland.

James said this is a very thorough application. He asked about moving the fuel tank and if it will be replaced. Bruce said there will be no new tanks on the lot to his knowledge. There is a utility building at the back that will be added to the existing building but won't have an interior connection. Michael said there is no gas on Garrison Avenue but there is on Madbury Road.

James asked about planting wildflowers in the grass area within the wetland. He said they could be planted easily with a seed mix. This would be better than the existing grass. Bruce said they would look into this.

Bruce said there will be nine spaces for compact cars. They are all on the right side. He said there is no separate loading zone but they will load behind some of the parking spaces as shown on the plans. He thought this would work fine.

Dave Kurz said he submitted a memo earlier on the project. That was the design review but he does not have any other concerns. He likes the front porch but said this could be an area for drinking. Michael asked about submitting a management plan. Dave Kurz said it would be helpful to see one but it is not needed. UNH oversees fraternities and sororities effectively. They are not a problem if they are in the right places as this one is.

Jessica said she had no concerns. Bruce pointed out the existing fire hydrant in front of the building on the lot.

Michael said 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 applicant will be responsible for doing this work. He said the applicant should coordinate with Public Works on some of the details such as the sloped granite curbing, narrow grass strip, and relocated private sidewalk in front of the building. Bruce said they could keep the grass strip which would be around 3 feet wide. April said that narrow width is awkward. They will look at that and at grading and drainage.

Michael said the conditional use will be presented to the Conservation Commission on April 27. Bruce will attend that meeting.

Michael asked about the electric service. Bruce said they 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. He did not know if there will need to be a transformer for this short run to the building. He will check.

Michael told the group they could leave as he has only planning-related questions remaining. All left except for James. Michael asked if the sidewalks would be concrete. Bruce said the existing one is asphalt. Michael said concrete would be better especially for this use.

Michael asked about the stop sign being 7 feet high. Bruce thought this was required under code so you can see over another car. He will check into possibly lowering the sign

Michael asked about the height of the retaining wall. Top and bottom elevations are shown for spot grades along the wall on sheet C3. The highest end toward the street is about five feet. Michael asked about the material. Bruce said a standard neutral gray or beige that goes with the landscaping. Michael said that sounded right but Bruce should submit a physical sample or a photo showing the material and color.

Bruce said there will be around 44 residents. Michael asked about an on site manager. Bruce said there is an apartment for this person (HD on the plans). He said this might be a UNH requirement.

Michael asked about the energy checklist. Bruce had sent it to the architect. Michael said that prior to final action the checklist must be filled out and the applicant must meet with Audrey Cline and a representative of the Energy Committee.

Michael asked if there are any invasive species on site, especially in the wetlands. Bruce did not know.

Michael said a construction management plan should be submitted. Bruce said there are detailed notes in the plans about construction. Michael said a drawing should be submitted showing where materials will be stored and how the construction will be staged. (The building is vacant now.) Bruce said the plans include erosion control, a silt sock along the wetland on sheet C3. He said this is a better method than a silt fence which is often installed incorrectly. He said the porous pavement is installed at the end.

Michael asked about removing the existing vinyl siding. Bruce said he will talk with the architect. Michael said he looked a little at the siding but could not tell if the wood clapboards remain underneath. He said if they are present and in good condition it would be great to remove the siding. For the new building he said the width (“reveal”) of the clapboards should match the existing building. Michael said the new clapboards will be fiber cement which is an appropriate material.

Michael asked about the timeframe. Bruce said they want to have students move in the fall of 2021. They expect 10-15 months of construction. Michael said if they need 15 months they would need to start in May and it could take longer with the coronavirus situation. James said the applicant may need to arrange to house the students temporarily come the fall if the building is not ready.

Michael said this is on the Planning Board’s agenda on April 15. The public hearing could be April 29. Then the board meets on May 13. Given the applicant’s tight schedule it would be good if the review is conducted in only a few meetings. It helps that there was a design review plus the application was very well done. Bruce said they have worked hard to address all of the potential issues so that this might be able to move along. Michael said the biggest issue he sees is the conditional use for the wetland buffer but the applicant seems to have addressed that with the porous pavement. Bruce said there will be no wetland impacts and there will be less impervious surface than before, if you count the porous pavement as pervious. James said the application looks good at this point.

Bruce said he has tried to be helpful with the Town. He told Public Works about a culvert off site under Garrison Avenue that is in bad shape. He knows the town has had some flooding. There is a flood zone on the lot but there are not touching it.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Behrendt, Durham Town Planner/TRG Chair