



PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY • CITY OF NORTHAMPTON

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The Northampton Planning Board

Minutes of Meeting

June 9, 2016

City of Northampton Council Chambers, 210 Main St., Northampton, MA

Members Present:		Time
R	Chair, Debin Bruce	
R	Vice Chair, John Lutz	
R	Ann DeWitt Brooks	
	William Grinnell	
R	Karla Youngblood	
	Mark Sullivan	
	Theresa "Tess" Poe	
R	Dan Felten, Associate Member	
R	Alan Verson, Associate Member	

Staff:

	Planning Director, Wayne Feiden	
R	Senior Planner, Carolyn Misch	

7:00 PM Debin Bruce opened the public meeting at 7:00 PM with an invitation for public comment. There was none.

7:00 PM Debin Bruce noted the process for the continuation and asked staff to reiterate permit request. Staff described permit

Mike Sidall , representing owner, described process working with neighborhood from last year to this point. He described the conditions that required improvements to the street, sidewalk panels, granite curb. He described the history of trying to find users that fit the campus and neighborhood.

Sidall emphasized that they as the owners have an interest in preserving these building as well as anyone in the City and he addressed comments from previous hearing.

Tom Douglas, architect for the applicant, addressed the question about the additions and showed the area with the stairwell and ramp inside the addition to access the first floor. He clarified the second floor projections and roof projections and showed highlighted areas where questions had been raised about the type of projection/expansion.

Douglas went on to described more detail of the light fixture showing that the source of light is tucked high in shade. Lower footcandles proposed than allowed.

Described floodlights on site that will be removed. (on screen)



Karla Youngblood asked about shield on existing driveway.

Alan Verson asked about building plan and addition.

Douglass showed the elevation of the proposed modification to the rear 1960's addition, detailing the foundation changes.

Rob LeVesque, landscape architect and site designer, presented changes related to comments from the May 26 hearing. He described the landscape plan and the request for wider radii for driveway with vertical granite curbing.

He reviewed building lighting, new vegetation, and removable bollards as well as clarifying that the minimum open space requirement for all the parcels would be met even with Lot 4 divided from the main campus.

LeVesque then reviewed the groundwater and surface water calculations and stormwater standards as well as plans for addressing impacts during construction and demolition.

Alan Verson asked about the list of trees to be removed and asked what had changed from previously proposed.

LeVesque noted increase in number of trees identified to be removed.

The Board discussed the need for screening of the power plant parking lot.

Mario Grosso, 84 Round Hill Rd asked about the sewer easement with Clarke and indicated that nothing has been proposed to change that. He asked about the Beech Tree and the proposed use for the Skinner building and associated parking lot.

Tom Douglass confirmed that Skinner was to be used and renovated as is.

Grosso asked if the tree in parking lot could be saved?

Joachim Stieber, 258 Crescent St, asked about the 90 new parking spaces and traffic impacts for Gawith and whether other existing parking areas could be used.

John McLaughlin, representing abutter Nelson argued that the modifications to the building could not be approved under the ordinance because it doesn't explicitly state that the walls can be taken down to the foundation.

Andy Bachelor, 37 Henshaw, stated his concern about the 2012 plan being dismantled bit by bit. Changes to overall site plan.

Fraser Beede 83 Round Hill Rd noted her dissatisfaction that plans weren't made available sooner for review and indicated that she felt more screening was necessary along Round Hill Road. She also raised a concern about the proposed sign on the stone wall stating that it was more appropriate to have one sign at the driveway entrance.

Michael Horan, 127 Round Hill Rd. voiced his interest in seeing the gym building removed and hoped the Board would consider the plans fairly.

Janet Gross, 38 Round Hill Rd read a portion of a statement from Sarah Metcalf, Bancroft resident (letter available in the record). Gross raised issue of lights on the private driveway and interest in having a buffer on her side of the project.

Buck Deggendorf , 88 Round Hill showed his alternative layout for converting the building footprint to greenspace and eliminating interior greenspace in order to accommodate parking.

James McDonald 230 Crescent St, asked for clarification about the future of the existing service driveway to Bancroft. He indicated that he felt the changes to the landscaping were better and wanted to ensure a continuous screen of the power plant parking lot.

LeVesque clarified the plans for the hillside on the western portion of the property.

Raphael Atlas 70 Hillside reiterated his concern about the creation of a large parking lot and the elimination of cross access (through the site) by neighborhood residents. He suggested arborvitae instead for a screen.

