

City of Keene
New Hampshire

MINOR PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 6, 2024

10:00 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

Members Present:

Jesse Rounds, Chair
Med Kopczynski, Vice Chair
Don Lussier
Mike Hagan
Rick Wood

Other Staff Present:

Megan Fortson, Planning Technician
Yelma Desseta, Civil Engineer

1) Call to Order - Roll Call

Chair Rounds called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Minutes of the Previous Meeting - May 2, 2024

Mr. Lussier made a motion to accept the May 2, 2024 meeting minutes of the Minor Project Review Committee Pre-Submission Meeting. Mr. Hagan seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Lussier made a motion to accept the Minor Project Review Committee meeting minutes of May 2, 2024. Mr. Kopczynski seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

3) Final Vote on Conditional Approvals

Ms. Fortson stated that there are no conditional approvals in need of a final vote today.

4) Hearings

- A) SPR-644, Modification #2 – Site Plan – Parking Lot Expansion & Site Modifications, 426-428 Winchester St - Applicant Brickstone Land Use Consultants, on behalf of owner TBK Realty Inc, proposes the expansion of the existing parking lot and associated site modifications on the property at 426-428 Winchester St (TMP #115-002-000). The parcel is 2.59 ac and is located in the Commerce Limited District.**

Ms. Fortson stated that the applicant has requested exemptions from submitting elevations, a traffic analysis, soil analysis, historic evaluation, screening analysis, and architectural and visual

appearance analysis. She continued that staff have determined that the requested exemptions would have no bearing on the merits of the application and recommend that the MPRC accept the application as complete.

Mr. Hagan made a motion to accept the application as complete. Mr. Lussier seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Jim Phippard of Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC, stated that he is here on behalf of TBK Realty. He continued that they own the subject parcel, which is located on lower Winchester St. It is a 2.59-acre lot, zoned Commerce Limited. The buildings exist on the property. There is shared access with the Fairfield auto dealerships and a property to the north; he forgets what the uses on these sites are. Existing parking is located along the south side of the front building at 426-428 Winchester St. and there is also an existing paved parking lot to the rear of this building. The building on the rear of the lot is occupied by a fitness center, with existing parking along its south side.

Mr. Phippard stated that the proposal is to add parking spaces, primarily for the use of the rear building. Now that they are fully occupied, they need more parking. The plan is to add parking with access from the south via Cornwall Dr. It will provide 23 additional parking spaces. They are also reclaiming a parking space that used to be a handicapped space. The pavement markings wore away and you cannot really tell it was there, except by the sign on the wall. They will end up with 24 additional parking spaces for the business's use, bringing the on-site total to 96 parking spaces.

Mr. Phippard continued that they propose adding trees along the west side of the new parking area, which will provide a limited amount of screening and some shade. The three trees are required because of the additional 24 spaces. They added handicapped parking on the east end of the parking area with an accessible route to the building's main entrance. The old handicapped parking space did not meet the accessible route requirements, so it was good to eliminate it. It was a little too steep.

Mr. Phippard showed the grassy area they are adding pavement to. He continued that there will be additional runoff created, but it is still within the acceptable guidelines. Lot coverage will go to 65%, which is less than what this district permits. They provided a drainage report, prepared by SVE Associates, which calls for adding a new drain manhole with a 24" pipe that connects back to an existing drain manhole. The parking lot drains to the west into that existing manhole and will then flow into the 24" pipe, which has a solid end and a 4" orifice to allow water to discharge. Thus, they are providing storage for the additional runoff under the parking lot that drains slowly into the existing storm drain system that then passes into the tax ditch system to the east of the property. The drainage report indicates that the amounts of runoff do not exceed the acceptable limits of a 25-year storm.

Mr. Phippard stated that they propose adding four pole lights with full cut-off LED fixtures that will be mounted at a height of 20' poles. He continued that they provide an average of just over two footcandles of light within the parking area. The uniformity ratio is 2.58 footcandles (fc), so they are well within the guidelines required in the Planning Board Regulations.

