

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
February 10, 2014 Meeting Minutes

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Commission Members Present: Vincent Zimnoch, Alan Gannuscio, Jim Szepanski, Peter Juszczynski, Alexa Brengi, and Curtis Ruckey (Alternate)

Commission Members Absent: None

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Rodriguez (Town Planner), and Dana Steele (Town Engineer)

I. Call to Order

Chairman Zimnoch called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Roll Call

Commission roll call was taken.

III. Approval of Minutes from the December 9, 2013 and January 13, 2014 Regular Meetings

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the December 9, 2013 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0; Gannuscio Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the January 14, 2014 minutes.

IV. Public Hearings (none)

V. Reviews (none)

VI. Action on Closed Public Hearing Items (none)

VII. Old Business

A. Discussion with Commission and Staff regarding:

i. T&M and North Group, LLC request for acceptance of roads

Mr. Steele stated he left a message for the Town Attorney but has not heard back from him yet.

ii. Zoning regulations (none)

iii. Subdivision regulations—*Open Space Fees*

Ms. Rodriguez stated that Gary Merrigan had a question in relation to a subdivision, and she has answered it. The concern was whether or not the subdivision regulation on open space fees clearly states that it would require as part of the regulation the open space or the fees in any case, which was her opinion on the matter, but that subdivision is not being proposed at this time and there is no longer a need for discussion on this matter.

VIII. New Business

A. Public Input (none)

B. Receive New Applications

i. Site plan modification for 107 Ella Grasso Turnpike for construction of a drive-thru lane

Mark Smith of To Design, the engineer who put together the plans, and Kevin Doyle from Alliance Energy Corporation, addressed the commission. There is an existing 1,900 square foot convenience store building with a big storage room almost 450 square feet in the back of the building, and the idea is to take that storage area and a little bit of the sales area, rearrange some coolers, and make a 563 square foot Dunkin Donuts satellite operation. There will not be any seating or cooking on premises. The idea is to construct the Dunkin Donuts in the back portion of the building and put a drive-thru window on the north side. To access the drive-thru window, they are proposing to create this 75 foot by 12 foot drive of new pavement around the back, about 900 square feet of new impervious surface. A true 24 foot two-way aisle to Halfway House Road is shown on the plans as well as sidewalks along Ella Grasso Turnpike. The existing impervious area is 40.7%, and the proposed is 43.3%. Building lot coverage, including the canopy, is 5.98%, and proposed is 6.17%, which includes the 105 square foot cooler bump out in the back. They are proposing to grade the drive-thru to go through a rip-rap leak-off into a depressed area that is a water quality swale. Comments were received from the Town Engineer that there was still a .1 cubic foot per second increase in peak rate. When they did their calculations, they did not account for any infiltration; they were looking at this as more of a storm water treatment to have sedimentation, and collect any grit or sand that runs off. Mr. Smith stated that when you size for that kind of thing you might catch an inch of runoff from your impervious surface, and this will hold 8 inches of runoff off of that hard surface, which they felt was reasonable. However, if the Town Engineer would like to see zero increase in runoff, they could determine an infiltration rate and size this so that there would be a zero increase instead of a .1.

Based on 20 feet per car, there is a 12-car stacking, which they consider more than adequate for this type of facility. Mr. Smith stated their original traffic analysis had been done based on ITE trip generation, and the Town Engineer asked why they did not use the DOT method. The traffic engineer responded and took the time to revisit his traffic study and re-ran the traffic counts and levels of service per the DOT method, which they feel is very conservative. A lot of vehicles that are going to this type of facility are already on the road, and not every car coming into the site is using this as a destination location, although they've treated it this way. On top of that conservative assumption, and using the DOT method, he re-ran his numbers, and all the roadway movements still perform at a level of service A as they did in their original analysis.

In order to accommodate the drive-thru, they've relocated the trash enclosure. The templates show the trash truck can make the movement, although he cannot square up 100% to the trash enclosure. They did not feel it would be a problem if the trash truck comes in off hours and has to line himself up.

Commission members had some questions for Mr. Smith and Mr. Doyle regarding hours of operation, deliveries, number of cars exiting onto Halfway House Road, and distance of speaker to nearest residences.

Mr. Steele discussed his report dated February 7, 2014. There was discussion about 12 versus 14 queuing spaces. Mr. Steele was concerned about the queuing with the drive-thru and asked why the turnaround wasn't just moved further east to get more queuing, since the DOT likes to see 14 queuing spaces for a Dunkin Donuts drive-thru. In other words, he is suggesting that the drive-thru lane have a wider sweep around the back of the building. Mr. Doyle replied that as you go back further it drops off some, and they were trying to keep it close to the building so they would not have to build a retaining wall. Regarding extending sidewalks to Halfway House Road, Mr. Smith stated the owner was hoping to put in his portion of sidewalk along the frontage of Ella Grasso Turnpike and leave it at that, if that was acceptable. Mr. Doyle stated it probably would be a good idea to put in a full cutoff lighting pole by where the menu board is. Mr. Steele added that he is not convinced that a tractor trailer can pull through to turn around and suggested that the applicant provide a turning template.

Ms. Rodriguez discussed her report dated February 6, 2014. There was some discussion about the materials that will be used for the addition (window and bumpout) and the need for a grease trap. Mr. Steele stated for the record that he is not saying that they do not need a grease trap, that it is the WPCA's decision. Ms. Rodriguez read comments from the WPCA dated January 24, 2014. Fire Marshall comments of February 7, 2014 stated no issues. Comments from the Police Chief have not yet been received.

There was more discussion about sidewalks, moving the drive-thru to accommodate 14 queuing spaces, and moving the dumpster. The general opinion of the commission was that 14 spaces would be preferable. Some commission members would like to have sidewalks on Halfway House Road. Mr. Gannuscio suggested more landscaping in the northeast corner of the property along Halfway House Road. Mr. Szepanski would like to see more landscaping where the swale is in the back of the building, behind the building by where the drive-thru is, and on the corner of Halfway House Road and Ella Grasso Turnpike. Mr. Smith summarized: additional landscaping; if they plan on adding a light, they will add a dual foot candle plan for it with a full cutoff; increase the length of the queuing lanes to get a full 14 cars; size the filtration area and make it into a zero increase in runoff detention area; they will run the autoturn and do a printout, see how functional it is, and if they feel it is an inconvenience for deliveries they will make some changes; and add the building number to the ground sign. He was unsure of the final consensus for the sidewalks. He stated it was a matter of cost benefit and how much they could put into a fairly limited project. He said he would talk to Ms. Rodriguez for further feedback, revise the plans, write a written response, and get it submitted a few weeks before the next meeting.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission continue the site plan modification review for 107 Ella Grasso Turnpike to the March 10, 2014 meeting.

C. Informal Discussions

Gary Merrigan, 560 Halfway House Road, representing Woodridge, addressed the commission. They would like to discuss a request to amend Section 409C of the regulations, which was previously amended in 2004 to allow the 20 foot separation distance for single family detached dwellings. What they would like to do is classify the single family attached dwellings in that same separation distance. The regulation as it is written is broad brushed for the multi-families, only because it calls for a 50 foot separation of like walls with windows, which encompasses apartments, condominiums, group buildings, and single family. When you try to apply the 50 foot rule to a single family dwelling, it's very difficult to place windows. That is basically what they are asking to amend. It was recognized also in the flexible development zone when the commission introduced that zone, the same 20 foot separation, so the commission recognized the use for detached and attached in Section 417, paragraph E (Density). A discussion took place regarding apartments, group buildings, and the definition of single family. Ms. Rodriguez said it would make sense to look at the definitions of detached, attached, and duplex. Chairman Zimnoch commented that staff needs to come up with the wording and the earliest a public hearing can be scheduled would be for the April meeting. Ms. Rodriguez said she would call Mr. Merrigan in a few days.

IX. Communications and Bills (none)

OTHER

Mr. Szepanski asked who is in charge of the street lighting on Route 75, because it is very, very dark at night. The DOT handles that.

Mr. Steele and Ms. Rodriguez mentioned the McKenzie vs. Monroe case which would be worth a discussion by the commission. The court ruled that the commission does not have the authority to waive buffer requirements, and many towns are being cautious about granting waivers now based on this precedent, since this limits the commission's flexibility and discretion to be able to do whatever it wants.

X. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourn the February 10, 2014 meeting at 8:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*