Ann Deggendorf 88 Round Hill Rd. read a statement about trees and tax credits. She voiced a concern about the poor condition of the trees and maintenance of the landscaping in general.

Arvid Nelson, 250 Crescent Street, provided his rationale for hiring a lawyer.

James Winston, 234 Crescent Street stated he was still concerned about runoff.

Andrea Reber, 65 Franklin St, voiced her concern about commercial uses on top of hill and the increase in traffic.

Sarah Winston, 234 Crescent, asked about the impact on the purported underground springs if lot 4 is developed.

Alan Verson asked whether moving the parking lot back was feasible.

LeVesque stated that the plan was to keep the parking lot within the existing footprint of gyms/pool building. Moving the lot to a previously undisturbed area of the campus would require removal of existing trees and lawn area.

John Lutz asked about traffic counts from the previously approved permit.

Karla Youngblood asked about sign on wall and if it was necessary.

Jim Hebert, applicant, indicated there was no need for wall sign.

Ann DeWitt Brooks asked about playground area and whether it would be removed.

LeVesque said it would be removed.

Debin Bruce asked about the second (proposed) curb cut width.

Karla Youngblood stated her concern about bollards and the logistics of opening and closing them.

Jim Hebert, applicant/owner, stated that the fire chief thought it would be beneficial for emergency access to Coolidge.

The Board discussed the language in the ordinance allowing for non-residential uses in historic buildings and whether that would include expansion or reconstruction.

Alan Verson voiced his opinion that the ordinance is poorly drafted but he indicated he felt that the proposal is still consistent with the ordinance.

The Board discussed the uses allowed in the ordinance, parking lot size and number of spaces.

Karla Youngblood noted that lighting at 14' high is better to minimize the number of poles needed.

The Board discussed options for imposing a curfew for the site lights and whether it made a difference if the lots were primarily for commercial vs. residential use.

The Board discussed possible permit conditions.

Possible conditions:

1. Prior to Building Permit (BP) the applicant shall submit a report from a certified arborist showing the tree protection measures required for the trees on site that are shown to be saved. Methods for protection shall be installed prior to site work.
2. Prior to BP, the applicant shall present a plan for approval by staff showing compliance with tree replacement either on site or through plantings on public right of ways.
3. Prior to any site work or demolition, all construction controls as submitted shall be in place.
4. Parking lot lights for parking lot (except PowerPlant lot) shall be turned off at 9PM .
5. Building lights off at 9 PM except motion sensor for power plant and buildings)
6. Lamp posts on southerly drive should be disabled.
7. Prior to issuance of final certificate of occupancy, the applicant must submit an as-built by a lighting engineer to show the site lights are in compliance with the standards in the with the plan and that the lights do not exceed 3000K.
8. The southerly driveway access shall be restricted by installation of locked, removable bollards to limit use to: 1) access for emergency vehicles, 2) egress only of trailer trucks exiting delivery. 3) delivery of materials for Coolidge and the abutting portion of the property on the southerly edge of the property. All other users, including landscape maintenance vehicles shall use the main entrance drive.
9. The new curb shall not exceed 24' at the property line. Could be slant base curb
10. Driveway drainage shall not run into the road
11. The existing manhole within the city layout should be removed and abandoned in accordance with City standards.
12. The existing drain line to Bancroft shall be abandoned in accordance with Department of Public Works standards.
13. All curbing in right-of-way shall be granite.

14. All water line connections shall be made in accordance with Department of Public Works standards.
15. All lines and catch basins no longer intended for use shall be abandoned in accordance with City Standards.
16. Any trees over 20" diameter breast height taken down on Lot #4 for the development of a residence shall be replaced in accordance with the City's tree replacement ordinance 350-12.3. This condition and the tree inventory layer shall be noted on the ANR plan submitted for Lot 4.
17. If Lot 4 is further divided through ANR process, the existing driveway shall be used as a shared driveway to serve any/all lots in this location.
18. Screening shall be at least 3' above the parking lot on power plan (spruce) upon planting.
19. Evergreen screen that provides screening ground up
20. One sign proposed at driveway entrance only.

Upon motion by Karla Youngblood and second by John Lutz, the Board voted unanimously to close the hearing.

Upon motion by John Lutz and second by Dan Felten, the Board voted unanimously to approve the site plan amendment with conditions discussed.

Staff presented the ANR for Oak St/Warren St. The Board voted unanimously to have staff endorse the plan.

10 PM, Adjourn.

