



City of Westfield

PLANNING BOARD

William Carellas, Chair
Cheryl Crowe, Vice Chair
Robert Goyette
Jane Magarian
Philip McEwan
Raymond St. Hilaire
John Bowen
Bernard Puza, Associate
Richard Salois, Associate

May 3, 2022
City Council Chambers

PB MEMBER PARTICIPANTS
 MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF

William Carellas, Chair
 Cheryl Crowe, Vice-Chair
 Robert Goyette, Jr.
 Jane Magarian
 Philip McEwan
 Raymond St. Hilaire
 John Bowen
 Bernard Puza (Associate)
 Richard Salois (Associate)

Jay Vinskey, Principal Planner
 Christine Fedora, Secretary

Chair Carellas called the meeting to order at 7:00.

A. Public Participation (on any matter not subject to a public hearing)

Kaily Hepburn - 64 Arms Circle - West Springfield, MA 01085 - she would like to do cannabis delivery in Westfield. The facility would be located on 1 Arch Road. She was before the Board looking for input/questions from the Board before she moves forward. She further informed the Board she held an outreach meeting with the neighborhood and presented her business plan and operations information. She also added a secured van will be picking up and delivering. She provided a handout to the City Planner.

B. Review and approval of previous meeting minutes 4-5-22 and 4-19-22.

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Bowen to approve the 4-5-22 and 4-19-22 minutes. All in favor.

C. Review of plans not requiring approval under Subdivision Control Law- None

D. Public Hearings (and possible deliberation and decision)

- Special Permit/Site Plan/Stormwater Permit - Self-storage facility - at North Rd. (Parcel 70R-8)

Presenting the application to the Board was Rebecca Li of R. Levesque Associates. Chair Carellas informed the applicant there are only 6 members present tonight, for this application 5 members would have to approve, though the Board might utilize the Mullin Rule. He further stated he will not be at the next regularly scheduled meeting (May 17). The applicant wished to proceed with the application.

Ms. Li explained the plan. This is a proposed self-storage facility to be located at 0 Southampton Road. It will consist of 4 buildings, 2 of the buildings will be interior climate controlled, and the access area will be controlled by an electronic security gate. The site will be accessed with a one way directional and exit controlled by a security gate. Parking will be on the north side and the spaces will be located in the southwest corner. There will be a building fire sprinkler system. They have also filed a N.O.I. with the Conservation Commission. The site has high topo points towards the road and slopes toward detention basins. There is also a proposed subsurface network with deep sump catch basins that run to a water quality unit to a detention basin. The property is zoned Business B, they are applying for a special permit for the self-storage use. They have the required number of parking spaces, they are trying to stay out of the 50 foot wetland buffer. She further pointed out they have wooden guard rail system to protect people from going over the slope and bollards on the corner of buildings.

Member Crowe voiced concerns regarding Arm Brook, wetlands and where the building would be located. Mr. Levesque informed her Arm Brook is an intermittent stream and proceeded to show the area it runs through. He further noted Mr. Geeleher has 2 sites within this property and proceeded to identify the other property he owns. Member Crowe asked how many feet between the proposed storage area to where the stream goes. Mr. Levesque indicated it was probably 200 feet from the stream.

Member Salois asked if it is outside the 50 foot wetlands but inside the 100 foot? Mr. Levesque informed him he was correct.

Ms. Li addressed the comments received from the City Planner.

1. GIS needs to be updated to reflect current property. Agreed
2. The intention is to have the facility accessible 24 hours but if the Board has objections they are willing to revisit.
3. There will be a gate system that will be electronically powered with a key pad and transponder as well.
4. Provisions for both fire and police for access.
5. The initial gate has been pushed back to accommodate the planner's comment regarding the limited vehicle stacking, to now provide 50'.
6. Photos were submitted of the typical façade of the building.
7. There will be one-way traffic throughout the travel lanes and in the middle of the island it will be 2 way traffic.

8. The drive isles are 23.5 feet which are wide enough to allow traffic to pass by stopped vehicles in front of units, there is also adequate space if someone wanted to pull up beyond their unit.

9. Protective bollards and mirrors have been incorporated into the drawings.

10. Guard rails have been added to the steep slope in the southeast corner.

11. The client will keep and maintain the border line of the buffer zones.

12. There is supplemental site lighting at the access area, will add additional lighting if deemed necessary, there are long path lights around facility currently.

