



Planning Board Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 7:00 pm – Zoom Meeting

Members Present:	Heather von Mering (chair) Maureen Meister	Diab Jerius Heather Hannon
Members Absent:	Elizabeth (Betsy) Cregger	
Also Present:	Brian Szekely, Town Planner WinCam	Beth Rudolph, Town Engineer
Others Attending:	Art Kreiger (Town Counsel) Jamie Devol Diom O'Connell Lance Grenzeback Steve Latzanakis Lucy Quinn Simpson Grist Kaloon Kelsey McClain Dennis Carlone Ted Touloukian Ian Gillespie Jan Steenberg Kurt James John Suhrbier	Jillian Bargar (Town Counsel) Stephanie Bernier Bill Johnston Craig Rabe Sally & Dennis Dale Anne Marie Brako Colleen Soda John Clemson McCanten Michelle McCarthy John Copley Larry Murray David Hacin John Stevens Jackie Welch

(**Note: over 50 people on this call)

A quorum being in attendance, Chair von Mering calls the Winchester Planning Board (PB) meeting to order at 7:02 pm, noting that the meeting is being video recorded via WinCam.

Updates, Chair von Mering:

Spring Town Meeting: moving forward will be remote participation; budget cuts also expected, some of which could impact PB agenda; Town Manager now providing weekly updates available through Town website.

Abby Road Subdivision–Tripartite Agreement: Mr. Kreiger (Town Counsel) provided details as follows:

- Town Counsel, Mr. Szekely and Mr. James (counsel for Five Points Development) developed this agreement.
- In March PB voted to escrow \$108K; on April 7th, the PB voted to release 3 lots for sale.
- Concept: upon the sale 3 lots, \$65K would be put in escrow; upon sale of 4th lot, another \$26K put in escrow for a total of \$91K.
- The developer is selling the lots (not houses); as a result, some remaining work can be done soon, and some must wait until the houses are built.
- There is an HOA that will have the responsibility to complete.

Ms. Randolph noted that Engineering concurs with Mr. Kreiger's recommendations.

PB Comments: well thought through.

Ms. Meister moved: Pursuant to Section 3.9 of the Board's Rules & Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, to waive the following provisions of those Regulations for purposes of the Tripartite Agreement among Five Points Development, LLC, Rockland Trust and the Board dated May 12, 2020:

- The two-year deadline for completion of work in Section 6.7.4.11,
- The requirement in Section 6.7.4.3 that “the Applicant shall retain fee title and maintenance responsibilities until the project is released from subdivision control.”

Ms. Hannon second the Motion. Discussion: none. Vote: Jerius, Meister, von Mering, Hannon in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes.

Ms. Meister moved to amend the conditional release of 3 lots shown on the Abby Road Definitive Subdivision Plan granted on April 7, 2020, to reduce the amount of the Tripartite Agreement from \$108,000.00 to \$91,018.00. Mr. Jerius second the Motion. Discussion: none. Vote: Meister, Hannon, Jerius, von Mering in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes.

Ms. Meister moved to execute the Tripartite Agreement as presented May 12, 2020. Mr. Jerius second the Motion. Discussion: none. Vote: Meister, Jerius, Hannon, von Mering in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes.

Ms. Bargar noted that the partial release is scheduled simultaneously to executing the Tripartite Agreement. Monies will be held in escrow with Five Points counsel until the closing.

Ms. Meister moved to grant the Partial Release as described of 5/12/2020 and designate Chair von Mering to sign. Mr. Jerius second the Motion. Discussion: none. Vote: Meister, Hannon, Jerius, von Mering in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes.

Town Meeting Articles:

Mr. Szekely outlined the Articles on the warrant for Spring Town Meeting. Articles 2, 4, and 5 are PB and Article 6 is a Citizens Petition. Article 6 has a public hearing scheduled for May 19th. The Finance Committee has not provided any input yet. The Town Manager has requested postponing any articles until Fall if possible. Chair von Mering noted the PB submitted a budget (pre-override) that did not include any studies and no Assistant Town Planner. She noted:

Article 2 is to correct a scrivener’s error.

Article 4 addresses funds for North Main Street study (\$30,000).

Article 5 can wait until Fall Town Meeting.

Chair von Mering suggested moving forward with Article 4 and postponing Articles 2 and 5.

Ms. Meister concurred and asked Mr. Szekely to get an update from the Finance Committee which should help regarding Article 4. And noted this is a small amount of money and this area of town is going to see a lot of redevelopment. This study is needed.

