



BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 7:00 pm

Bellingham Municipal Center

Arcand Meeting Room and Via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

William F. O'Connell, Jr.	Chairman
Brian T. Salisbury	Vice Chairman
Philip M. Devine	Member
Dennis J. Trebino	Member
Nick Mobilia	Member
Robert Lussier	Alternate Member

ADDITIONAL OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Amy Sutherland, Assistant Town Planner
Tim Aicardi, Building Commissioner
Tina Griffin, Recording Secretary – via Zoom

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

306 Maple Street:

The applicant, 306 Maple Street LLC, and owner, Andrew Sacher, the project will consist of a single-story warehouse building containing 59,400 sq. ft. which includes approximately 4,950 sq. ft. of accessory office space at 306 Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 11.5 acres of land, shown on Assessors Map 37, Parcel 6B Zoned Industrial.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to open the Public Hearing for 306 Maple Street. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia, the voice vote passes unanimously, and the Hearing is opened.

The applicant has requested a continuation for 306 Maple Street, until the March 28, 2024, meeting, as they are currently working through some peer review comments and have recently submitted funds to do the sound study that was previously discussed.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, March 28, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

Scenic Road Permit 306 Maple Street:

The applicant, 306 Maple Street LLC, and owner, Andrew Sacher, the project will consist of a single-story warehouse building containing 59,400 sq. ft. which includes approximately 4,950 sq. ft. of accessory office space at 306 Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 11.5 acres of land, shown on Assessors Map 37, Parcel 6A Zoned Industrial. The plans were approved by Allen Engineering & Associates, 140 Hartford Ave., Hopedale, MA 01747.

The applicant has requested a meeting continuation for the 306 Maple Street Scenic Road Permit Public Hearing, until the applicant has more information to provide to the Board.

Mr. Trebino made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, March 28, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

85 Mendon Street:

The applicant, MZHM, LLC, c/o Julie and Paul Rogers, 85 Mendon Street (formerly Pete's Bluebird) is seeking permits in accordance with the Town of Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-16, the applicant seeks a Development Plan Approval, By-Laws §240-54, Special Permit, and Stormwater Management Permit for the project which is for a restaurant which is partially developed with building, parking and utility infrastructure Street in Bellingham, shown on Assessor's Map 39, Parcel 1 & 1A, book 41400, Page 433, Zoned Business 1. The applicant is seeking a special permit for a reduction of parking.

Mr. Trebino made a motion to open the Public Hearing for 85 Mendon Street. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury, the voice vote passes unanimously, and the Hearing is opened.

The applicant has received their peer review scope of services and has provided the check for peer review. They have asked for a meeting continuation to March 28, 2024, for 85 Mendon Street, in order for them to begin the process with peer review.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, March 28, 2024, Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

North & Blackstone Street:

The applicant, Ravens Homes, Inc, and owner, Raven Homes, propose to construct (12) 3-unit townhouses with associated improvements at North/Blackstone Street in Bellingham, approximately 20.8+/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 59-Lot 60A, zoned Agriculture.

This application falls under the Town of Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-101, Special Residential Use – Townhouse Dwellings, §240-16, Development Plan Approval, § 240-54 and Stormwater Management, and §240-60.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to open the Public Hearing for North Street & Blackstone Street. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine, the voice vote passes unanimously, and the Hearing is opened.

The applicant's representative has requested a meeting extension in order to allow the engineers time to discuss information with the peer review before the next meeting.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, March 28, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

WS Development:

The applicant, W/S Bellingham IV Associates LLC, and owner, Bellingham N Main Street II LLC, Hartford Av. Associates LTD, W/S Bellingham IV Associates LLC, & Varney Bros Sand & Gravel propose to construct a 700,000-sf industrial building for warehouse and distribution use with associated improvements on approximately 175.6 +/- acres of land in Bellingham, shown on Assessor's Map 24 Lot 12 and 10, Map 30 Lot 73-1, and Map 31 Lot 3, zoned Industrial. This application falls under the Zoning By-Laws §240-16, Development Plan Approval, §240-54, Stormwater Management, §240-138, Water Resource District Special Permit, §240-60, Flexible Parking Options Special Permit and §240-119, Major Business Complex Special Permit. The plans were prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to open the Public Hearing for WS Development. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine, the voice vote passes unanimously, and the Hearing is opened.