Mr. Phippard continued that other than the three trees they are adding, they are not providing any additional screening of the parking area, because they do not feel it is necessary. It is screened from the public right-of-way, Winchester St., by the front building. It is located to the side of the rear building, and this is not a City street, so they feel they are in compliance with the screening requirements.

Mr. Phippard continued that they will plow snow to the edges of the parking area. Excess snow will be removed from the site. That is the current practice and it will continue. City water and City sewer exist at the rear building, and this (parking expansion) has no effect on that. The property is located within the 100-year floodplain. The buildings are elevated, not too low for the flood elevation. They are re-grading the area, essentially lowering it a foot. That provides compensatory storage on site, even though they are hauling fill back in. There will be no loss of flood storage. They will go through the documentation as is required in the flood district. SVE Associates will certify that there is no loss of flood storage.

Mr. Lussier asked if Mr. Phippard could confirm that the proposed drainage manhole is within the applicant's property limits, not within the City's easement. Mr. Phippard replied that it is on the applicant's lot entirely. Mr. Lussier asked, regarding the final connection into the City's storm drain, if that is an existing City manhole. Mr. Phippard replied that it is an existing storm drain, and the applicant is just providing a connection into that pipe. Mr. Lussier asked if it is a blind connection. Mr. Phippard replied yes, it is a "Y" connector at the end of the line with a 4" line going into a 12" line.

Mr. Lussier stated that he needs something clarified for the record. He continued that the drainage report on page 21 of 50 in the agenda packet says (they propose) "*A 24" HDPE storm drainpipe with end cap and 4" orifice,*" but in the plans and in the details they show that the last section of pipe from the applicant's manhole to the City's "Y" is proposed as a 4" pipe. That is not an end cap and an orifice; it is a 4" pipe. Mr. Phippard replied that he agrees, and that is an oversight. Mr. Lussier asked what they are actually proposing. Mr. Phippard replied a 4" outlet pipe. He continued that it is shown on the detail. Mr. Lussier asked if what is shown on the details is correct. Mr. Phippard replied yes. Mr. Lussier replied that he thinks that is fine. He continued that he and Mr. Phippard both know that by October, that will be blocked.

It will be a "maintenance nightmare" for the owner. He asked if Mr. Phippard agrees. Mr. Phippard replied that he agrees that it is a maintenance issue. He continued that he hopes they have enough storage in (this) pipe and it can collect sediment in the large pipe, not the 4" pipe. Mr. Lussier replied that he is more worried about leaves. He continued that he thinks the applicant will come to regret that 4" pipe. Nonetheless, he will recommend a condition precedent

that the owner acknowledge, in a letter to the City of Keene, that that drainage system, including the 4” pipe and connection to the City’s main, is not to be maintained by the City. That will be the owner’s responsibility. He wants that documented for posterity, because the City will be getting calls about these catch basins backing up and not taking water within the next couple years.

Mr. Lussier asked if the applicant would be open to adding a manhole to where it actually connects, just for maintenance access. Mr. Phippard replied that since the storm drain is on this property, an idea is to relocate the drain manhole over the line. Mr. Lussier replied no, he does not want there to be any confusion about that being part of the City’s system. He continued that he will not tell the applicant they need to do a drain manhole there, but he encourages them to think about it, for the applicant’s own maintenance access. Mr. Phippard replied that that would be much more effective.

Mr. Lussier asked if there is curbing on the west side of the parking lot. Mr. Phippard replied yes.

Chair Rounds asked if there were further comments or questions. He continued that he remembers an earlier version of this had some lighting trespass, but it looks like that has been dealt with, which he appreciates. He did not look into the parking lot too much. He asked if Mr. Hagan had any Zoning concerns about the parking.

Mr. Hagan replied that they reviewed this at the pre-submission meeting prior to the meeting. He continued that the applicant meets the required setbacks and lot coverage requirements.

