

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JULY 20, 2015**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman
Andy Kidd, Vice Chairman
Horace Brown, Secretary
Michael Stebe
Susan Shanbaum

Alternates Present: Teresa Ike
Patrick Kennedy
Julian Stoppelman

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
James Davis, Zoning Enforcement Officer

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m. The Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

TOLLAND TURNPIKE ASSOCIATES II, LLC – Special exception under Art. II Sec. 9.14.02 (b) for a new medical building which requires more than 60 parking spaces and associated site work at 376 and 394 Tolland Turnpike. - Special Exception (2015-058); Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (2015-059)

Attorney Leonard Jacobs of 146 Main St., Manchester, CT, presented the application. Also present were Lon Annulli and Bradford Downey of Orlando Annulli & Sons; Ozzie Torres from Meehan & Goodin; Steve Sapoli of Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc.; and Rebecca Eldridge and Nick Michnevitz of MBH Architecture.

Attorney Jacobs presented the background on the project to build a new Hartford Healthcare medical building at 376 and 394 Tolland Turnpike in the General Business zone. The site is located on the south side of Tolland Turnpike, next to the East Point medical office building at 360 Tolland Turnpike. The cancer center is expected to have less turnover in the parking lot than a typical medical building, since patients receiving cancer treatment stay for longer periods of time than those visiting a typical medical office, Attorney Jacobs said. The proposed cancer center site location is on two parcels; a vacant parcel, currently under contract with Orlando Annulli & Sons, and a parcel currently occupied by the India Kitchen restaurant which will be purchased by the developer. The Hartford Healthcare building will go on those properties, Attorney Jacobs said. There have been two hearings thus far. The first hearing was before the Town of Manchester Zoning Board of Appeals, which granted a variance under Art. II, Sec. 24.04 to construct a 48' high building (40' maximum height permitted) at 376, 394 and 400 Tolland Turnpike with the conditions that no building illumination and no wall signage could be built above 40 ft. The second hearing was held by the Planning and Zoning Commission for an application to expand the number of parking spaces at 360 Tolland Turnpike to accommodate

some parking for the cancer center. Attorney Jacobs said 41 of the parking spaces at 360 Tolland Turnpike were anticipated to be allocated to the new cancer center building, and the cancer center will share a common entrance and exit with 360 Tolland Turnpike. The project required a special exception because the cancer center will have more than 60 parking spaces. Attorney Jacobs said the applicants believe the location is suitable, the structure will be attractive, the proposed cancer center will not cause disturbance to neighbors because the site is adjacent to another office building and vacant land, and the project meets special exception criteria.

Ozzie Torres, an engineer representing Orlando Annulli & Sons, showed slides of vacant parcels number 376 and 394 with parcel 360 that will also have parking. He said the 376 Tolland Turnpike parcel slopes away from Tolland Turnpike and 394 Tolland Turnpike is graded and drains out toward Tolland Turnpike. 376 Tolland Turnpike is vacant and will have parking when the project is done. A storm line was placed previously to serve the parcel for future development which will occur with this project, he said. Mr. Torres showed where utilities are located and where they are currently served.

Mr. Torres showed the layout plan. He said site line issues would have made it problematic for vehicles to exit from the 394 Tolland Turnpike parcel, so that access point was made into an entrance only and marked with signs. Vehicles would need to exit using the common driveway with the East Point building.

Regarding drainage, Mr. Torres said the storm system for 374 Tolland Turnpike will drain out into the existing storm system. Half the building will drain there, and half will go in the other direction; both are following the watersheds that currently exist. A portion of the 394 parcel will drain out to Tolland Turnpike; there will be less impervious surface on that portion of the development so stormwater management is not required, and the flows to the storm system on Tolland Turnpike will be reduced and underground storage won't be required. Regarding utilities, Mr. Torres said the utilities will be coming from the street. There is sanitary sewer serving the building and water will also enter from Tolland Turnpike. Regarding the grading plan he said there will be a retaining wall along the south and east property line to hold up the parking area and embankment. There are existing utility poles serving the motel behind the property which will be removed and a new underground system will go around the motel to serve it, Mr. Torres said. An existing utility easement will be transferred to the easement required to serve the new building. There is also an easement along the edge of the property to allow the applicant to do construction along that edge of the property, he said.

