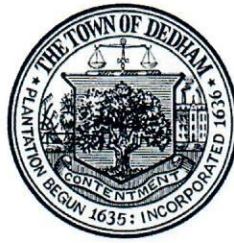


Planning Board

Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Chair
John R. Bethoney, Vice Chair
Robert D. Aldous, Clerk
Ralph I. Steeves
James E. O'Brien IV

Planning Director

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**TOWN OF DEDHAM
PLANNING BOARD**

MEETING MINUTES

February 18, 2016, 7 p.m., Lower Conference Room



Present: Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Chair
John R. Bethoney, Vice Chair
Robert D. Aldous, Clerk
Ralph I. Steeves
James E. O'Brien IV
Richard J. McCarthy, Jr., Planning Director

Call to order 7:08 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Board welcomed back Mr. Steeves, who had been absent from the last meeting due to illness. Plans, documents, studies, etc., referred to are incorporated as part of the public records and are on file in the Planning and Zoning office.

Applicant: Town of Dedham
Project Address: 450 Washington Street, Dedham, MA
Case #: **SITE-11-15-2406**
Zoning District: Central Business
Representative(s):

- Peter Turowski, AIA, NCARB, Turowski 2 Architecture, Inc., 313 Wareham Road, Marion, MA 02738
- William Scully, P.E., Traffic Engineer, Green International Affiliates, Inc., 239 Littleton Road, Suite 3, Westford, MA 01886
- Viola Augustin, Mila Landscape Architects, LLC, 82 County Road, PMB 12, Mattapoisett, MA, 02739
- James Kern, Town Manager
- Paul Corey, Design Review Advisory Board (DRAB)
- James Sullivan, Chair, Building, Planning & Construction Committee (BPCC)

Town Consultant: Steven Findlen, McMahon Associates

There have been several productive meetings discussing site issues at the former Ames Schoolhouse. The front elevation of the building will remain essentially the same. The entrance will be re-sided and graded to make it handicapped accessible. The sides will only be re-sided. All windows will be refurbished. The Historical Commission approved the plan. The

Massachusetts Historical Commission granted variances for accessibility. The grade will be dropped in the rear between the two wings. A night entrance will be secured after entry to allow people access to the Town Hall after hours. The building is fully compliant with zoning regulations.

Waivers requested:

- Waiver for strict conformance to ZBL for parking requirement
- Waiver for off-street loading
- Waiver for interior planting
- Waiver for planting islands
- Waiver for distance of 180 feet in parking bays
- Waiver for planting spacing

The existing site has 30 parking spaces in front and 63 spaces in the rear, and the current Town Hall site has 49 spaces for a total of 142 spaces available. The ZBL requires 245 spaces. Kenneth Cimeno, Building Commissioner, agreed with the number, and will write a letter to the Board. They will request a waiver of 143 spaces. Mr. Scully's analysis puts the requirement well below 142 at peak demand. Simultaneous uses are unlikely to occur, and he is confident that this meets and even overestimates what is needed in the daytime. His estimate is about 85 spaces at typical peak demand. He explained the resources he used to compute this. Most board meetings occur in the evening, and most of the Senior Center activity is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is on-street parking available within close proximity to the site and a public parking lot requiring a 5-6 minute walk. In addition, the COA brings seniors to the site, and there are MBTA and shuttle buses. Mr. Findlen, hired by the Planning Board to perform peer review, reviewed the calculations, and the methodology used to determine the number of required spaces. He agreed at 245 spaces seems adequate. He is waiting for a response regarding meeting rooms. There is often more than one meeting occurring at the same time, which is a coordination issue. He thought the applicant's numbers for the demand seem adequate, but he is still working to find the actual requirement.

The Board wants to be sure that the public has adequate access to get in and out of the parking lot without it being full and requiring a search for parking, and that the seniors have full accessibility to the Senior Center. It is assumed that they will be directed to the rear of the building, although they can enter through the front, but will need to go down a level. Restrictions on employee parking were discussed. There are approximately 41 people working in Town Hall on a full-time basis. The initial suggestion is that parking is mostly restricted to the general public and seniors, and that employees park in the overflow lot at the old Town Hall. This will be reviewed in a year or so, and should be fine until Phase 2, at which time they need to get adequate parking as close to the new building as possible to accommodate the public, seniors, and employees. The spaces against the building and in the first row should be reserved for seniors and marked as such, and the front would be for public access and seniors. This will be revisited a year to six months later. Both lots will be marked.

Mr. Bethoney fully supported Mr. Podolski's position that 100% of the employee parking during Phase 1 take place at the old Town Hall, and 100% of the parking at the new Town Hall/Senior Center be designed for the uses associated with the building, not employees. Consideration should be given to employees 55+; they should be able to park in the main lot. This will be reviewed a year later and when Phase 2 begins, at which time they will look at the

whole site. Mr. Kern said that the front parking spaces should be for Town Hall business only. He hoped that the first three months of the Senior Center being open will not represent the real demand for the program, and that it will increase as time goes on. He suggested that the average age of employees be determined and save maybe 8 spaces for them. Employee cars usually stay stationary for most of the day. There is a proposed sidewalk connection from the old Town Hall to the new site. The 5% grade will be manageable for the Senior Center. Sidewalk grade will be less than 5%. There would be a row of handicapped parking spaces where the slope will be less than 2%. No railings are needed. The grade is the best it can be for easy accessibility from the back parking lot to the access at the Senior Center. Mr. Findlen agreed. There will be signage directing people to the lower parking lot in the event that the front one is full. Vehicles cannot enter the front lot from the right entrance; there will be signage saying "No Left Turn." In the future, there could be a connection to the other lot from the front. Parking would be open to all after hours.

Mr. Aldous said he would prefer the left side driveway be open and not shut off as shown. It was explained that there would be a loss of more parking to accommodate a two-way driveway. There is limited outdoor space, and they tried to provide some adjacent to the building. The current parking is helter skelter, and does not meet any zoning requirements. Mr. Aldous disagreed, saying it would not work well, and that a sign will not help. This was discussed in detail. The applicant is trying to balance parking spaces with the desire for green space. This will provide a couple of thousand square feet of open space where there will be picnic tables. There would be a sidewalk up to the front of the building. Mr. O'Brien said there would be a certain amount of trial and error; people will have to learn to heed the signage. He noted that this is only temporary until Phase 2.

Mr. Steeves asked where Fire Department parking spaces are. Currently, firefighters park on the side of the building and in back of the station. He did not understand why the road on the left could not be made wider to provide egress out. Mr. Kern said this may happen once the location of the new building is determined. He said this was not the charge of the present design team in Phase 1. Mr. Podolski said there is a significant slope as well. Mr. Aldous asked about the section that was recently paved after a building was razed and whether it belonged to the Fire Department. Mr. Kern said this is primarily used by the Fire Department, but not exclusively. Mr. Findlen noted that the plan indicates that this area is off limits right now.

Traffic circulation in back was discussed. The driveway is two-way, but circulation around the back of the lot is one-way. There is an opening into the existing Town Hall lot that can be used to enter or exit the site, or vehicles can across the back to the front to exit. There will be directional signs for trucks and trash collection. Radii were tested for fire trucks. There will be two loading areas in back near the building for small vehicle loading, and large trucks will be parked in the back. The dumpster and recycling bins will be in back. They will use an alternate surface type of treatment, i.e., concrete as opposed to bituminous, to define the area. There may be a need for a waiver for the loading area.

The site will have 17% landscaping with 2.9% interior plantings. A waiver request is required for anything on the perimeter that does not meet regulations. No waiver request is needed for interior landscaping. A parking bay is 198', exceeding the 180' distance required in the Zoning Bylaw to be broken up with planting; this will be a waiver request. The Board needs to decide if it is willing to give up a back-to-back parking space for this. Mr. Podolski said an

island in the middle would look better than just having a total row of all parking. Spacing between trees would be 25 feet. Town Engineer Jason Mammone, P.E. and Joe Flanagan, Director of the DPW, commented on these. Only one tree does not meet the minimum height requirement; the Board was fine with that. Everything else complies. Mr. Findlen agreed.

Mr. Corey said that DRAB likes the planting list and locations, although the geraniums around the whole building are not ideal over a long period of time. DRAB recommended either something else or alternate them with something else to provide year-round green space. Some of the long-term maintenance costs on some of the plantings may need to be absorbed as they grow, i.e., day lilies need to be split, and grass needs to be maintained. Ms. Augustin suggested that they keep the geranium in the front and add grass as a lawn on the side. Mr. Haven did not like the trees at the Senior Center area, and advised more staggered plantings there. Mr. Corey explained DRAB's requests regarding the patio area, including varying the edges. DRAB thought this was more attractive. Mr. Sullivan said that removing square footage of the patio is not good, as there is limited exterior space for the Senior Center. DRAB will discuss this further. Mr. Kern said the BPCC was aware that there is not much outdoor space. Having an attractive area is fine, but not in this space because parking is more important.