Ms. Fortson stated that Mr. Hagan had expressed concern about the floodplain development permit. She asked if he wants to add that as a condition as well. Mr. Hagan replied that he thinks, given Mr. Phippard’s testimony, that the applicant understands the requirements for that. Mr. Phippard agreed. Mr. Hagan stated that he does not think they need to make it a condition, but prior to any work starting, the submittal and approval of a Floodplain Development Permit will be required.

Mr. Lussier made a motion that the Minor Project Review Committee approve SPR-644, Modification #2 as shown on the plan set identified as “New Parking Lot, 426-428 Winchester St., Keene, NH” prepared by Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC, at varying scales on October 25, 2023 and last revised on May 17, 2024, with the following conditions precedent prior to the final approval and signature on the plan set by the Minor Project Review Committee Chair:

- 1) Submittal of an updated narrative, note sheet, and proposed condition plans, to indicate the correct number of proposed parking spaces.
- 2) Owner’s signature appears on the title page and proposed conditions plan.
- 3) Submittal of five (5) paper copies and a digital copy of the final plan set.

- 4) Submittal of a security in an amount and form acceptable to the Community Development Director and City Engineer to cover the cost of landscaping and sediment erosion control measures.
- 5) Submittal of an updated drainage report, clarifying the intent of the 4” orifice connection to City drainage system, in a form acceptable to the Public Works Director.
- 6) Owner’s submittal of a letter acknowledging that the City will not be responsible for any portion of the on-site drainage, including the 4” drain line, up to and including connection to the City’s storm drainage system, in a form acceptable to the Public Works Director.

Mr. Wood seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

- 5) **Changes to Minor Project Review Committee Application Fee Schedule: The City of Keene Community Development Department proposes to amend sections of Article 25, “Application Procedures” of the Land Development Code and Chapter 100 of Appendix B of the City Code of Ordinances to change the certified mailing requirement to a “Certificate of Mailing.”**

Chair Rounds stated that after further reading of the Land Development Code (LDC), he concluded that this agenda item is not necessary and they can probably skip it. Ms. Fortson replied that is correct, this agenda item does not need to be voted on. She continued that a section in Article 25 gives the City Council the authority to adopt the fee schedules for boards. Thus, staff did not actually need to have the fee schedule updates go through each of the boards that will be impacted. It will just be written into an ordinance and then go through the normal ordinance process, for review and adoption by the City Council.

Mr. Lussier asked if the boards should weigh in and give the City Council a recommendation regarding changes to the fee schedule. Chair Rounds replied that staff will definitely inform the boards about fee changes, and they could discuss it and offer comment, but the LDC does not require it. Brief discussion ensued.

- 6) **Staff Updates**

Chair Rounds asked if there were any staff updates. Ms. Fortson replied no.

- 7) **New Business**

Mr. Lussier stated that with him today is Yelma Desseta, Civil Engineer. He continued that he himself is currently here at the MPRC as the Public Works Director’s designee. Given that Mr. Lussier has been promoted to the Public Works Director, Mr. Desseta will be the new Public Works designee at these meetings. MPRC members welcomed Mr. Desseta.

- 8) **Upcoming Dates of Interest**

June - 2nd Monthly MPRC Meeting – June 20, 2024 at 10:00 am (*if needed*)

July - Pre-submission Meeting – July 3, 2024 at 9:00 am

July - 1st Monthly MPRC Meeting – July 3, 2024 at 10:00 am

July – 2nd Monthly MPRC Meeting – July 18, 2024 at 10:00 am (*if needed*)

Ms. Fortson stated that this is Mr. Kopczynski's last MPRC meeting before his retirement. MPRC members thanked Mr. Kopczynski for all of his work and expressed appreciation for him. Ms. Fortson stated that at the next MPRC meeting, they will need to elect a new vice chair.

9) Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Rounds adjourned the meeting at 10:27 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Megan Fortson, Planning Technician