Regarding landscaping, Mr. Torres said there will be trees and shrubs shielding the low area of the parking lot, low landscaping along the front of the building, landscaping along the parking lot and foundations, and screening around the emergency generator and transformer, leaving space to allow for servicing them. He showed an example of the proposed retaining wall. He said the retaining wall will be exposed to the parking lot and to the south of the property.

There is an application for erosion control, Mr. Torres said. The erosion and sedimentation control plan conforms to the 2002 State guidelines for erosion control as well as Town requirements. There will be two storm water quality units and existing catch basins will be installed with silt bags during construction.

Mr. Sapola of Frederick P. Clark Associates reported on a traffic impact study. The study was submitted to the Office of the State Traffic Authority. The site map shows a shared access drive between the site and 360 Tolland Turnpike and the traffic study included the traffic light at the intersection of State Route 30 and Tolland Turnpike. Mr. Sapola said peak hours at the intersection were 7:15 to 8:15 a.m. and 4:15 to 5:15 p.m. He reported on accident data from the state DOT for the intersection and for the area between the intersection and the East Point access drive. He said the project would not impact the current rate of accidents. Regarding traffic generation, Mr. Sapola said there would be 5 doctors, 30 staff members, and up to 30 patients arriving and departing during peak hours. He estimated 70 vehicle trips during weekday morning and weekday afternoon peak hours. He noted the plans include two access points to the shared driveway to 360 Tolland Turnpike and a one-way entrance only on the India Kitchen property at 394 Tolland Turnpike. 85% of site traffic will arrive from the intersection of Route 30 and Tolland Turnpike, and 15% will arrive from the west on Tolland Turnpike. The project will have insignificant impact on the level of service and delay at the traffic signal, he said. At Tolland Turnpike at the East Point access drive, there will be no level of service (LOS) change in the morning and minimal change in delay, while in the afternoon there will be an acceptable LOS change from B to C (1.7 second average vehicle delay increase). Building elevations were shown. Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner, added that the screen the group was viewing was the most updated rendition with the illuminated sign located below 40', as required by the Zoning Board of Appeals in a condition of its approval of the building height variance. Mr. Michnevitz said the sign is now at 38' high.

Mr. Michnevitz presented the architectural renderings highlighting the tinted glass, cool grey metal panels and brick. The third floor is the infusion center where patients will be getting chemotherapy and other treatments, he said. The floor features much natural light, a healing garden for patients and their families, and insulated metal panels. The front entryway facing the south has a glass canopy so visitors are protected from the elements. He showed the floor plan and said the layout was designed to make it easy for patients to navigate. Mr. Michnevitz asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Brown asked about landscaping and said he was concerned that one of the plants called emerald gaiety euonymus was perhaps on the invasive plant list. He noted that an inquiry should be made to see if this is indeed on the list of possible invasive plants. Attorney Jacobs accepted the condition that if it shows up on the list, another similar plant will be substituted, to be agreed upon by the applicant and Town staff.

Mr. Prause questioned why the west entrance-only access was necessary and why the curb had to be cut at all if only 15% of the traffic will use it.

Mr. Annulli explained that there is a loading area there that allows access to the emergency generator, transformer, and dumpsters, and is also used when equipment in the building is changed every two years. He said staff asked if the width of the driveway could be reduced and in response the driveway had been narrowed to 18' wide.

Mr. Michnevitz stated that the facility has clean and soiled linens and that box trucks will be using that entrance as well. They are trying to prevent service trucks traffic coming through the main entrance, he said.

Mr. Prause asked if trucks can fit into the common driveway. Mr. Annulli said they could but it could be difficult and dangerous for the trucks to then maneuver around to get back out, making the point of ingress essential. It would also allow emergency vehicles easier access to get around the entire building, he said. Mr. Prause asked, if only a few box trucks and garbage trucks use that entrance occasionally, why the applicant would not put in a gated access instead. Mr. Annulli said this can be looked at. Mr. Prause said he was more comfortable with gating it or closing the entrance entirely to lessen the risk of people trying to come out. Mr. Annulli said he would talk to the staff and get back to the Commission. Mr. Brown asked if only about half of the parking spaces would be occupied since there would be a staff of 80 but there are 160 spaces. Attorney Jacobs said yes, that is probably accurate, and noted that the zoning regulations require a certain number of spaces.