13. Will adhere to Stormwater best management.

14. They spoke with Mark Cressotti (City engineer) he has no additional stormwater concerns at this time.

15. Spoke with Ed Boucher (water) notifying approved for fire service and domestic water as well, wants more information time line and schedule.

Member McEwan inquired about the storage units; would they be used for personal belongings? Yes. Member McEwan asked how the large buildings would be accessed. Mr. Geeleher explained there will be hallways that they will be able to walk in. Member McEwan further asked if they have an interior unit will they be able to access it during the middle of the night. Mr. Geeleher noted he is planning 24 hour access. There will be by a key fab which will allow them to get in, there will also be outdoor space that will have a lock on it. He further noted he would be amendable to looking at different hours.

Member Salois voiced his concerns the fact the drainage will go into the wetlands, the wetlands are into the recharge area for the aquifer, he felt its' awful close to the recharge area and it goes downhill. Mr. Levesque noted that is under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission, he has to meet the Planning Board's standards as well as meeting the DEP standards for Stormwater control, match post and pre development, can't send more runoff to wetlands.

Public question, in favor, opposed?

Dave Dalzovo - 572 North Road - Inquired if the Conservation Commission had walked the property yet? Chair Carellas informed him he did not know. Mr. Dalzovo further noted there has been problems with beavers in those areas, water comes to his property. He also voiced concerns regarding the climate control equipment and the noise that would be generated by them.

Joshua Ouillette - 31 Meadowbrook Ln. - Inquired when this is going forward if the master plan is not completed? Chair Carellas stated it is currently allowed in BB district with a special permit, the master plan is moving forward separately. Mr. Ouillette felt this a threat to the ecosystem. How can you be sure hazardous material is not stored there? How can you be sure they won't be careless? Other concerns Mr. Ouillette asked about included light pollution, game trails running along Arm Brook; there are black bears, bees, wildlife. Why is the north

side being burdened by this? Mr. Ouillette then read from "The Lorax" by Theodor Seuss Geisel.

Maryann Babinski - 114 Roger Avenue - Asked if there is security in the building? Is it open 24 hours? Are there security cameras that would be capturing what goes on when no one is there? She further added that the Conservation Commission has kept their meeting open to do site visit, she was hoping that the Board would keep this hearing based on the comments heard today. She further voiced her concerns that this is an important area, she felt there is more development on the north side than there needs to be. She voiced concerns that development seems to be putting natural resources, the aquifer at risk. Use regulations should apply to entirety of property when a portion is in the limits of water resource (aquifer) district. She further stated that aquifer regulations prohibit self-storage facilities. She stressed the importance of keeping the meeting open.

Joan Correll - 126 Western Circle - Her family lived up there for over 100 years. Informed the Board there previously was a self-storage facility application that was denied because of the possibly of toxic matters being stored in the containers. She noted the north side is one of the welcoming ways to the City she felt it should be kept rural in character. She asked the Board to keep the "big picture" in mind.

Maryann Babinski - Mentioned the Dion Label Company and the White Oak School stating there are intermittent well areas, she felt the Board needs to pay close attention to these as they are at risk for contamination.

Mr. Levesque explained that a Master Plan is a visionary document, often times changes are made to the zoning but sometimes not, and sometimes these changes are inspired by the Master Plan. The zoning is the gold standard as to what can be done in a district. He then explained that a Special Permit isn't saying its special, its use requires a special look at it. Planning Board and the Council decide if something should be looked at more closely that is why it's a special permit and not a by right use. They have to meet the standards for a special permit.

Mr. Levesque addressed concerns.

- There is a plan for light pollution, the light is required not to spill over, measure foot candles from all fixtures.
- There is a vegetated buffer around the perimeter of the property, those areas will maintain vegetation.
- The game trail along Arm Brook to west will exist that is why 100 foot upland review area and have a new ordinance, the City has just created a by law that will keep 50 feet away from wetlands.
- Intermittent streams are monitored, a watershed analysis is done, look at USGS Maps, There is a definite definition they have to follow, performance standards have to be approved.
- Beaver dams can be addressed by getting a permit from the Health Department and Conservation has a permitting process as well.
- There will be another meeting for the Conservation Commission.

- They are also required to meet sanitary Stormwater standards, the buildings don't have floor drains, there is a drainage system with 2 safeguards.