Mr. Jerius motioned to withdraw Articles 2 and 5 from the Spring 2020 Town Meeting warrant. Ms. Meister second the Motion. Discussion: none. Vote: Meister, Hannon, Jerius, von Mering in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes.

10 Converse Place: Mr. Szekely noted the developer team has about 10 to 15 minutes to present, Mr. Carlone will comment; the PB will offer comments and then the public will be given time to comment (2-3 minutes each). Chair von Mering added that there are many people on this call; if some do not have the opportunity to speak, please send comments to the PB email.

Mr. Gillespie introduced his team. Mr. Hacin, architect, discussed key programming goals. He stated the current design reduced the height by one full story. He proceeded through the slides which included Parking Plan (all residential, possibly some retail), ground Floor Plan, Typical Floor Plan (1, 2, 3 bedroom units), 5th floor Penthouse Plan stepped back to provide private outdoor spaces, Roof Plan where all the mechanicals are concealed. Other plans included landscaping, sections, elevations, and views (perspectives) from various points of reference. He summarized the height started at 6 levels, then went to 5. This is 4 full levels with a 5th setback level making the project feel in scale and character with the Town.

Mr. Carlone (architect/consultant for PB): Overall an elegant design that meets the demanding needs and dimensions of this site. He recommends using an elevator lift to reduce the impact of the ramp. He suggested making the residential amenities very visible. Landscaping is also elegant. The street needs to address the service corridor. He suggested to use the flat 5th floor roof to add a roof deck or pergola, a rich element. He likes the elements that make the façade design look more like town houses. Voiced concern with the detailing of copper with slate. He also felt the outdoor dining is key to the success of the retail. The oval at the water should have benches which will be required to have backs if they are for public use. Overall, the design is a handsome addition that is extremely respectful to our Town.

Public Comments:

Diom O’Connell (10 Bacon Street): The existing building is an eyesore. This proposed building is 4 to 5 times bigger in footprint from the existing laundry building and the same height (45x75x61 is existing building). It is like having 4 of the laundry buildings on the site; it’s HUGE. This is like nothing else in our downtown. He noted the building is bigger than the images suggest. He is also concerned that people do not know about this project. He is supportive of development downtown and suggested 4 stories.

Sally & Dennis Dale (147 Cambridge Street): Concur with Mr. O’Connell’s comments. This is a massive building. Taller than Town Hall. The reference to Lincoln School which sits on a hill is an unjustified comparison in scale. The restaurant on the NE corner is an unfortunate location (cooler and darker). The back of the adjacent buildings on Converse Place are used for service access. The landscaping is overdone; too busy; needs simplifying. Long sloping to pond is inaccurate. The vertical piers along the sides make the building look like a factory. Interested in the number of parking spaces. Prefer dining on the water side. Building needs to drop a story. Looks more like a factory.

Jackie Welch (27 Everett Avenue): Thank you for considering Winchester to invest in. Concern with scale and massing for our Town, not disrespecting our desire for development. Number of stories too high. Not sure if PUD Zoning or Special Permit or % of open space and height. PB needs to weigh all the factors to make sure it fits. Design comments: rotunda elements are nice in concept. Like recessing the 5th floor. Suggest setting back the brick separators. The 5th floor rotunda does not work along the curve. Maybe recess the 4th and 5th floors. Do the mechanical requirements impact the height? The oval appears to be part of the building; does the public use this space too?

John Suhrbier (Housing Partnership Board): Impressed by this current design, the improvements over time, and the working together. Important site; offers an area for the new CBD more dense design. He supports.

Michelle McCarthy (29 Oxford Street): This is the best she has seen. Change is hard. The design is beautiful. Excited to see. She is known as an “historic addict” and sees this design as integrating the beautiful town. Not many options for seniors downsizing and wanting to stay in Winchester.

Jamie Devol (7 Dix Terrace): Many aspects are nice. But she agrees with Mr. O’Connell and Ms. Welch that it is too big; should be 4 stories at the most with the top set back. Pond side is better for dining. Have the public space face the water and let the residential be facing Converse Street. The towers are awkward. The rounding is beautiful. But the mass is just too big.

Craig Rabe (17 Hutchinson Road; President of Chamber of Commerce): Beautiful design. Fits. Agrees with Ms. McCarthy’s comments. Brings a good density to downtown. Does not think anything wrong with it being a big building.