Jeff Curley with WS Development was present at tonight's meeting and let members know that he has submitted some feedback to the document that was circulated at the last meeting. In response to some of the comments that were heard that night, he also provided a Draft Construction Access Management Document of the kind he anticipates being submitted as part of the building process.

Mr. O'Connell stated that he emailed a comprehensive Construction Risk Management Program to Board members this afternoon, as well as Mr. Curley, who replied that he did receive the email as well and will be providing information to the Board tonight regarding some parts of that program. Mr. O'Connell let the applicant know that he should be looking into the Boards emailed copy of the program that was sent and see how the two programs can be merged together. This would be to have flexibility in the program in the event of construction of other projects that may be happening in that same general area. Mr. O'Connell also let the applicant know that a motion to draft decisions on both favorable and unfavorable snow & ice management will take place. Removal of snow & ice is a town requirement. Mr. Curley replied that he will look into amending that language in the Draft document to work with the Board on that Condition.

Board members discussed items with the applicant regarding Conditions that should be added or revised. Mr. Curley was in agreement with the Board on a number of these items and replied that he would work with the Planning Board to address the items that are a concern for this department.

Mr. O'Connell opened the meeting up to any public that was present with questions.

Mr. Martinez, resident of Maple Street took a moment to let the applicant know of Conditions that took place during construction of the Victory Building on Maple Street. When construction was going on at that location, subcontractors were coming in from 8:00 am until approximately 4:00 pm on a Saturday, instead of the weekday mornings, when construction was allowed on site earlier those mornings.

However, you would be able to hear trucks earlier on Saturday mornings, in which they were arriving on site by 6:00 am. The Police Department would go to the site and let them know they can't start until 8:00 am on Saturday's. Just a few minutes after the Police Department left, the construction companies would start working again. Mr. Martinez stated that this had happened continuously, which is why he would ask for the town Building Inspector to have authority to shut down the project construction for 1 day, when they have their second violation. This would just help ensure that construction projects would most likely be worked on during the hours allowed and not before or after that. Parameters around this operation should be made ahead of time to ensure these measures can be followed during construction.

Mr. Aicardi stated that this has been an issue with multiple companies over the years and can be difficult because even though they can't start project construction until a certain time, they might have already made enough noise with just getting to the site. If the project continues to progress forward, the difference for this location is that it would be set far back and not be as impactful to resident households during their construction timeframes.

Mr. O'Connell commented that this project has been discussed with the Planning Board for the past 16 months. The Board is now at the point where a decision should be drafted by Mr. Kupfer for a favorable or unfavorable decision. There will be three weeks to exchange the documents between the developer and the town. Those documents are not able to come from the Board in Draft form until they are finalized. There wouldn't be any communication allowed between the Board and applicant during that timeframe. Any conversations needed would only be able to take place between the applicant and Planning Office personnel, without involvement or communication from Planning Board members. Mr. Curley was in agreement with the Board and would like to move forward with this process.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to close the WS Development Public Hearing. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to forward a favorable or unfavorable Draft Decision to WS Development Company. Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the voice vote passes unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

57 Mendon Street:

The applicant and owner, Hiawatha Properties, LTD submitted under Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-16, Development Plan Approval and §240-54, Stormwater Management, and a site improvement plan dated May 20, 2019, to the existing commercial site which proposes a land disturbance of 15,000 sf. +/- at 57 Mendon Street, approximately 2.14 +/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 44-69, Zoned Business 1 and Residential. The plans were prepared by Land Planning, Inc.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to open this Public Hearing. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously. Meeting is officially opened.

The applicant's representatives have requested a meeting extension to allow time for them to complete the soil testing and be able to provide the Board with more information on stormwater questions they have had.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, March 28, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the voice vote passes unanimously.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

206 Mechanic Street – Discussion of Welcome Sign / Colors on Building

Marcus Partners Representative, Chelsea Salvatore, was present on behalf of the applicant to discuss some items that were previously requested by the Planning Board. Ms. Salvatore let the Board know that the site was previously owned by Howland Development and went through the Planning Boards approvals a couple years ago, before Marcus Partners merged together with Howland Development as half ownership. Previously approved was building colors, which are now part of the applicant's plan and the Board's approvals. The location is proposed as being khaki, brownish, and navy colors, along with a Welcome to Bellingham sign that was also part of the previous Approvals. This will be the third project of Howland Development and Marcus Partners working together. The referenced color patterns have been used on their two previous projects and is being proposed for the Mechanic Street one as well. The proposed sign has gone through some revisions from the precedent image that was shown. The stone base would be kept in order to maintain the signage of being solid and permanent. To complement the building, signage is proposed as being a gray and blue scheme, which would compliment the Welcome to Bellingham sign and large building numbers at the corner of Mechanic Street and Maple Street. The proposed signage height would be 79" tall.

Ms. Salisbury stated that the corner being shown isn't as neat as the picture portrays. There is currently utility poles and large utility boxes there, which is why there was conversation about strategically positioning the proposed welcome sign in a way that you don't have to look around those items to see the sign. There was also previous discussion regarding the 90' of wall that mirrors the other side in a similar style. There was a lot of previous discussion about that and would need to be included in the elevations being proposed. Mr. Salisbury also stated that there is concern about the sign being white in design, being a prominent display, and how it would appear at night, especially in terms of it having lighting. Ms. Salvatore was asked to provide this information to them when it is available so that the Board can see what is being determined with these concerns.

Mr. O'Connell let Ms. Salvatore know that there is a lot of clarification that will need to be provided to the Board for some questions that were discussed tonight. Information was provided on what the Board Members would like to see for building colors, parking lot entrances, lighting, and the signage that is anticipated being placed in front of the building. The next two meetings for the month of March have many items to be discussed, and this item would need to be put on an agenda in April, at the earliest.

Ms. Salvatore replied that she will discuss some items with the sign vendor and her team for some more renderings. She will then reach back out to the Planning Board Office in order to confirm a meeting date that would allow enough time in between to be able put together the information requested by the Board this evening.

Release of Funds – 160 Mechanic Street

Mr. Aicardi completed the final signoff today for the release of funds at 160 Mechanic Street. All paperwork has been received and reviewed by the necessary departments in regard to Tri-Mark. The applicant is asking for the release of the \$296,934, along with the additional \$125,000 in Bond money.

The Town is in receipt of all documentation and MassDOT has provided a letter that all items they had are completed, and they were in agreement with releasing of funds.

The Boards Conditions required Bond money to be in place in the amounts listed above for impacts that might have had effect on the town. The applicant has been in their Mechanic Street location for a few months and haven't experienced any issues. The Town Departments are in agreement with returning the Bond to the applicant of the project.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to Release the Bond for 160 Mechanic Street. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Sign Decision – 175 Blackstone Street

Mr. Trebino made a motion to sign the decision for 175 Blackstone Street from the Public Meeting that was held on February 8, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Board Members will sign their Decision this evening.

Special Permit to create a Back Lot subdivision

Mr. Kupfer has provided a copy of the Special Permit to be used for creating a Back Lot subdivision at 175 Blackstone Street.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to sign the Special Permit to create the Back Lot subdivision for 175 Blackstone Street. Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Devine made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2024, Planning Board meeting, as submitted. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Next Meeting:

The next Planning Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 7:00 pm. This meeting will take place both in-person and via Zoom.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 pm. Mr. Devine seconded, and the motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina M. Griffin
Recording Secretary