

TOWN OF BELMONT

PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2021

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: September 22, 2021
TIME: 3:10 PM

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Chair; Thayer Donham; Renee Guo; Karl Haglund; Ed Starzec; Matt Lowrie

Staff: Robert Hummel, Senior Planner, Offices of Community Development

1. **Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM**

Mr. Pinkerton called the meeting to order and introduced the Planning Board members. He reviewed a summary of the items that were on the agenda. The meeting was held remotely via video conference webinar.

2. **New Cases:**

a. **CASE NO. 21-16, Design and Site Plan Review**

774A, 778, 782 & 790 Pleasant Street (LBII) Empire Management Corporation, Brian Lafferty, President

Mr. Pinkerton read the public notice.

The Applicant was requesting Design and Site Plan Review to construct a 39,000 square foot addition to the current Subaru dealership. Section 7.3.2a of the Zoning By-Laws allows the construction of any new building greater than 2,500 gross square feet by Design and Site Plan Review by the Planning Board.

Brian Lafferty, Applicant, noted that the business has grown, the retail environment had changed due to online business and most recently the pandemic. The existing space was very cramped and the Subaru Headquarters has pushed them to meet current brand standards in terms of size and facility. He noted that the plan fits well on the site and within the neighborhood. It was structured to minimize traffic off-site and to include maneuvering on-site and off Pleasant Street.

James Almonte, Landscape Architect, walked the Board through the existing conditions, existing parking, landscaping, curb cuts, size and heights of existing buildings, stormwater and drainage discharge and topography. He reviewed the details of the site plan and presented the plans for stormwater management. He described the site lighting plan and the landscaping plan. Next, he presented some renderings of the proposed building including the landscaping.

Tim Fitzroy, UDA Architects, reviewed the site circulation plan and he described the flow of the interior spaces of the building. He explained the design details of the parking structure, the city view logo pattern in the metal panels and the function of the metal panels.

Ms. Donham asked to have traffic bollards for pedestrian safety at the rear. She suggested that the Applicant talk to Flett to see if there is anything that they can do to make the visibility clearer at the exit at the south end of the site.

Mr. Pinkerton asked where the mechanical equipment would be located and Mr. Fitzroy noted that it would be out of sight. He asked if there could be a peer review in the stormwater management plan. Mr. Lafferty noted that he would be fine paying for this third-party peer review. He asked if the third-party reviewer could spend some time dealing directly with his stormwater engineer. Mr. Hummel will look into finding the third-party review engineer and to have a quote for the Applicant.

Mr. Pinkerton opened up the meeting for public comment.

Bonnie Friedman, Town Meeting Member - Precinct 3, and Community Path Committee, asked if they could describe what the rear of the property looked like for the future community path and to be able to bike to and from the site. She also wondered about solar for the cars in the future. Mr. Lafferty noted that they would be heading into the electrical vehicles market eventually.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the Applicant should look at becoming LEED certified. Mr. Lafferty noted that Subaru Headquarters would hold him to be environmentally responsible.

MOTION to continue to October 5, 2021, was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed. Vote was unanimous.

**b. CASE NO. 21-17, Special Permit
774A, 778, 782 & 790 Pleasant Street (LBII) Empire Management Corporation, Brian Lafferty, President**

Mr. Pinkerton read the public notice.

The Applicant was requesting a Sign Special Permit for three Special Permits to erect multiple wall signs, a directory sign, and to relocate the existing free-standing sign.

MOTION to continue to October 5, 2021, was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Ms. Donham. Motion passed. Vote was unanimous.

3. Continue Cases:

**a. CASE NO. 21-08 - Design and Site Plan Review
115 Mill Street (McClean Overlay District 3)– Northland Residential Corporation,
Mr. John C. Dawley, President and CEO**

Curtis Quitzau, VHB, civil engineering consultant, presented the site civil aspects (utilities and site logic) including storm water. He briefly reviewed the location of the project. He explained

that the utilities were already located under Olmstead Road and there were no capacity issues. He added that there was a sanity sewer that would need to be relocated and this would be part of this project. He reviewed the proposed roadways and sidewalks. He noted that the roads were designed to accommodate Belmont's fire trucks and they met with Belmont's Fire Chief and there were no outstanding issues with the Fire Department. He described the sidewalks, walkways and assessable ramps from the driveways to the walkways. He said that the entire site was accessible and complies with accessibility laws. The landscape island was a place to use for short term parking for Amazon deliveries, move-ins, etc. He described parking and garage access routes. He pointed out the location for the trash paddock and trash truck circulation. There was flexibility in the driveway system that they had provided for the trash truck and trash removal. Next, he moved on to discuss drainage and he noted that they were providing a conventional collection system of catch basins, manholes and underground pipes for collection. The detention and water quality treatment would meet state and local requirements. He described the influencing factors as to how the design was approached and walked the Board through the design.

Next, Mr. Quitzau reviewed some of the BSC (town's third party peer reviewer) comments and noted that many of the comments were now moot because the new soil testing upended some of the assumptions that were made on limited information at the time. Mr. Quitzau addressed the abutter's concerns regarding Upham bowl flooding. He noted that the maps were accurate and that the water flow would be maintained to Upham's bowl. There was an overall net reduction of flow to Upham's bowl and if there was a problem there, they were not contributing to it as it does not have to do with their project at the end of the day. He reviewed the drainage system and he said that his information was accurate and this addressed the public comment regarding the pipes.

Mr. Rinaldi, BSC Group, town's third party peer reviewer, noted that a lot of the original comments would be changing as they redesign the drainage system. He noted that they are heading in the right direction.

Mr. Lowrie noted that he was concerned about the flooding of the Upham Bowl and he was wondering what the problem was and maybe they should know more about it. He asked if this could be addressed with the peer review analysis and could it be better without making it a problem.

Mr. Quitzau mentioned that Upham's bowl does hold stormwater and sometimes it overflows but that is by design and it is not a problem, it does have some overflow on Olmstead Drive. It has been characterized as a problem but they do not know of any problem.

Mr. Eckert, abutter, 68 South Cottage, joined the zoom meeting. He noted that the temporary design at Upham Bowl worked until Woodlands 2 was built, then Woodlands 2 perimeter is a bowl and it creates a dam. This berm overflows down Olmstead Drive. System 22 was never

installed. This is a subset of a master plan that had a piece that was not installed and it should be looked at comprehensively.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the Zone 2 issues should be analyzed and addressed. He suggested that the Board get a list of Mr. Eckert's concerns so the Board could write an opinion addressing his final concerns.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the September 21 discussion would be to discuss landscaping, traffic plans and fire. The stormwater discussion will pick up again on October 5, 2021.

MOTION to continue to September 21, 2021 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Ms. Donham. Motion passed. The vote was unanimous.

4. Review and Approve Draft Planning Board Meeting Minutes for August 17, 2021.

Planning Board approved the August 17, 2021 meeting minutes.

Roll call:

Yes votes-

Ms. Donham

Mr. Pinkerton

Ms. Guo

Mr. Lowrie and Mr. Starzec abstained from the vote.

5. Updates on Cases and Planning Board Projects, and Committee Reports

Mr. Hummel noted that the next meeting would be for McLean and the retail marijuana facility. There were some new plans for small projects coming up.

6. Elect Officers

Mr. Pinkerton was elected to continue as Chairperson and Matt Lowrie was elected as Vice Chair. Motion passed. Vote was unanimous.

7. Adjourn 9:24 PM

The Planning Board's next scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday September 21, 2021