Lance Grenzeback (2 Crescent Road): Concern with the large mass of the building. Historical record that buildings used to be higher, so this is not that large. The decision was made to put higher density housing in the center as part of a long-term focus. This new version of design is excellent.

PB Comments:

Ms. Hannon: The roof reads as very busy, using different materials. Like the rounded corners, landscaping, materials. Suggested more residential entrances at the ground floor.

Ms. Meister: Agrees the roof is too busy. Like Converse Place. The renderings look distorted; Slide 31. The height is still 61 feet; prefer 48 feet to keep the small-town character. Winchester is not a city. Roof should read more like Town hall. Chimneys do not work. This is not elegant. Want 4 stories set back in some way to create a real

Mansard. Dining should be on the water side. Retail is a question. How much can Winchester absorb? Giving up an entire floor to retail may not work.

Mr. Jerius: Confirmed that the FAR is 3.0 and that the 6-story created more open space. He likes the design; it has improved. Chimneys are jarring; maybe reduce the size and set back. Front along Mt. Vernon street is static. This is a PUD. He does not have a problem with the height. We want denser housing. Going to an increase get the extra 2 ½ if offer more diverse housing and would justify the FAR (noting this is a little premature but do not want to miss making this point).

Chair von Mering: Appreciate how the architect has progressed the design. The partition walls and chimneys are too heavy creating a “vertical rise”, making it look taller. The design appears to be outside the property lines; need to keep within; changes to the roadway and street need coordination with the abutters. For a PUD the housing units need to meet varying needs (age, size, financial abilities, economic levels); the units appear all very similar except at the penthouse level. The requirement is affordable housing. If not interested in adjusting the distribution of unit sizes and prices, then can get a special permit but that will require you to eliminate a floor, reducing the massing, and allow you to keep high-end units. Currently not meeting the PUD requirements. Agrees with Mr. Carlone to add a roof top terrace but would need to drop a floor. Concurs with Ms. Hannon and Ms. Meister on the retail. Restaurant would be better on the back. Perhaps consider more residential on the ground level.

Mr. Hacin: Thanks for the comments; they will address the chimneys, simplifying the roof and putting the restaurant on the water side; he had originally understood that retail was needed; as for the renderings not being accurate (distorted), he noted that they are all accurate renderings and not intended to mislead. As far as reducing a floor, will need to look at that.

Mr. Gillespie: Noted the PB initially suggested 6 stories and later 5 stories. Disappointed that we have a great design and being asked to reduce the height. Voiced concern and dismay over comments. Do not believe they can go to a shorter height/smaller building and make it work. They have met with Mr. Szekely and Mr. Carlone five times, and the PB several. They will need to regroup regarding what Winchester will approve. There is 15% affordable housing in this design. They believe they have a beautiful design. Not clear on what the PB is directing them to do.

Chair von Mering: noted she missed their 15% Affordable housing. The PB will review and outline the expectations to make it clear.

Mr. Jerius concurred and expressed concern if the community is not hearing about the project and participating; concurred there needs to be consensus.

Ms. Meister noted she never liked 6 stories; also has concern that this is unknown to the community; the best turn-out has been today; how big is acceptable impacts the future appearance of Winchester.

654 Main Street: Chair von Mering noted for this pre-application presentation, the development team has about 10 minutes to present, the public will be allowed feedback, and then the PB will offer comments. There are many people on this call; if some do not have the opportunity to speak, please send comments to the PB email.

Mr. Gillespie noted that Kevin Ryan and his son Andrew intend to keep the hardware store in this new development. He stated this is a mixed-use development that includes 15% affordable housing; anticipates this will be by Special Permit by the PB.

Mr. Touloukian (architect) presented the elements of Form/Design Process, indicated there have been 3 preapplication meetings and six with Mr. Carlone. The design was 5 stories, is now 4 and addresses concerns raised regarding Vine Street. The home at 63 Vine Street will be restored. There are 2 common spaces, 38-42 units with 15% affordable, 38-42 parking spaces, a 2.5 FAR, and includes retail on Main Street.

Mr. Carlone: This is a very complex site that slopes. He emphasized the critical need for retail in Winchester. The design has evolved. Elmwood Street currently does not have a sidewalk and this design gives the Town and developer an opportunity to modify this street and make the area more like the town center. The roof makes

sense. The site is in a flood zone. The hardware store will be at one end and the restaurant at the other along Main Street.