Vehicular pavement is all asphalt except where it crosses pedestrian areas where it is smooth colored impervious concrete. There will be a concrete pad for trash. Pedestrian pavement in the back is darker gray concrete except at the entrance where it is light limestone colored concrete. The front pavement is a mixture of light limestone concrete color and standard sized red brick concrete pavers sprinkled with gray speckles of the limestone. Curbing will be vertical and flush granite. There will be 6" x 6" granite curbing around the entire perimeter. The planted area will have flush granite curbing for drainage. There will be raised granite except at the entrance and the handicapped areas. This will make the entrance handicapped accessible. There will be decorated granite in front with a curb.

Mr. Aldous said that unit pavers will need to be rebuilt every spring. Ms. Augustin said this will not be required if the design and implementation are right. Mr. Podolski agreed. A letter from Joe Flanagan, DPW Director, stated that pavers should not be used. He is adamantly opposed to using pavers in the vehicular area; they complied with this. His letter said that they "will be salted in the winter, and the salt eats at the joints and causes the pavers to deteriorate." She said they will deteriorate over time, and will have issues just like concrete and asphalt pavement. It will not look as good if they are not put in, but it is up to the Town to decide. Mr. Aldous said the Board has to listen to Mr. Flanagan. Mr. Kern said it is a trade-off, and it is reasonable to entertain some of it. Mr. Podolski asked him to meet with Mr. Flanagan to see if they can find a solution. Mr. Bethoney said that if they bring the Board a plan without any consideration required, the Board decides. The only way is not 100% Planning Board is if a plan is brought that meets every regulation; that will not be the case on this site. Mr. Podolski said that because the site is restricted, it offers an opportunity to think outside the box.

Mr. O'Brien asked what will happen to the flush pavers in the parking area in winter and how the plow will go around them without disturbing them. It was suggested that the islands be staked. Stormwater management calculations does not consider the flush curbing. The grading plan assumes they are flush. If they are not, they need to figure how the water will go around and not puddle. The Conservation Commission is ready to sign off on the project. Mr. Bethoney asked for a condition that all the planting areas be staked so plows will be aware of

them. DRAB is fine with the granite curbing in back being flush. If they are raised in front, it was suggested that the existing design of round corners be used. The new plan shows square corners, which makes turning difficult. Ms. Augustin explained why rounding corners are not good and the safety factors considered. Mr. Findlen said there is a 12' radius requirement on the curbstone; Ms. Augustin said it works without that. Mr. Findlen will check the Zoning By-law. The rationale for off-set parking lots was discussed. The Board asked Mr. Corey to send them a memo in this regard.

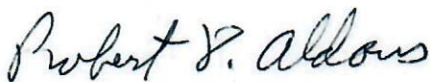
Mr. Bethoney's personal opinion was that the passive recreation areas around the building do not fit with the building because it is a period building and they are too modern. He is not in favor of any site furniture that does not match the building style. It was explained that this building is part of a campus plan, and the other building will probably be more contemporary. The Town never responded on what they wanted. DRAB agreed with Mr. Bethoney. Mr. Haven personally preferred furniture that would appreciate both the historical nature and be transitional to more modern, but this opinion was not shared in general in the Square. Mr. Kern's initial reaction was similar, but there sometimes needs to be a transition to more modern. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation specifically guides additions to old buildings to be different to distinguish themselves from the historical building. Mr. Podolski asked for pictures of older buildings with this kind of furniture, as well as different options. The Board will look around and consider this. Mr. Corey said that DRAB did not consider this, and suggested that Mr. Haven work with Mr. Sullivan.

Lighting had some spill over on the initial plan, but this has been resolved. Photometrics, have not been run yet. Light design was explained in detail. There will be high efficiency lighting along the driveway and in the parking areas. The Board discussed the design, and Mr. Findlen will review it. **Mr. O'Brien asked if the Civil War memorial stone, which was in the original town hall, could be placed in the foyer. Mr. Kern said a grand staircase has been suggested, and the stone could be put in front of it. He is not sure if it will go in front of the building. Mr. Podolski suggested putting it in a green space, and Mr. O'Brien suggested a time capsule be included. He also suggested a statue of Mr. Ames.**

Mr. Findlen gave a summary of the meeting, including parking, loading, landscaping, recycle bin locations, DRAB comments, snow removal, radii, tree height, staking of flushed landscaped areas, furniture, and lighting. He would like to see a photometric plan. Mr. Sullivan asked about the left end island abutting the existing Town Hall. There has been discussion about getting rid of the 5' landscaping buffer that abuts an existing buffer on the new Town Hall site if they go with a campus plan. This would free up the radius. The Board agreed to remove it. This was discussed briefly.

The Board reviewed the mixed use zoning change and approved it. A Public Hearing will be held on March 10, 2016, after which time the Board will continue the Town Hall meetings. Mr. Bethoney moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Steeves, and voted unanimously 5-0. The meeting ended at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert D. Aldous, Clerk