

**PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 19, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT

**JAMES ANDERSON, CHAIRMAN
DAVID BURROWS
SUSAN DURST
RUSSELL FRANK
VINCENT GRASSI
SCOTT HERRICK
SEVEN SIEGEL**

STAFF PRESENT

CAROL EYERMAN, TOWN PLANNER

Chairman James Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The roll was called, noting that all members were present.

CONTINUED FROM MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

ITEM 1 Discussion – Site Plan Amendment Pre-Application – Gorham Town School Department – Gorham High School – a request for approval to expand the Gorham High School kitchen and cafeteria by approximately 100 seats and to add a modular classroom building and 20 additional parking spaces, zoned UR, Map 106, Lot 47.

Owens McCullough, Sebago Technics, came to the podium and introduced Norman Justice, School Department Director of Facilities and Transportation. Mr. McCullough said the proposal is to add seven additional modular classrooms at the High School to deal with over capacity currently at the school. The kitchen will not be modified, 100 seats will be added to the cafeteria. Classrooms here at the Municipal Center will be relocated to the new modulars, as well as adding space for special education and adult education programs. The building addition with cafeteria is about 30 feet by 111 feet, next to the current cafeteria and is to be of construction similar to the current school, will provide space for 100 additional seats, with be bathrooms plus custodial areas. There will be an enclosed walkway from the High School to the modulars. There will be two points of egress at the modulars to meet Code, one will be toward the tennis courts and the other be toward the parking lot, which will also correspond to the adult entrance education. Utility services exist within the current building. There is an oil/water separator from the kitchen has to be relocated, and there will be an enclosed dumpster and solid waste recycling container. About 20 parking spaces will be added to the current gravel lot, based on the approval granted in 2018.

Mr. McCullough explained that these are modular constructed buildings with vinyl siding, insulated meeting all current building codes, roofs slightly pitched, and the connector will be stick framed with traditional foundation. The foundation for the modulars will be a structural slab on grade. Stormwater will be conveyed to an underdrain soil filter and discharge across the site that outfalls to a detention pond on the back side of the School. Tennis courts will remain unchanged.

This project will have to go to referendum in the Town, probably in the next year.

Mr. Anderson confirmed with Mr. McCullough that a photometric plan will need to be submitted and asking if any poles are proposed. Mr. McCullough said there will be a couple of full cutoff light poles along the parking lot for safety lighting and there some sun downer lighting along the

building.

Mr. Burrows asked if any trees will be removed. Mr. McCullough replied there will be a few trees removed in the parking lot, but there are some trees along Morrill Avenue along the frontage in the right-of-way which will stay, and landscaping will be added along the front of the parking lot. Mr. Anderson confirmed with Mr. McCullough that a landscaping plan will be provided, probably following the plan approved in 2018.

Mr. Siegel confirmed with Mr. McCullough that these modulares are similar to the ones being proposed for the Narragansett School. Mr. McCullough advised Mr. Siegel that he will provide a cost estimate for the parking lot when they submit their plans again. Mr. Siegel and Mr. McCullough discussed the parking requirements for the High School. Ms. Eyerman said that the parking approved in 2018 does not need to be approved again.

Norman Justice told Mr. Siegel that they are hoping to put an application in to the State of Maine once those applications open up for new construction or renovations and additions, so a K-5 and a high school application will be submitted. Mr. Justice said that replacing the existing modulares would be expensive and hopefully approval from the State would eliminate the need for more modulares.

CONTINUED FROM MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

ITEM 2 Discussion – Site Plan Amendment Pre-Application – Stephanie Cressey – Cressey’s Apartments Expansion – a request for approval to expand the existing apartment complex by 6 additional buildings and another driveway from Flaggy Meadow Road, zoned SR, Map 36, Lots 12, 15, 11-1.

Ms. Eyerman explained that this request is to expand an existing apartment complex to add six additional buildings and another driveway coming along Flaggy Meadow Road. Items of note include that individual septic systems would be required in addition to the existing septic system, the existing driveway will need to be upgraded, and the frontage along Flaggy Meadow Road needs to be reditched to deal with stormwater. The stormwater compliance officer recommends low impact development for this area as it is in the MS4 district of the Town. The Conservation Commission would like the opportunity to work with the landowner to provide a conservation easement for the northern side of the parcel. There are a stream, wetland and a 100 year flood plain on the site, none of which are in the area proposed to be developed. Public sewer is available but is approximately 6,000 feet away; however, the applicant should do the math and calculate the numbers for the Board. The two parcels need to be merged in order to comply with the setback requirements or somehow be reconfigured so that the parcels comply. There are no sidewalks or paved shoulders on Flaggy Meadow Road, and Suburban Residential is not an area required by Code to have sidewalks; however, if there are sidewalks near to a proposed development, then sidewalks should be considered by the Board.

Andrew Morrell, BH2M Engineers, introduced the applicant Stephanie Cressey. Currently on the site owned by the applicant there is a single family residence and 31 apartment units on site, spread out on 8 different buildings. The proposed plan show 36 units located within 6 buildings. A second access is proposed off Flaggy Meadow, as well as a connection to the existing entrance off Flaggy

Meadow. The existing hen house with an additional built-out will be used as storage units and garages for some of the apartments. Individual septic systems are proposed for each building, and there is public water and overhead electric.

Mr. Morrell noted the fire chief's requirement for an internal fire hydrant on site. Pedestrian access throughout the site was also discussed at the staff level. Mr. Morrell said they would like the Board's input on access alternatives off Flaggy Meadow and potential rezoning in this area. The applicant will have some discussion with the Conservation Commission about a possible easement at the northern limits.

Mr. Morrell confirmed with Mr. Herrick that the proposed hen house usage could be a garage or storage space for a tenant, just for the residents of the 36 units. Mr. Burrows asked if the sidewalks in front of the buildings could be connected to provide pedestrian access. Mr. Morrell said that pedestrian access could be achieved by connecting each of the new proposed 6 buildings but there is no purpose in connecting them to Flaggy Meadow where there is no sidewalk. Any pedestrian traffic on the existing facility is done along the road or using the access drive coming in. Ms. Eyerman said that the ordinance does ask for walkways within a development, separate from sidewalks to the development. Mr. Anderson said he believes internal pedestrian access makes sense. Mr. Morrell said he does not believe there are any sidewalks on Flaggy Meadow Road, and the closest sidewalk would be the intersection with Route 25. The Board and Mr. Morrell discussed a proposed internal pedestrian access sidewalk system, as well as perhaps a more centralized parking lot to connect the buildings. Mr. Siegel encouraged the applicant to look into utilizing the Development Transfer review standards.

In reply to a query from the Board, Mr. Morrell said they are trying to get at a minimum two parking spaces per unit, space permitting, and perhaps three if possible.

Mr. Anderson confirmed that the development is served by public water. Mr. Morrell said there are two existing septic systems that serve the existing facility.

Mr. Morrell asked for Board's input on the proposed access drive, based on sight distance along Flaggy Meadow Road. The access drive is proposed to be two ways. Mr. Anderson asked that a landscape design be provided.

At Mr. Anderson's request, Ms. Eyerman explained that the growth management ordinance limits the number of permits to overall 110 units in the entire Town, with a number of exemptions. The Planning Office plans to send the information out in the near future.

POSTPONED FROM MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

ITEM 3 Discussion – Site Plan and Subdivision Pre-Application – K/V Enterprises – Robie Street – a request for approval of a site and subdivision plan which includes residential units, streets, open space, recreational facilities and trail network, zoned UR/SR, Map 24, Lots 19 and 20, Map 25, Lot 8, and Map 27, Lot 20.