Public Comments:

Jackie Welch (27 Everett Avenue): The scale and massing are concerning being so close to property lines. It is visually crowded on the parcel. What is going on with the roof. It looks like 4 stories plus. Does it have to be that high? Is there a mechanical space? Will there be a vehicular lift in the parking? How many spots will rely on the lift? Will there be an attendant? This introduces an inconvenience factor making/forcing people to on-street parking and impacting the current neighborhood. Lastly, 25% to the sky? Confused by those %. Only open space is courtyard. Is it available for use by all in the building?

Jamie Devol (7 Dix Terrace): Agree it seems big. Like the views, brick, very maxed-out size wise. Much better from a few weeks ago. Agrees with the roof being too tall. Main Street looks very vertical - make the opening wider. Neighbor view is important. This is on the right track.

Lucy (51 Vine Street): This is too big. The kids will go to Lincoln School. Can that school accommodate these kids? What about traffic? It is unsafe and inconvenient to Vine Street residents.

John Stevens (44 Vine Street): Buildings look nice. There is a proposed Amendment to the zoning bylaw. Amendments have been made to the zoning by law. West side has residential neighborhood; on the East side, that is not the case. Section 7 page 7.19, 7.3.15.5 Traffic Circulation Access. Parking is not adequate for number of vehicles reasonably expected. Page 7.22 "individual statement" (isolated design). Page 7.23 mutual benefit to immediate neighbors does not happen. Visual dominance. Consider the bordering neighbors.

PB Comments:

Mr. Jerius: This is a much improved design; like to see the roof on Main Street lower; something in the middle of the project is very high; he is ok with the massing; we need commercial space; the wall is very static looking down Elmwood Avenue.

Ms. Hannon: Likes the materials, the gables, restoring the historic house, the balconies. Likes the vertical windows, but it is odd having only vertical. The hip roof next to the gables is also odd. Appreciate the sections and the street elevations.

Ms. Meister: The design is heading in the right direction. Also likes restoring the historic house; it serves as a buffer. Need to address parking. Like the cross-gables. The shed roof does not work and noted Zoning Bylaw regarding dormers 7.3.13.4; suggested reviewing; this design does not fit. The scale relative to the street is good. Main Street roof needs work, it's too tall. Maybe dormers and extend further out with deeper eaves. Roof looks disconnected from the rest of the building. Could use retail to serve more residents; restaurants are good. Elmwood Street elevation is an improvement.

Chair von Mering: Have made tremendous progress on a difficult site. Will be requesting a traffic analysis. The Main Street elevation shows 4 stories and at Vine Street there are 2 ½ stories; this is excellent. On Main Street there are a lot of vertical voids, suggest grouping windows together to help shorten this feeling of height (less choppy). The height/parapet: trying to figure out how to lower the roof, it looks like it is floating, and the upper windows do not align with anything below on the façade. On Elmwood, prefer to see the 2-story window broken up. Where the front and back building merge looks like an odd angle; suggest making it more defined. The chimneys stick up; if they are needed then make them more like a traditional chimney. Parking is an issue on Vine Street. Suggest pulling back the dormers to meet the terms of Definition (General Bylaw). Look into screening to help view of property from Lucy's house. Suggested adding a balcony on the third floor looking at the elevation from Vine Street at the historic house side.

Mr. Touloukian: Appreciated all the feedback. The roof that sticks up in the elevations is the stair access to the roof level. He will review and work through all the comments.

Ms. Meister: consider what is going inside as well; maybe more 1-bedroom units vs 2 bedrooms may help to reduce the number of cars. Mr. Touloukian noted there are 29 one-bedroom, 9 two-bedroom and bike storage.

Other PB Discussion:

Ms. Meister: Need a letter to the Historical Commission regarding 3 projects: Main Street, Grove Street, and Niles Lane. Coordinating more closely is important.

Chair von Mering: will add Historical Commission letter to agenda for next meeting. In addition to:

- Special Permit Fee
- Subdivision Fee
- How to proceed with Master Plan Implementation Committee
- Will be discussing Tree Bylaw with Conservation Commission on 5/26 as part of their meeting; then address PB meeting agenda after.

Ms. Meister requested that any discussions/meetings get listed in the weekly Town Planner's updates to the PB; also requested update on recording secretary. Mr. Szekely noted it is in the hiring process. Ms. Meister requested providing the new person with examples of minutes (Liz's) as a model.

Ms. Meister moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jerius second the Motion. Vote: Jerius, Meister, von Mering, Hannon in favor. Cregger absent. 4-0-0 Motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 pm.

Heather Hannon, Clerk

Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary