

Planning Commission
Minutes of September 23, 2015 Meeting

1670 Flat River Road
Coventry, RI 02816

Meeting Called to order at 7:02 pm by Chairman Russell Crossman.

Members Present: Chairman Crossman, Vice-Chairman Mr. Nunes, Secretary Mr. Flynn, Mr. Crowe, Mr. Kalunian, Mr. Mattson, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Osenkowski, and Ms. Fagan-Perry.

Members Absent: none

Also Present: Attorney Assalone, Mr. Peabody, Mr. Joyal

Mr. Crossman reviewed the exits in the room in case of an emergency.

Approval of Minutes:
August 25, 2015

Ms. Fagan-Perry made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Bouchard requested that the minutes be amended to correct a typo on page 4. A line in the second to last paragraph should read "hopes" instead of "homes". Ms. Fagan-Perry amended her motion to include this correction. Mr. Flynn seconded. All members were in favor. Motion passed.

SITEWALK

Sitewalk/Pre-Application: "**Minor Subdivision Kevin N. Gregory**"; Jamie L. Sardelli
Proposed Minor 2-Lot Subdivision
AP 103, Lot 22.1; Zone R20
Howard Avenue

Suzanne Gregory representing the applicant. Her husband, Kevin Gregory, is looking to increase the value of the property by subdividing the parcel into 2 lots. Mr. Peabody explained that a variance for frontage as well as a side line variance would be required. Mr. Crossman stated that after the site walk a recommendation to the Zoning Board could be made. Mr. Peabody agreed that would be prudent when the applicant comes back to the Planning Commission for the preliminary.

Mr. Flynn questioned if the original lot is conforming to which Mr. Peabody answered in the affirmative; however, there is a structure on the parcel which does not meet the setback requirements and a deck that may have to be taken down. Plantings such as bushes may also have to be planted to delineate the property line. Mr. Kalunian stated that any stipulations would be determined during the site walk.

Secretary Flynn scheduled a site walk for Saturday, October 3, 2015 at 9:00AM with a rain date of October 10, 2015 at 9:00AM.

NEW BUSINESS

Pre-Application: “**Dunkin Donuts**”; Dan’s Management Company
Proposed 2,200 s.f. Dunkin’ Donuts w/ 1,200 s.f. Retail Office
AP 7, Lot 16; BP
2285 New London Turnpike

Mr. Crossman and Mr. Kalunian recused themselves from this item due to conflicts stated on the recusal form. Vice-Chairman Nunes presided over the continuation of the meeting.

Attorney Brunero representing the applicant. He re-stated that the lot was originally zoned Industrial and then changed to Business Park zoning to accommodate the construction of a Coastway Bank facility. This proposed Dunkin’ Donuts would have the same access from both Gay Street and New London Turnpike. The only difference would be one combined entrance/exit instead of two entrances/exits. This newly designed entrance/exit has been widened and pushed to the Southwest side of the property. A stop sign will also be installed as well as a “right turn only” sign.

This parcel has public water and sewer access and drainage similar to what was designed in the past. The design complies with all sideline setbacks. Dumpsters will be screened in. Attorney Brunero further stated that cemetery access will be provided; the cemetery on the property will be maintained during regular mowing. Attorney Brunero also stated that the overgrown area on the lot will be cleared and a complete landscape plan will be provided.

This Dunkin’ Donuts business is currently located across the street but it has not been conducive to the original business plan due to the flow of traffic; therefore, the owner wishes to relocate. This new site has adequate parking and if the seating capacity of the building becomes overused there is an adjoining facility that can be used for future expansion.

Attorney Brunero concurred with Mr. Crowe’s suggestion to widen the entrance/exit. Mr. Flynn expressed concern about the widening of the entrance. He proposed a “pork chop” entrance/exit similarly being utilized by the neighboring Cumberland Farms. He felt that this type of design was working well. Attorney Brunero felt that it may present an issue having 2 entrances and exits. He feels that the signage should be adequate. Mr. Flynn claimed the pork chop entrances forces a motorist to turn right. Ms. Fagan-Perry clarified that there would be “no left turn” signage posted.

Attorney Brunero said that the normal flow of traffic comes in from West Warwick and Arnold Road on its way to access the on-ramp to I-95. However, if the signage becomes a problem in the future, a pork chop exit can be installed.

Mr. Nunes agreed with Mr. Flynn. He, too, would like to see a pork chop design claiming that no one reads signs anymore and there should be enough room to fit the pork chop island into the design. Mr. Bouchard suggested that some of the parking space could be utilized to adjust the design to accommodate a pork chop. Attorney Brunero pointed out that Cumberland Farms installed a rumble strip to control traffic flow. Mr. Nunes felt that a rumble strip was only necessary for trucks.

Mr. Joyal informed the Planning Commission that when the Cumberland Farms was built, money was allocated to the Town to rehabilitate Gay Street. Attorney Brunero said his client was also willing to repave an area of Gay Street. Mr. Crowe felt that this will be necessary as Gay Street will be utilized more in order to access the Dunkin' Donuts facility when it is constructed. Utilization of Gay Street will also relieve congestion at the traffic light enabling traffic to flow more freely.

Mr. Crowe questioned the measurement of Gay Street. Mr. Peabody stated that sections of the road measured 24 feet with some sections wider. The narrowest section of 19 feet was widened by Cumberland Farms during construction. Ms. Fagan-Perry questioned if the money allocated to rehab Gay Street was still available. Mr. Peabody answered that the money was still available for use. Mr. Crowe reiterated his concern that the paving be done correctly as Gay Street will be well-traveled.

Attorney Brunero asked the Planning Commission whether they would prefer to see landscaping or paving at the edge of the property or some sort of combination. Ms. Fagan-Perry said she would prefer paving. Mr. Crowe said he wouldn't mind landscaping as long as the paving on Gay Street was uniform and clearly striped for traffic control. Attorney Brunero said the legal width of the road would have to be researched. Ms. Fagan-Perry recollected that part of the land was previously zoned Industrial and the other part was zoned Residential. Attorney Brunero said the road was originally measured as "two rods" – a "rod" equaling 16.5 feet – a common term used in the past.

Mr. Osenkowski questioned if there was access designed from the Dunkin' Donuts to the neighboring Cumberland Farms. Attorney Brunero said there was shrubs and grass connecting the two properties. He was not sure if additional shrubbery or a fence was being considered. Mr. Osenkowski preferred to not see a fence. Mr. Nunes was in agreement. It was agreed to design a continuous landscape.

Mr. Bouchard then suggested that Attorney Brunero's client touch base with Charlie Vacca of the Historical Society in regards to cleaning the cemetery located on the property. Mr. Nunes asked if there was a fence surrounding the burial site. Attorney Brunero said there was already fencing in place and it was in fairly good condition and his client had every intention of protecting the integrity of the site.

Mr. Nunes stated that this project was able to move forward. Attorney Brunero said that he would be back in October for Master Plan review.

Chairman Crossman then resumed the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Planning Commission Issues of Interest

None

Public Works Director

None

Planning Director Report

None

Public Comment

None

A motion was then made by Mr. Osenkowski to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mattson seconded. All members in favor. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Minutes prepared by Susan Volpe