Member Goyette asked if there would be lease agreements that state there will be no hazardous materials? Mr. Levesque replied absolutely. Chair Carellas asked how this would be enforced? Mr. Lévesque noted they are currently working with a company that does these types of things and will get information from the facility that do these types of things.

Member Goyette asked if this is something that could be conditioned? Mr. Levesque stated he could give a list prior. Chair Carellas asked if they would be clear cutting the trees within the limit of the 50 plus feet.

Member Bowen inquired as to where the heating devices would be located? Mr. Geeleher stated they are currently working on that and they would like to have it finalized shortly, they are thinking of putting some on the back of units not on the roofs to minimize any noise.

Jill Dalzovo - 572 North Road - Asked if there would be a sign? lighted? There might be a small sign on North Road, there is an easement that runs through the left of Cumberland Farms that might be where another sign will go. Planner Vinsky stated that signs can't be off the premises (off the property). He further noted the Board may want more detail about the sign design.

Mr. Levesque added there are no conservation problems he said he is comfortable moving ahead if the Board wants to. Chair Carellas noted the Board does not have definitive building plans or the placement of the heating and humidity devices.

Member Crowe revisited the hours of operation. Member Salois felt being in a residential area 24 hours might be inappropriate. Member Crowe also stated she would like to see what Conservation has to say with Arm Brook and wetlands being on both sides. Member Salois said he would like to continue to the first week in June to give time for conservation to sign off. Member Salois MOTIONED to continue to the first week in June.

Mr. Levesque informed the Board they have a meeting with conservation next week, they have a file number getting the answers from Conservation should be easy to do.

Member McEwan stated he also has a problem with 24 hour operations. Mr. Geeleher said he is trying meet the wants and needs of the industrial business and residential on both sides; if had to change to restrict access from 12 a.m. to 5 a.m. that would be controlled by the main gate. Member McEwan noted he has concerns with not having staff there all of the time. Mr. Geeleher said there will not be office people per say, there will be someone daily doing maintenance work, renting out containers and keeping an eye on the facility. Plans for dumpster? No dumpsters, no trash facilities.

Member Crowe asked where the maintenance person would be located? Mr. Geeleher stated it would be located in place of one of the units, typical a janitor's closet.

Chair Carellas reviewed the information they would like for their next meeting: Additional information on the signage, Lighting, Conservation issue

Member Bowne asked if there was a business study that says another storage facility is needed in Westfield. Mr. Leveque replied yes, a climate controlled one.

Chair Carellas stated he would not be at the next meeting, but felt this is not a bad use as far as being a traffic generator as long as the applicant takes care of the conservation issues and does the right thing. He felt this would be good if the applicant preserves the wildlife and does what he's supposed to do.

Member Bowen also noted he would not be here for the next (May 17) meeting. Member Goyette seconded the earlier motion by Member Salois to continue to June 7th. All in favor.

E. Other business

- Marijuana Cultivation limits

Member Salois voiced his concerns regarding potential odor from these operations, mentioning the problems that Holyoke has been having. He was wondering if this is something the city should look at, possibly limiting the number of them like retail; he thought Westfield had permitted six of these. He further noted he is not in favor of delivery services. He felt the number of grow houses could possibly be limited to a percentage of retail or some type of calculation.

Chair Carellas said there could be farms in Westfield that produce odors, how can we control one type of a farm and not others? But he felt this is something that should be looked at.

Members Bowen and Crowe inquired as to what authority this would be done by? Member Salois felt that an ordinance would have to be written to fit with zoning ordinance. Planner Vinskey stated there is nothing in the zoning ordinance that limits retailers, if it is anywhere it would be in the general ordinance (where the retail; cap is codified).

Chair Carellas noted he would like to know where legal stands on this. Planner Vinskey also added another option would be to ask the Mayor not to entertain host community agreements going forward, since those are more discretionary.

The Board felt it did not have specific authority to enact a cap, but asked that Planner Vinskey communicate to the Mayor and Council if Westfield can, should or would limit these facilities somehow, for their further study/consideration. The Board did not take a specific position on support of a cap or not.

Member Crowe stated she watched the community outreach video of the woman who spoke earlier regarding the delivery of cannabis. Vinskey to forward to members the materials she had provided at public participation.

F. Announcements

- Master Plan Update

Member Salois stated the Master Plan committee has its first meeting on Thursday with the consultant. All the members are very interested in making it work and they are excited to be working on it; if Board members have issues to highlight, let Mr. Vinskey know.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05.