Mr. Prause asked if any member of the public wished to speak either in favor of or in opposition to this application. No member of the public came forward at this time.

Mr. Prause asked if there was input from staff regarding the application.

Ms. Bertotti, Senior Planner, provided a memorandum with recommended motions and said that four staff members had outstanding comments that can be addressed subject to the approval tonight. The comments were from Traffic Engineer Jim Mayer, related to posting of signage next to the one-way entrance and reducing the width of the entrance; from Mr. James Davis, Zoning Enforcement Officer, requesting updates to the zoning table on one of the maps and details of the screening for the dumpster, emergency generator and transformer; from Mr. Kalansuriya, Design Engineer, related to providing some standard detail notes on the plans; and from Michelle Govoni, Civil Engineer, who met with the applicant today to go over a number of comments she had, all of which the applicant and Ms. Govoni agreed could be addressed on the final plans. Ms. Bertotti noted that only the engineering comments applied to the erosion and sedimentation control application, and those could also be addressed on final plans.

In response to Mr. Kidd and Mr. Stebe's requests for more detail on lighting and signage, Attorney Jacobs confirmed that same new lighting to be used in the cancer center parking lot will also be used in the existing parking lot at 360 Tolland Turnpike, and Mr. Michnevitz explained that the sign has white letters that will be illuminated and the four branded colors (magenta, orange, green and blue) will be back-lit. The letters protrude 3-4" from the building façade, he said. He confirmed that the sign is made of box lights and does not have a halo of light around it, and other lights on the building itself will be the bare minimum.

Mr. Prause asked if there were further comments. Attorney Jacobs reiterated that the applicant would prefer to keep the entrance for the box trucks and garbage trucks separate from the main entrance. He said the concern about the option of adding a gate to the entrance-only driveway was that the driver of the truck would have to stop on Tolland Turnpike and reach the intercom and back up traffic or cause an accident. Mr. Prause suggested adding a boundary to prevent other traffic from trying to exit through the entrance-only driveway.

Mr. Brown raised the question of too many under-utilized spaces in such a big lot. Mr. Michnevitz explained that it is challenging to estimate the number of spaces needed because many staff members rotate their schedules. He did agree there was an excess of spaces. Ms. Shanbaum thought most people would go toward the main entrance and therefore park above and

be more inclined to leave on the egress side. She did not think the public will be parking on the lot below. Mr. Stebe suggested that the staff parking area could have signage designating it as staff parking, to discourage people from exiting through the entrance-only driveway.

Mr. Stoppelman asked if it made sense to put a crosswalk across the common driveway. Mr. Michnevitz said the applicant may be able to accommodate a crosswalk if the Commission wants it. Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning, noted that the existing condition of the parking lots would be changing because commissioners at the previous meeting had approved additional parking and lot reconfiguration at 360 Tolland Turnpike. He said the commissioners present at that meeting felt that additional parking, circulation and improvements on 360 Tolland Turnpike addressed an immediate need near the building and also provided additional parking to meet the zoning traffic count for the two buildings together. Mr. Kidd asked, if the cancer center needed those spaces in the 360 Tolland Turnpike parking lot, whether there should be a walkway between the two lots. Mr. Annulli responded that, for those parking spaces which were planned for the cancer center building, a crosswalk would be needed and they could put in a crosswalk to those spaces. Mr. Kidd said he disagreed with Mr. Prause's suggestion of gating or eliminating the entrance-only driveway and he liked Mr. Stebe's suggestion of designating the area as staff parking.

Mr. Prause asked where entry-only signs would go and said he only saw one. Mr. Annulli responded that he revised the plans and has signs at both sides of the entry way. Mr. Prause asked if another sign could be put further east so people driving down from the main parking lot to the staff parking lot would see a sign saying "entrance only, no exit." Mr. Annulli said that could be done. Mr. Prause reiterated Mr. Brown's request that, if the emerald gaiety euonymus appeared on the invasive plant list, it would be substituted with another noninvasive plant with concurrence of the staff and the applicant.

Mr. Prause asked if there were any other comments since the Public Hearing was still open.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 8:35 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

September 16, 2015 _____

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.