Ms. Eyerman explained that this application is provided based on the Development Transfer Overlay section of the ordinance. Zoning is both Urban Residential and Suburban Residential, which allow for single family and multi-family units. The site contains wetlands, aquifers and

streams and is located within the Narragansett Game Sanctuary. The applicant has been working with the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust for preservation of open space in the area, which in the ordinance is required to be a minimum of 13 acres, based on the site's acreage; however, the applicant is proposing 51 acres. The Development Transfer Overlay requires fee calculations, because for an increase in density, the applicant provides a fee to the Town, which is used by the Town to purchase open space in the Rural district. The section also requires building designs, lot designs, access limitations using internal roads and multiple connections. Ms. Eyerman commented that walkable areas are desired within the Village, and walkable block sizes are between 100 to 400 feet, so consideration could be given to shorter roads to provide pedestrian cut-throughs. An additional right of way may be able to be made off Toppan Drive. Specific parking lot locations are also required. Public water and sewer are located near this property.

Owens McCullough, Sebago Technics. Mr. McCullough introduced Kendrick Ballantyne and Vincent Maietta of K/V Enterprises, and Henry Hess and Kylie Mason, landscape architects from Sebago Technics. Mr. McCullough said proposed are up to 105 single family housing units, and 240 multi-family housing units, tailored to fit into a designated Town growth area. Lots will be around 8,500 square feet. The project will require a Maine DEP Site Location of Development act permit and an NRPA permit for some wetlands alterations, and a traffic movement permit will also be required from Maine DOT. A connection option could be to New Portland Road through the Village School, connection to Robie Street, and perhaps another connection to South Street. A future connection will also be provided on the south end of the property and up to the northern land. Mr. McCullough referred to the hunting restriction in the Narragansett Game Sanctuary.

Henry Hess came to the podium and told the Board this development is in close proximity to the schools here in Gorham with multiple points of access from Robie Street, as well as from Spruce and Bramblewood Lanes, as well as ultimately a connection to White Birch Lane. The parcel area, including the area to be preserved as conservation, is 133 acres in total. Of that the total development is proposed within approximately 82 acres, leaving 51 acres to be conserved. Preliminary conversations with Presumpscot Regional Land Trust have occurred and some of their suggestions have been shown on the plans. Mr. Hess spoke about the desirability of the development in providing a walkable neighborhood, as well as creating less of a strain on Town infrastructure due to the availability of sewer and water to the site and shorter roads. Mr. Hess anticipates at least a year of acquiring the various State and local permits that will be required.

Mr. Anderson asked about the construction timeline; Mr. Hess said this is going to be a phased project and will look to be around ten years. Mr. Hess confirmed that the proposed lot sizes are similar to those existing on the roads along South Street. Mr. Anderson noted the growth management ordinance recently passed by the Town Council which will impact the buildout of the project.

Ms. Durst and Mr. Hess discussed that the roadway connections to Ridgeway, Bramblewood and Spruce, providing multiple accesses. Mr. Hess replied to Ms. Durst that currently the multi-family units are proposed to be three story units. The availability of affordable housing units has not yet been determined. Mr. Grassi asked if any decision has been made about the phasing sequencing. Mr. Siegel confirmed with Mr. Hess that the new multi-family ordinance was not used in the density calculations, but it will be considered going forward. Senior housing can also be a consideration. Mr. Siegel recommended that the applicant talk to the Recreation Department about connecting with the cross-town trail which ends at New Portland Road. Mr. Hess advised Mr.

Siegel that the applicant prefers mixed use housing, rather than all multi-family housing, and residential housing is preferred to a mix with commercial uses due to the proximity of the Village. Mr. Hess said two parking spaces per unit are presently proposed. Mr. Hess said a majority of the roads are proposed to be public roads, with potentially the multi-family drives remaining private.

Mr. Frank asked if construction will actually begin at Robie Street, or will approval for and construction of the other access roads be done first. Mr. Hess said that the phasing will be looked at going forward. Mr. Burrows asked if the development depends on the connection through White Birch Lane; Mr. Hess replied that it would be difficult to construct that without that access, given the points of access and connectability to the Village. This is something that will be discussed with the School Department. Mr. Burrows suggested lowering the number of houses and increasing the lot sizes to improve walkability and provide for more cross streets and more green space.

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Hess discussed shorter, walkable connections. Mr. Hess confirmed to Mr. Anderson that a traffic movement permit will be required, but no scoping meeting has been held yet with DOT.

Mr. Siegel commended the applicant for the size of the acreage being proposed for preservation.

Mr. Herrick asked if there is any additional plan or proposal to address walkability to Gorham center as opposed to within the subdivision, considering the relative narrowness of the roads to which the development is proposed to connect. Mr. Hess said that consideration of off-site improvements will be a part of the MDOT scoping discussion. Mr. Anderson noted that Robie Street does not have sidewalks until it nears the Village School.

Mr. Frank asked if there are current traffic numbers for Robie Street now. Mr. Hess said that at this time they do not have those count numbers, but going forward they will be doing those investigations and looking at those counts.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPENED: Susan Robie, 34 Robie Street. Ms. Robie said they are direct abutters on the north, parties to a private way agreement for Whispering Pines Lane, and are committed to donate land at the east end of their property to the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust for the purpose of connecting land dedicated to conservation to the Village School. For the sole purpose of mitigating traffic on Robie Street if this development were to be approved, Ms. Robie and her husband agreed to trade a 50-foot right of way across part of their land to White Birch Lane. Her concerns are impact on the established neighborhood, especially as the Comprehensive Plan notes one of the goals of development being to minimize the impact of vehicular traffic on established residential neighborhoods. She spoke about construction disruption to Robie Street, noting the difficulty now to get large pieces of equipment into Robie Street from South Street. Other concerns involve traffic, traffic control, use of traffic calming methods, street trees on Robie and walkability. As part of the review for Station Square, a traffic study was done at the intersection of Robie and Lincoln Streets; those numbers are still available and should be used as a basis for the increase into this development. She suggested that the proposed right of way shown should connect to Day Road. Ms. Robie commented that the majority of stormwater now is sheet flow and noted that there is a drainage easement with the Town for stormwater from South Street into the woods on her property, but no more stormwater can be added to it from any source.

Phil Gagnon, Gordon Farms Road, commented on the potential creation of a cut-through based on

the development's access points. He asked how this will impact the walkability pattern already in existence in the neighborhood.

Peggy Marchand, 150 South Street, at the corner of Ridgeway, spoke about the traffic buildup currently on South Street. She and her husband measured Ridgeway Street and said it is 19 feet by either 3 or 6 wide, and is not wide enough to accommodate two lanes of traffic. She said that school buses do not travel down Robie Street because it is too narrow. Ms. Marchand commented about development that has occurred, with resulting loss of open spaces and trees and the high water table in the area. She said she hopes the development will not come at the cost of her neighborhood.

Eric Burbank, 146 South Street, said he agrees with having density in the Village and hopes to see green space preserved. He commented that Ridgeway measures as narrow as 16 feet, it is currently a dead end with 8 houses, and using it as an access road will have an irreversible and detrimental effect on the neighborhood. He said he hopes the development can happen, but not at the expense of the Bramblewood, Ridgeway, Spruce and Robie neighborhoods.

Roger Brown, 52 Day Road, commended the applicant for the proposed large acreage to be put into conservation. Mr. Brown asked why the New Portland Road frontage of the site is not proposed to be used more for access instead of possibly destroying existing neighborhoods to access South Street. Mr. Day referred to the Comprehensive Plan's goal to protect the state's wildlife and fisheries habitats and a local goal to protect significant wildlife and fisheries habitat. He spoke about maintaining unfragmented habitat blocks and deer watering area to the south.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ENDED.

Mr. Hess said stormwater management for the project will be under review with staff and low impact stormwater design will be sought, as well as working through the DEP process. Traffic impact will be reviewed with both the Town and DOT. Discussions have been held with staff to provide multiple points of access, hopefully creating less congestion on any one street. Connection to White Birch Lane was a request by staff. Access from New Portland Road is complicated by the presence of streams and tributaries, with areas more appropriate to be conserved and used for walkability and trails.

Mr. Anderson commented that this application will be before the Board again, and the public will receive notice of any future public hearings.

ADJOURNMENT

Susan Durst MOVED and David Burrows SECONDED a motion to adjourn. Motion CARRIED, 7 ayes. [9:11 p.m.]

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara C. Skinner, Clerk of the Planning Board

September 19, 2022